

Morpeth Neighbourhood Plan

Transport Group

4th April '13

Present:

Nic Best, Ian Campbell (IC), Doug Cockburn, John Earl, Peter Fuller, Charles Robinson, Peter Scott, Peter Stonell (PSt)

Members of the group have interests in:

Cars & car parking, rail, buses, cycling and walking – and perspectives from Morpeth and Pegswood

Issues:

Transport issues are emerging from the Topic Groups, were identified in the October Launch and subsequent feedback – and in the three CABE workshops. These need to be collated and analysed [**Action**].

It had been hoped that the NCC-commissioned 'Morpeth Transport Review' carried out by Phil Jones would give an initial evidence base for transport in the Neighbourhood Plan. *IC reports*: Phil Jones is doing some short term work on Telford Bridge junction (due May/June) but also some more extensive work on wider transport issues (subject to confirmation by NCC client) which could report July.

In the meantime, the Group identified some obvious issues:

Road Network

- The historic town centre road layout
- The impact of traffic on the character of the market town
- Integrity of Telford Bridge – proposed refurbishment a temporary measure?
- The Telford Bridge 'pinch point' and the distribution of existing and proposed housing and facilities (esp schools) north and south of the river
- Lack of longitudinal traffic survey data
- Predicted and unforeseen changes to traffic flows and destinations – and the 'shape' of the town and surrounding area - when the Northern Bypass opens

Public Transport

- Congestion at bus station, Mitford Road caused by school buses
- Lack of local bus services to the north and west of Morpeth serving Mitford, Hebron, Hepscott etc
- Perceived cost of public transport vs perceived cost of car use
- Location of rail station wrt town centre, employment centres

Active Transport

- Topography of Morpeth re: cycling, walking

Access to Key Facilities

- The economic ambitions that rely on visitors to the town (centre)
- Location, capacity, cost and management of town centre car parking

- No obvious sites for new car parks after Dark Lane
- School catchment areas
- Congestion associated mainly with the 'school run' morning and afternoon

Freight

- The freight network including access to Coopies Lane Ind Estate, Pegswood Ind Estate, proposed employment sites at Northgate and Fairmoor, delivery access to town centre shops and the new Dark Lane supermarket
- The low bridge over the A1 bypass requiring exceptional loads to come through the town centre (though PSt reports seeing turbine blades on the A1?). Needs checking!

Principles: floated by IC

- ease of access by all modes
- Greater parity between different users
- - associated with allocation of space (which also has a time dimension)
 - car parking
 - park & ride
 - bus hub/interchange
 - provision for cyclists
- safe traffic system
- transport system contributing to economic viability
- minimum adverse impact on local environment, heritage and character

Transport Implications and Solutions for Different Roles of Morpeth:

[sorted but unfiltered brainstormed ideas]

Commuter Town

- Four way junction at Clifton
- New A1 junction at Whalton Road
- Local rail services (both Morpeth & Pegswood)
- Semifast rail services Newcastle-Edinburgh

Employment Hub

- Long stay car parking capacity
- Effective management of car parking
- Workplace Travel Plans (County Hall, Coopies Lane, Town Centre, Fairmoor)
- Employer travel support schemes (car, rail, bus, bike)
- Local rail services
- Intercity rail services
- Semifast rail services Newcastle-Edinburgh
- Pedestrian & cycle networks, shared cycle/pedestrian paths

Shopping & Service Centre

- Short stay car parking capacity

- Effective management of car parking
- Car parking capacity signs
- Multi storey carpark
- One way system from Telford Bridge
- Semifast rail services Newcastle-Edinburgh
- Visitor survey incl origin, destination, mode

Education Centre

- School travel plans
- Pedestrian & cycle networks
- ? Northern Bypass giving access to KEVI
- Cycle access through Carlisle Park and riverside promenade to Mitford Rd

Tourism Gateway

- Park & Ride Schemes
- Location of proposed hotel(s)
- Close Telford Bridge and pedestrianise Bridge Street
- Intercity rail services
- Local rail services north of Morpeth, scenic coastal rail route
- Pedestrian & cycle networks (leisure & destination)

A1 Junction for East & South East Northumberland (through traffic)

- Divert or reduce through traffic
- Stobhill-Loansdean Link Road
- New road bridge parallel to Telford Bridge
- Modify low bridge on A1

Resources to implement solutions

- Capital schemes in Core Strategy (NCC CIL)
- Capital Schemes in MNP (Local CIL)
- Lobbying of TOC, Network Rail (more than just SENRUG)
- Lobbying of bus operators, bus subsidy grant
- Community Transport
- Support of employers
- NCC support necessary for a wide range of solutions
- Lobbying allies (eg Northumberland Tourism)

Actions:

- Analyse Oct Launch feedback re: transport
- Analyse Topic Group notes re: transport
- Analyse CABA workshops re: transport
- Contact NCC Walk to School Officer
- Get info on Blyth (and other) Active Travel Town schemes – contact Sustrans and possibly invite them to a meeting
- Check A1 Low Bridge/Weight Limit urban myth (? Dick Phillips)