

Agenda Item IMD9

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2021/09

TITLE	New National Cycle Design Guidance - July 2020
DECISION TO BE MADE BY	Executive Member for Highways and Transport - Pauline Jorgensen
DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME	15 March 2021 Virtually at 5pm
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER	Director, Place and Growth - Chris Trill

PURPOSE OF REPORT (Inc Strategic Outcomes)

This report provides a high-level summary of the government's vision and associated new guidance for cycling infrastructure design. By embracing the guidance at an early stage, WBC will be well placed to develop policy along with the numerous benefits that Active Travel brings to all residents, visitors and businesses in the borough as part of our existing wider sustainability, climate change and placemaking principles.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive Member for Highways and Transport:

- 1) Approve the WBC adoption of the Department of Transport Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 'Cycle Infrastructure Design' (July 2020), as part of our relevant highway design guidance going forward for schemes not yet commenced;
- 2) Agrees that WBC seek to embrace the principles of LTN 1/20 (and Gear Change) in developing new policy and applying, where possible within budget constraints and availability of external funding, to schemes already within the design process.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

WBC are advised to embrace the principles of DfT's Gear Change (July 2020) and Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 'Cycle Infrastructure Design' (July 2020) and this paper considers how the documents affect Wokingham Borough Council's approach to cycling infrastructure and how it might affect future transport and development projects.

Gear Change describes DfT's vision for cycling and walking, setting out the actions required at all levels of government to radically increase active travel. For this purpose, a new body has been formed, Active Travel England, to monitor progress and allocate available funding.

LTN 1/20 is a new national cycling design guidance (superseding all previous LTNs on the subject) sets out minimum requirements for cycle infrastructure, including but not limited to, cycle lanes and tracks, junctions and crossings, construction and maintenance, and cycle parking.

The guidance asks that all Local Authorities incorporate the principles in all the proposed schemes irrespective of whether cycling or walking is the main element of the proposal. We should take a pragmatic approach to achieving these ambitions in order to take our communities with us and make our guidance as inclusive, seamless and flexible as possible to achieve them. We therefore need to strive to embrace the spirit of the guidance moving forward using the principles of Gear Change and the updated cycling infrastructure design guidance; embedding these in our policies as they are reviewed and improved.

Background

WBC has an existing suite of placemaking, transport, climate change and sustainability policy and guidance and the new guidance will need to be embedded as part of the wider considerations used in our decision making.

This paper considers the implications of Gear Change and Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 documents on future transport and development projects. WBC's existing 'style guide' was published in October 2013 and provided guidance and appropriate standards for the delivery of what at that time was considered high-quality cycling infrastructure within the Borough. DfT's Gear Change (July 2020) and LTN 1/20 (July 2020) should ideally replace this existing guidance and the documents can be viewed online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

Gear Change

Gear Change is subtitled "A Bold Vision for Cycling and Walking". It describes the vision to make England a great walking and cycling nation and provides various statistics demonstrating the need and the potential for what could be achieved. Benefits around air quality, climate change, health and wellbeing, addressing inequalities and tackling congestion and well as increasing local business are described. Local businesses have experienced an increase of up to 40% footfall in areas where well-planned walking improvements have taken place while in London new routes enable 46% of people to move in only 30% of the road space, freeing up that road space for larger vehicles that have no other mode option.

Gear Change describes the recent and ongoing changes from Covid-19 as a once in a generation chance to accelerate active travel. Lockdown saw an increase of cycling of around 100% on weekdays and 200% at weekends. The vision for cycling and walking is to make places truly walkable and to make cycling a mass form of transport with half of journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030. This vision includes: healthier, happier and greener communities, safer streets, convenient and accessible travel and cycling and walking to be at the heart of transport decision making.

It sets out the actions required at all levels of government to make this a reality, grouped under four themes:

- better streets for cycling and people
- cycling and walking at the heart of decision-making
- empowering and encouraging local authorities
- enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do

Active Travel England

The actions set out in Gear Change contain various items of interest to Wokingham Borough Council, from the provision of higher standards of cycling facilities (discussed

further in LTN 1/20) to ensuring that all future schemes and developments are sustainable transport focussed. In order to ensure that all Local Authorities are raising standards and implementing Gear Change, the government is creating a new commissioning body and inspectorate called Active Travel England. This will be led by a new national cycling and walking commissioner. The body will have various powers and responsibilities including inspecting and reporting annually on Local Authority performance with regard to cycling and walking, regardless of whether they have received walking and cycling specific funds; it is suggested that it be an equivalent to Ofsted. Although the exact details of Active Travel England are still to be developed and shared, Gear Change suggests that they will:

- Hold the budget
- Approve grant schemes
- Inspect grant funded schemes
- Train and demonstrate/share good practice and knowledge
- Inspect Highway Authorities
- Review Major Planning Applications

It is clear from the vision and the formation of Active Travel England that there is a need for Local Authorities to follow the vision and also follow LTN 1/20 as much as possible in all future highway works and not just those focussed on walking and cycling but any highways project.

Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20)

Wokingham's Cycling Infrastructure Style Guide, when published, was based upon LTN 2/08 "Cycle Infrastructure Design" and 1/12 "Shared Use Routes for Pedestrian and Cyclists". These documents have now been superseded and replaced by LTN 1/20.

LTN 1/20 provides guidance and good practice for the design of cycle infrastructure, in support of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. The document sets out minimum requirements for cycle infrastructure, including but not limited to, cycle lanes and tracks, junctions and crossings, construction and maintenance, and cycle parking. The design options detailed in the LTN 1/20 include segregation from traffic, measures for cycling at junctions and roundabouts, and updated guidance on crossings, signal design and the associated traffic signs and road markings.

LTN 1/20 identifies five core design principles which represent the key requirements to encourage more cycling and walking. These principles are as follows:

- Coherent – people must be able to reach their destinations easily, along routes that are well connected, simple to navigate and of consistent high quality.
- Direct – cycle routes should provide the shortest and fastest way of travelling from place to place.
- Safe – cycle infrastructure must be safe and most important must be perceived to be safe by users.
- Comfortable – cycle routes should be of a good quality, well-maintained, smooth, wide enough to accommodate the volume of users, have minimal stopping-starting and avoid steep gradients.
- Attractive – cycle infrastructure should help deliver public spaces that are well designed stimulating cyclists.

A further twenty-two summary principles have been identified that should be followed by developers and local authorities in order to deliver high-quality infrastructure. From those principles the following are considered the most significant changes/additions compared to previous guidance:

- Cycles must be treated as vehicles and not as pedestrians.
- Cyclists must be physically separated and protected from high volume motor traffic.
- Consideration of the opportunities to improve cycling provisions will be an expectation of any future local highway schemes funded by government.
- Cycle parking must be included in substantial schemes.
- Maintenance of schemes is vital and proposals should always include a clear programme of maintenance.
- Trials can help achieve change and ensure a permanent scheme is right first time.
- Access control measures, such as chicane barriers and dismount signs, should not be used.
- All designers of cycle schemes must experience roads as a cyclist.

LTN 1/20 places additional emphasis on segregation of cyclists from both pedestrians and high-volume traffic. On urban streets, cyclists must be physically separated from pedestrians and should not share space with pedestrians. In these cases, distinct tracks for cyclists should be made, using sloping, pedestrian-friendly kerbs and/or different surfacing. The Table 1 below suggests that based on the road speed limit and traffic flow different provision of cycling infrastructure should be provided.

Speed Limit ¹	Motor Traffic Flow (pcu/24 hour) ²	Protected Space for Cycling			Cycle Lane (mandatory/ advisory)	Mixed Traffic
		Fully Kerbed Cycle Track	Stepped Cycle Track	Light Segregation		
20 mph ³	0	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	2000	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
	4000	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
	6000+	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Pink
30 mph	0	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
	2000	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
	4000	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Pink
	6000+	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Pink
40 mph	Any	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Pink	Pink
50+ mph	Any	Green	Pink	Pink	Pink	Pink

- Provision suitable for most people
- Provision not suitable for all people and will exclude some potential users and/or have safety concerns
- Provision suitable for few people and will exclude most potential users and/or have safety concerns

- Notes:
1. If the 85th percentile speed is more than 10% above the speed limit the next highest speed limit should be applied
 2. The recommended provision assumes that the peak hour motor traffic flow is no more than 10% of the 24 hour flow
 3. In rural areas achieving speeds of 20mph may be difficult, and so shared routes with speeds of up to 30mph will be generally acceptable with motor vehicle flows of up to 1,000 pcu per day

Table 1 Appropriate protection from motor traffic on highways

Assessment Tools

The guidance contains assessment mechanisms that set minimum quality criteria to achieve when designing cycling schemes. These are the Cycling Level of Service tool (CLoS) and the Junction Assessment tool (JAT). CLoS and JAT tools are of great importance as only schemes which meet minimum criteria levels will be considered for funding. If the criteria are not met, then authorities will be required to justify the design choices.

Local Authorities are expected to consider this guidance and the tools when designing new transport schemes and particularly when applying for government funding that includes cycle infrastructure.

Business Case (including Analysis of Issues)

Gear Change and the updated national cycle design guidance aim to include cycle infrastructure as a key element of all future highway schemes to encourage cycling uptake and increase its mode share as a means of everyday transport.

The guidance asks that all Local Authorities incorporate the principles in all the proposed schemes irrespective of whether cycling or walking is the main element of the proposal. Consideration should be provided on the ways to improve cycling infrastructure to the requirements of LTN 1/20 to secure government funding.

The government intends that all proposed schemes will be checked by Active Travel England, against the summary principles before funding is agreed and that finished schemes will be inspected as appropriate to ensure that they have been delivered in compliance with them. Therefore in terms of options, WBC can opt not to adopt Gear change and LTN 1/20 but this would severely risk future funding from government on all transport schemes and also miss an opportunity to improve conditions for cycling and walking in the borough.

In order to help Wokingham Borough Council provide high quality provision for cycling and walking LTN 1/20 principles should be embedded into the design process of all schemes. This would include requirements such as involving local cycle groups, ensuring engineers involved have cycling experience and future maintenance is considered specifically for cyclists and pedestrians. However phased implementation will be necessary in existing and currently emerging schemes to make this realistic within resource constraints.

Existing/Emerging schemes

There are effectively three categories of schemes, those which:

- Have already been delivered (historical schemes)
- Are currently in development (design/planning application)
- Are yet to commence (Pre Application/Feasibility)

It is likely that some of the schemes which have been delivered in the past will no longer meet the guidance and these may be revisited at some point in future as external funding opportunities arise and where a particular need is recognised. Those that are currently in development will be viewed on a case-by-case basis; including those that

are developer funded or involve housing, negotiations may have already taken place and it may not be possible to gain the required land or make suitable design amendments to meet our place making policies whilst delivering to LTN 1/20. The council should aim to meet LTN 1/20 but it is recognised that there will be constraints on many existing/emerging schemes which have been in the planning process for many years. Similarly, for those schemes which are yet to commence, although the majority of schemes will be designed in line with LTN 1/20 there will need to be a balance between this and our other policies.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Unknown (see below)	Unknown (see below)	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	As above	As above	
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	As above	As above	

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Retrofitting LTN 1/20 to existing schemes will have financial implications, though this is likely to be the subject of capital bids should the funding not be accommodated within existing highway capital budgets. This is likely to become a rolling programme over several years.

Cross-Council Implications

Positive impact on the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Public Sector Equality Duty

As this is currently guidance adoption only, an equalities impact assessment, will be prepared at a later stage with an action plan.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Director – Resources and Assets	No comment
Monitoring Officer	No comment
Leader of the Council	No comment

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

List of Background Papers

Gear Change:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england>

LTN 1/20:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120>

Contact Robert Curtis

Service Place

Telephone No 974 6489

Email robert.curtis@wokingham.gov.uk

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