

Our ref: GW/FB/Vision 21/Response to LTP2

29 April 2005

Mr John Seddon  
Policy & Strategy Manager  
Traffic Regulations  
Worcestershire County Council  
County Hall  
Spetchley Road  
Worcester  
WR5 2NP

Dear John

**Consultation Response to Worcestershire County Council Local Transport Plan 2 – 2006/2011**

These are the formal comments and representations on LTP2 of the Vision 21 Partnership. Vision 21 is the Local Strategic Partnership for the Malvern Hills District and this response therefore reflects the collective views and comments of a range of organisations representing the public, private, community and voluntary sectors.

The Partnership welcomes the opportunity to comment on the LTP2 and trust these views will be seriously considered as part of the consultation process and where possible and practical will be incorporated into the current or future Transport Plans.

We would of course be willing to meet with officers and members of the County Council to further discuss any of the issues raised in this letter.

Vision 21 had already identified transport as one of its key priorities and has established a Transport, Housing and Jobs Theme Group specifically to consider local transport issues and in particular the strategic links with housing and jobs.

In responding to the LTP2 we have broken this down into a number of main issues, which broadly follow the key priorities in LTP2.

General

While we appreciate the funding limitations set by the Government, within which the County Council must work, we still believe the Plan should adopt a less “business as usual” approach and the opportunity should be used to consider longer term innovative strategic solutions to the traffic problems identified and which are able to support vibrant economic development for the

County through an improved transport infrastructure. Although funding may not be immediately available this will demonstrate a forward thinking approach and provide the ability to have worked up schemes available as and when funding opportunities arise.

Vision 21 would strongly recommend that all interested stakeholders and partners throughout the County work together to support the County Council and lobby relevant government departments for greater funding to achieve our transport objectives. Vision 21 is prepared to actively work with other partner organisations and the County Council to seek more funding for transport initiatives throughout Worcestershire.

### Vision

The aim of a vision statement is to set out the aspirational objectives of any plan.

We believe however, that the LTP2 vision lacks clarity and would ask you to consider and incorporate references to the following key issues:

- i. That transport means a range of alternatives not merely car travel.
- ii. Sustainable travel should be clearly defined and should include economic as well as environmental factors.
- iii. The importance of transport as a “real driver” for prosperity, viability and sustainability should be emphasised. Good transport has clear links with employment and job creation, increasing the access to a highly skilled flexible and mobile workforce, affordable housing and the promotion of tourism. We consider these are fundamental issues if Worcester is going to be able to become the sub-regional development focus as proposed by the Regional Spatial Strategy.

### Congestion

Congestion on the main A449 between Malvern and Worcester is recognised in LTP2 as one of the main corridors of congestion in the County. We would propose that the following initiatives are explored in order to alleviate this problem:

- i. A park & ride scheme from one or more locations in Malvern to Worcester, establishing cost effective, frequent and high quality public transport between these two locations.
- ii. Effective use of existing car parks in urban and rural areas should be explored, as should the provision of other forms of transport such as bicycles, car sharing from these same locations.
- iii. Improved rail facilities and timetables between key locations combined with improved car parking at stations.
- iv. Encourage and provide incentives to employers to adopt travel to work plans and flexible [family friendly] working patterns.

V21 would wish to promote the use of alternative travel options before the building of new roads but accepts that based on current traffic volumes it is impractical to put this forward as the only solution and would therefore also support the need for appropriate studies and solutions to be considered to deal with the congestion on the A440 southern link road that consider all options and if necessary, proposals for the widening of this stretch of road.

We have noted the continuing decline in public transport use and wish to support progressive proposals for increasing the use of public transport.

Vision 21 would also wish to support more coordinated solutions to create sustainable villages in our rural areas which enable them to sustain local services and thereby reduce the need for car dependency.

That the movement of goods particularly in rural areas and communities should be properly managed and controlled.

Opportunities should also be taken when undertaking local developments or town enhancements to require the developer and local authority to solve transport issues through a more progressive use of S106's, CPO's, etc.

Many of these projects will not be undertaken without real benefits being realised by all the local authorities and local businesses and we would wish to see incentives and disincentives that encourage people to move from private to public systems of transport and to contributing to other travel based initiatives.

### Accessibility

The plan should address some of the conflicts that exist between the economic necessity for improved transport but the opposition and resistance that may exist locally. Examples in Malvern include:

- i. Tourism – tensions exist between the need to make tourist attractions accessible by car but the risks of “tourism erosion” caused to the attraction by excessive numbers of visitors
- ii. The 3 Counties showground – there are opportunities for greater use of this site but local opposition exists based on congestion, noise, etc.

Closer working and a more consistent approach are required for all those bodies involved in operating and managing local transport systems. It is also necessary to ensure that transport systems locally, regionally or nationally are able to effectively link together.

### Road Safety

Vision 21 is concerned that insufficient research has been undertaken on the cause and effect of reduced fatalities or serious injuries, for example, has this resulted in more minor injuries/near misses etc? There are considerable financial benefits for the emergency services in reducing the figures even

further and we would want to make a case for any consequential budget savings being available for other transport related projects.

We would like to see and support a greater sharing of road traffic accident data between fire & police and other emergency services.

The safer routes to schools is an excellent scheme but there is evidence that adequate resources need to be given to this in order that school plans can be implemented within appropriate timescales.

### Air Quality

V21 is pleased that Malvern Hills' air quality levels are good but we can always do better. We would like to see a greater emphasis and encouragement given to reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, for example, we would like to see schemes that encourage public authority vehicles switching over to more fuel efficient vehicles.

We would also welcome a commitment and targets for reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in line with the County Climate Change Group, i.e. at least 10% less by 2010 and 20% less by 2020.

**Businesses should be encouraged to realise that good environmental practice makes good business sense.**

Fundamental to the LTP2 proposals is the need for greater funding for new & innovative projects, as indicated above, V21 would be willing to take part with other partner organisations in lobbying central government for more funding for transport in Worcestershire.

I trust the above is helpful and will be fully considered by the Council. Finally, I would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to contribute to this consultation process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Guy Weston', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Guy Weston**  
On behalf of V21