

Sustainable transport and infrastructure



Image courtesy of Sam North



Headlines

- The establishment of sub-National Transport bodies, adding an additional layer of complexity
- The overall aspirations for sustainable travel set out in the Core Strategy have proved challenging.
- Levels of leisure cycling across the National Park have increased during the life of the Core Strategy. The evidence for this is both anecdotal and reflected from automatic counter data. However, for most popular leisure cycling destinations such as the Trail network, the majority of visitors arrive initially by car.
- The dominance of the car for travel is demonstrated by the resurgence in traffic over the life of the Plan, following the recession from 2008 onwards. Between 2012 and 2017, there was an increase in flows of approximately 13%.
- Policies relating to specific types of development appear to be most effective. There may be other methods more appropriate for encouraging behaviour change.
- The parish statements raise some concerns about parking provision in settlements and wider traffic / visitor management approaches.

What has worked well

- **Road building** – the Core Strategy approach has enabled the Authority to work with highway authorities and Highways England to influence remedial schemes across the National Park. Examples include the A54, A619 and A628. Highways England and TfN have engaged with the Peak District in discussions about long term proposals to improve trans-Pennine connectivity.
- **Design of transport infrastructure** – an ongoing approach, culminating in the adoption of the Peak District National Park Transport Design Guide SPD in 2019. We have a constructive relationship with some highway authorities over design, but not all.
- **Rail** – the strong policy approach enabled the National Park Authority to influence the design of the Hope Valley Capacity Enhancement scheme within the National Park. This worked well enough for the Authority to withdraw its objection to the proposals prior to the public inquiry in May 2016.
- **Routes for walking, cycling and horse riding** – this combined approach with that for rail policy has been useful in promoting the enhancement of former railway routes, and guiding the Authority approach to rail reinstatement along the former Matlock to Buxton and Woodhead routes.

What has not worked so well

- **Reducing the general need to travel and encouraging sustainable transport** – this is an aspirational policy approach, and as such it is difficult to measure its success. The AMR indicator takes average annual daily traffic flows as a proxy of success – between 2012 and 2017, there was an increase of approximately 13%.
- **Travel Plans** – the use of Policy T2F should ensure that developers consider non-car access to new sites. However, a decline in the availability of alternative means of transport in some areas, can limit effectiveness. The policy is also dependent on robust ongoing monitoring and evaluation of travel plans, it is not clear who is responsible for this.
- **Parking** – a change in Government approach to parking has meant that the Core Strategy policy approach of maximum standards became out of date quite quickly. The DMP policies have focused on a pragmatic approach with both maximum and minimum standards, and an updated parking standards document. It is still too early to measure the success of this approach.

What are the big issues for the Plan review?

- **Aspirations for sustainable transport** – the Local Plan contains an aspirational policy on reducing the general need to travel and encouraging sustainable transport. Should this policy approach be retained in the Local Plan or sit elsewhere?
- **Road building** – the current policy approach appears to have been successful and generally ensures early engagement with scheme promoters. But in light of the desire for trans-Pennine connectivity, is this still the correct approach.
- **Rail and Trail** – the current policy approach safeguards the former Matlock to Buxton and Woodhead railway routes for future rail use. Given the popularity of the Monsal Trail, should the policy switch to safeguard its use as a Trail?
- **Parking** – the change in approach to parking between the Core Strategy and the DMP has been based on the recognition that the private car is the main mode of transport for most of our residents, businesses and visitors. Is the current approach still appropriate in light of wider aspirations on climate change?



What are the big issues for the Plan review? (Continued)

- **Air transport** – our current policy approach within the DMP seeks to control the use of drones in the National Park, where necessary. Given the likely increase in use of drones for delivery, should the policy identify no fly zones, where the impact of drones is greatest on either nesting birds or quiet enjoyment? If so, Should the use of drones for delivery be supported outside these zones?
- **Air quality** – the current Local Plan has aspirations for sustainable transport, but does not consider the effects of transport on air quality. Should the Plan review consider air quality? If not is this still an area of work that the Authority should become involved in, or does this fall under the remit of other organisations?