

# Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan

## Background to the Transport Evidence informing the Ipswich Local Plan

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## Introduction

Ipswich Borough Council adopted its Core Strategy and Policies development plan document (DPD) in December 2011 following an Examination in Public. The preparation of this plan was informed by transport evidence in the form of the Ipswich Transport Model undertaken by AECOM on behalf of Suffolk County Council, which addressed highway capacity issues based on 2008 survey data.

Suffolk County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 2011-2031 sets out the County Council's long-term transport strategy for the 20 year period from 2011. LTP3 notes: 'The key focus of the plan is to support Suffolk's economy as it recovers from the recession and to support future sustainable economic growth.'<sup>1</sup>

LTP3 also identifies the Travel Ipswich scheme (formerly known as Ipswich – Transport Fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century) which 'is a £21 million package of traffic management, smarter choices, bus, walking and cycling improvements to address the main transport issues facing Ipswich' over the plan period to 2031.<sup>2</sup> This scheme was completed in September 2015.

Following publication of the 2011 Census travel to work information, transport consultants WSP undertook an analysis of this data and produced a draft report for Suffolk County Council in December 2014. This work informed the preparation of a draft update to the Ipswich Transport Model produced by WSP for Suffolk County Council in August 2015.

The Ipswich Transport Model update also takes account of completions, major planning permissions and pending planning applications, site allocations and proposed site allocations in the Ipswich Policy Area as defined in the adopted Ipswich Borough Council Core Strategy and Policies DPD appendix 3.

This paper explains the current position regarding transport analysis to support the submission of the Ipswich Local Plan for Examination in Public.

## Ipswich Transport Model (2010)

The Ipswich Transport Model undertaken by AECOM on behalf of Suffolk County Council addresses highway capacity issues. The conclusion to AECOM's Ipswich Transport Model Assessment stated that in 2009, a generally good transport network was available throughout the town and should be able to cope with future demand<sup>3</sup>. The forecast growth in Ipswich was not exceptional compared to similar urban centres of Chelmsford, Colchester and Norwich, and predicted increases in journey times as a result of anticipated growth were not considered great<sup>4</sup>. Existing highway capacity at that time was not considered to be a constraint on the level of development proposed in the adopted Core Strategy (2011).

Growth is also likely to result in the more efficient use of the whole transport network as road congestion and capacity issues lead to greater modal shift. Modelling showed that parts of the network were likely to be operating above capacity at peak periods in the future. This meant that traffic delays were likely to increase in some parts of the network, particularly near the town centre. This is likely to be the case in most urban areas intended to support growth whilst minimising traffic impacts.

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<sup>1</sup> Suffolk County Council, Suffolk Local Transport Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 – Transport Strategy, p. 4

<sup>2</sup> Suffolk County Council, Local Transport Plan 2011-2031 Part 1 – Transport Strategy, p. 20

<sup>3</sup> AECOM, Ipswich Transport Model Assessment, (2009) paragraph 5.17, p. 14

<sup>4</sup> AECOM, Ipswich Transport Model Assessment, (2009) paragraph 5.1, p. 12

Although growth will create more journeys, as urban centres grow opportunities to provide quality public transport solutions increase because patronage demands higher levels of service<sup>5</sup>. Growth in this instance therefore is less a question of the impact on highway capacity but more about the potential for promoting sustainable modes of transport. A variety of sustainable means to mitigate and manage growth present themselves as credible alternatives to major new road investment including effective travel plans, shower facilities and lockers in new office developments, well-designed dedicated cycle and pedestrian routes, high quality cycle parking, safe and convenient access to public transport, priority bus measures, car clubs and appropriate levels of car parking.

### Suffolk Local Transport Plan 3 2011-2031

The Suffolk Local Transport Plan (LTP) 3 2011-2031 adopts an approach to urban areas intended to support growth whilst minimising traffic impacts. The broad approach being taken is based on three elements:

- The need to reduce demand for car travel for local journeys to avoid increased congestion;
- Improving infrastructure to make it easier for people to travel without the car; and
- Better traffic management to get more efficiency from the existing network.

The LTP transport strategy for Ipswich reflects this approach and the aim is to reduce the forecast traffic levels in the Ipswich Transport Model so that congestion is less severe.

In addition the Travel Ipswich scheme completed in September 2015 aims to reduce dependency on the private car by 15% within the lifetime of the plan, thereby reducing pressure on highway capacity. The scheme aims to achieve this through improved bus stations and stops, real time passenger information, use of intelligent bus priority technology at junctions and the creation of strategic cycle routes linking into a walking and cycle network in the town centre<sup>6</sup>. All of these measures are designed to make alternatives to the use of cars more attractive.

### Ipswich Garden Suburb

It was not anticipated at the Examination in Public for the adopted Core Strategy that significant improvements to the highway network outside the Borough would be required to deliver the strategy to 2027. An outline transport strategy for the Ipswich Garden Suburb (previously known as the Northern Fringe) was being developed at that time with a focus on reducing traffic impacts; improving sustainable transport connections between the area and the town centre; and managing traffic on the local network. It was anticipated that the bulk of peak travel demand arising from the Ipswich Garden Suburb would be focused on the town centre, which would be easily accessible by non-car modes of transport. The location of the Ipswich Garden Suburb presents the opportunity for the development of sustainable means of access to Ipswich town centre in the form pedestrian, cycle and public transport routes, as well as rail connections between Westerfield and Ipswich railway stations. In addition, the masterplan for the Ipswich Garden Suburb has been designed to incorporate a range of key community services and facilities along with a well-connected internal street network, in order to retain travel demand within the development as far as possible.

An outline planning application has been submitted to Ipswich Borough Council for up to 815 homes on land south of the railway line and west of Westerfield Road. This is on part of the

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<sup>5</sup> AECOM, Ipswich Transport Model Assessment, (2009) paragraph 4.4, p. 11

<sup>6</sup> Department for Transport press release, 'Investment in Major Local Transport Schemes: Update' 4<sup>th</sup> February 2011, paragraph 3.

allocated site in the adopted Core Strategy. Transport modelling is currently being undertaken for the Ipswich Garden Suburb area by the applicants of the current planning application, with input from Suffolk County Council.

#### Census 2011 travel to work analysis

In December 2014, consultants WSP produced a report for Suffolk County Council, which analysed data from the 2011 Census in respect of travel to work in and around Ipswich. The population in the borough of Ipswich increased from 117,069 in 2001 to 133,384 in 2011. During the same period the number of households rose from 49,869 to 57,298, an increase of 7,429 or 14.9%. This growth in population and households was the largest of all local authorities in Suffolk during this period, and also saw a 20% increase in residents aged 16-64.

WSP noted the population per household fell from 2.35 people in 2001 to 2.33 people in 2011, whilst observing the significant increase in flatted accommodation in Ipswich during this period. Car ownership, whilst lower than the average in Suffolk, had increased from 1 car per household in 2001 to 1.06 cars per household in 2011 in Ipswich. WSP felt this was likely to be as a result of an increased need for Ipswich residents to commute outside the town to find work.

The percentage of jobs in Ipswich filled by Ipswich residents in 2011 was 55.7%, which has fallen from 57.5% in 2001, whilst the percentage of Ipswich residents who work in Ipswich has also fallen from 69.2% in 2001 to 62% in 2011.

The main destination of Ipswich residents remains the central area of the town, followed by other areas including Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate, Ransomes Europark and Ipswich Hospital. Key destinations also include Whitehouse, Ipswich southern fringe, Adastral Park in Martlesham, the Port of Felixstowe and Needham Market.

The main journey mode for Ipswich residents continues to be driving a car or a van, which has risen from 46.9% of journeys made in 2001 to 57.7% as shown in table 1. The percentage of journeys made as a passenger in a car has also risen from 6.6% to 7.3%.

A significant percentage of journeys are made on foot although this has decreased from 24.3% to 17.2%. The percentage of journeys made by bicycle has also fallen from 9.4% to 4.9%. The percentage of journeys made by bus, mini bus or coach has fallen slightly from 9.0% to 8.2%.

WSP conclude by noting the population of Ipswich working in supervisory and routine jobs increased by 17,950 over the ten year period between 2001 and 2011, whilst the availability of these jobs in Ipswich increased by 3,642. They note this likely explains the increase in car journeys made for work as shown in table 1.

Table 1: Journey to Work Mode Share of Ipswich Residents<sup>7</sup>

Mode	2001 Mode Share	2011 Mode Share	Change
Train	0.9%	2.5%	+ 1.6%
Bus, Mini Bus or Coach	9.0%	8.2%	- 0.8%
Motorcycle, Scooter or Moped	1.6%	1.2%	- 0.4%
Driving a Car or Van	46.9%	57.7%	+ 10.8%
Passenger in a Car or Van	6.6%	7.3%	+ 0.7%
Taxi or Minicab	0.5%	0.4%	- 0.1%
Bicycle	9.4%	4.9%	- 4.5%
On foot	24.3%	17.2%	- 7.1%
Other	0.7%	0.5%	- 0.2%

### Ipswich Transport Model Update

WSP have undertaken an update of the Ipswich Transport Model for the Core Strategy, with a draft report being prepared for Suffolk County Council in August 2015. This report identified 109 road junctions in the borough where capacities may be exceeded or be significantly congested by 2031. Of these a number of junctions are located within the Air Quality Management Areas.

The assumptions used to generate this traffic modelling included the growth proposed by new development in the borough but also a significant amount of background growth which is expected to occur anyway. It should also be made clear that the model does not include any of the proposed traffic mitigation measures such as sustainable transport measures. Furthermore, the traffic model has provided only interim results which are due to be revised in the near future.

Mitigation measures are identified in the adopted Core Strategy and the emerging Ipswich Local Plan, and the sustainability appraisal recommends that all future planning applications continue to thoroughly assess the cumulative effects of traffic and emissions and propose robust mitigation in line with other policies within the Core Strategy and the Ipswich Garden Suburb supplementary planning document.

<sup>7</sup> WSP, Ipswich Census Data Trend Analysis, 2014/15, percentages total 99.9% likely due to rounding