



Climate Action briefing on the Leicester Transport Plan consultation from a climate perspective. Summer 2021.

This Transport consultation closes on 17th September.

Leicester City Council is consulting on a new Leicester Transport Plan which sets out the Council's transport vision and priorities for the city to 2036. They are also exploring the potential for a workplace parking levy which could help to fund a better bus service.

Since the city (along with the rest of the UK and world) should be carbon neutral within the time frame of this transport plan, and a quarter of Leicester's carbon emissions are from transport, this plan is important. Climate Action believes it represents a real shift towards prioritising public transport and walking and cycling over private car use. We think the council will receive considerable opposition on this, and we want to support and strengthen this shift.

Please take some time to respond to this consultation if you live, work or come into the city regularly.

Use your own words – one paragraph written by you is given far more weight than a template letter used by many people.

If you are short on time why not just choose one thing from each of the 3 categories below (support, missing areas and strengthen) to comment on?

If you don't want to use the council's online consultation survey to respond, then send your response to consultations@leicester.gov.uk and make it clear in the subject line that it is your response to the Leicester Transport Plan 2021-2036 consultation.

Make sure you include your name, address and postcode (a city postcode is preferable if you live or work in the city) with your consultation response.

You can find the consultation here:
<https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/communications/ltp4/>

You can find the actual Transport Plan which is being consulted on here:
https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/communications/ltp4/supporting_documents/Leicester%20Transport%20Plan.pdf

Here are the key points Climate Action suggests making in our consultation responses.

Support.

We strongly support the following things in the Transport Plan:

- a transport hierarchy which prioritises public transport and walking and cycling over car use – especially as it will increase bidding for funds which support sustainable transport
- substantially improved and cheaper bus services across the city and linked to the County
- a Workplace Parking Levy to help fund improvements to the bus services
- the management of car use, including junction management, revised parking charges and availability, and road reallocation
- The improvement and development of walking, cycling and bus corridors across the city.

Missing areas.

There are some key things missing in this plan which we would like to see in the final Plan:

- There should be a carbon budget for transport which all council policies and actions take into account and work with.
- Electric Vehicle charging needs to be tied to renewable electricity generation wherever possible. Specifically:
 - wind turbines and solar should be put in at the existing and planned Park and Rides
 - solar arrays should be associated with public charging points across the city
 - solar generation should be expected and supported when allocating grants for electric vehicles.
- Freight is barely mentioned even though it makes up a large proportion of the traffic and pollution on our roads.
 - The city needs last mile freight hubs where freight is switched to electric vehicles for delivery within the city, along with incentives for people and businesses to use them.
 - There should be support for cargo bike deliveries, including incentives to get businesses to use them.
 - Local delivery hubs are needed. They should be near schools and shops which people can walk to in order to collect deliveries. This would improve community connection and increase exercise levels as well as reducing the cars and vans and pollution on the roads.
 - The planned train station remodelling should include space for cargo bikes, parcel delivery and a future last mile freight hub.
- The council should be explicitly working towards making the city centre car free except for people with disabilities and deliveries. Setting a date for this will help people to plan for it.
- A citywide 20mph speed limit should be introduced in order to support walking and cycling, reduce fatal road accidents (20mph has a 1.5% chance of injuries being fatal while 30mph has an 8% chance of fatality in the case of injury), and decrease air pollution. The current constant changes between streets is confusing, hard to enforce and does not support cycling. A consistent city-wide speed limit of 20mph would also support smoother driving which can give a third reduction in carbon emissions over harsh braking and accelerating.
- School streets (closing roads outside schools to cars at the start and end of the school day) should be established for all schools in the City. This would support children and parents to walk and cycle in the long as well as short term as well as reducing carbon emissions and air pollution in schools.

Stronger.

There are also some areas in this Transport Plan which need to be much stronger:

- The specific targets for bus, walking and cycling need to be much higher – and a target for reducing private car use is also needed. At their current levels they will not begin to achieve the stated goal of carbon neutral by 2030.
- There needs to be a real network of bus services across the city – along with London underground style maps to make it useable. The plan's emphasis on radial corridors leaves an urgent need for orbital services so that people do not have to spend time, carbon and money going in and out rather than a shorter distance around.
- A real network of safe, segregated cycle and walk-ways across the city is also needed. The radial corridors and neighbourhood links being planned are a good start but joined up networks are needed. This means road space needs to be reallocated to make a real network of cycle and walking routes. One-way systems and low traffic neighbourhoods should be used to make this happen. There is a lot of evidence now that reducing road space for cars also reduces car use.
- The Plan says the council is using an Enhanced Partnership Scheme (EPS) to work with the bus companies, but it also says they will consider applying for a bus franchise (which would give them control over routes and fares) if it is not successful. We want the plan to say what must be achieved by the EPS, when these achievements are needed by, and a commitment to apply for a bus franchise at this point if the requirements aren't met.