

Central Lincolnshire Policy S48 Walking and Cycling Evidence Report

Formerly Policy S47

March 2022



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan is being updated since the first Local Plan for Central Lincolnshire, an area covering the districts of City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey, was adopted in April 2017.
- 1.2. This Evidence Report (which is one of a collection) provides background information and justification for Policy S48, which relates to the provision of facilities and infrastructure to support and encourage walking and cycling.

2. Policy Context

National Policy and Guidance

- 2.1. Since the Central Lincolnshire Plan was adopted the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in July 2018 with subsequent additional changes being published in February 2019 and a further update in July 2021.

- 2.2. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF explains that:

“The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

- 2.3. Paragraph 8 goes on to state that:

“Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – *to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- b) **a social objective** – *to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and...”*

- 2.4. Chapter 8 relates to promoting healthy and safe communities. Paragraph 92 states that:

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

- a) *promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;*

- b) *are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and*
- c) *enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.*

2.5. Chapter 9 relates to promoting sustainable transport, Paragraph 104 states that:

“Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:

- a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;*
- b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;*
- c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;*
- d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and*
- e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places.”*

2.6. Paragraph 105 states:

“The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.”

2.7. Paragraph 106 goes on to state:

“Planning policies should:

- a) support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;*
- b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;*
- c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;*

d) provide for high attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks and supporting facilities such as cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans);...

- 2.8. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first introduced in 2014 which offers 'live' government guidance. The PPG provides guidance to help in the implementation of policy in the NPPF.
- 2.9. The PPG includes two separate sections relevant to Policy S48: Walking and Cycling. These sections are 'Transport evidence bases in plan making and decision taking' and 'Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements'.

Local Policy

- 2.10. The adopted Local Plan includes Policy LP13: Accessibility and Transport which seeks to ensure that accessibility and transport issues are taken into account in new developments, making specific reference to walking and cycling. The policy has also been informed by the 4th Lincolnshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and its objectives for transport in Lincolnshire for the period 2013/14 to 2022-23.
- 2.11. The Local Transport Plan sets out its objectives for transport in Lincolnshire. The following are particularly relevant to walking and cycling:
- improve access to employment and key services by widening travel choices, especially for those without access to a car;
 - make travel for all modes safer and, in particular, reduce the number and severity of road casualties;
 - maintain the transport system to standards which allow safe and efficient movement of people and goods;
 - improve the quality of public spaces for residents, workers and visitors by creating a safe, attractive and accessible environment;
 - improve the quality of life and health of residents and visitors by encouraging active travel and tackling air quality and noise problems;

3. Context and Evidence

- 3.1. Walking and cycling can have wide ranging beneficial effects, from reducing congestion, and pollution from exhaust emissions, to contributing to the improved health and physical fitness of the population. Walking and cycling can also play an important role in multi-modal journeys in combination with other sustainable travel modes, such as bus and rail services.
- 3.2. During the LTP3 and early LTP4 period considerable work was undertaken through a number of sustainable travel initiatives that sought to improve walking and cycling infrastructure as well as improved public transport to achieve modal shift. Significant work was also undertaken with schools to promote walking and cycling to and from schools, and to help provide facilities such as cycle parking, and in some cases improved routes to schools.
- 3.3. It is important that the improvements in the number of people choosing to travel by foot or bicycle, especially for short journeys, continues. The Lincoln Transport Strategy (LTS) notes that walking trips are in decline, and that there are further improvements that could

be made to the cycle network within the city. The LTS includes objectives to ‘rebalance movement towards walking and cycling and multi occupancy, shared mobility and passenger transport’, and to ‘seek to enhance the health and wellbeing of communities through improved air quality, increased physical activity and safety’. The Transport Strategies for Gainsborough and Sleaford also highlight deficiencies in the connectivity of cycle networks and place a focus on walking and cycling for short journeys.

4. Issues and Options Consultation

4.1. Within the adopted Local Plan, walking and cycling was included within LP13: Accessibility and Transport. The Issues and Options Consultation identified this existing policy, LP13: Accessibility and Transport as a policy not intended to be changed. A very small number of comments were received on this proposal not to change the policy, which are summarised below.

- The transport plan is not fit for purpose given how little has been done to ensure walking, cycling and public transport.
- As a minimum this policy will need to be reviewed in light of parking standards being introduced.
- Part d of the policy should be strengthened for electric charging facilities.
- More should be done in this policy to address walking and cycling provision in new development.

5. Regulation 18 Consultation

5.1. A Consultation Draft of the Local Plan was published for consultation between 30 June and 24 August 2021. During this eight week consultation comments were received on the plan, the policies within the plan, and supporting information and evidence.

5.2. A number of comments were received in relation to this policy. They have been summarised as follows:

- Various comments broadly supporting the policy.
- Various comments relating to fragmented nature of existing provision
- Various comments suggesting the policy needs substantial or significant rewording, especially in relation to including equestrian users, connectivity with and between existing routes and specific reference to Public Rights of Way network.

5.3. No significant changes have been made to the policy wording in response to comments made during the consultation. It is considered that, overall, the policy as written adequately addresses the points made. The opening paragraph has been amended slightly to include additional text, and now reads “...existing routes and public rights of way where opportunities...”

5.4. Some changes have also been made to the supporting text in the interests of clarity. Paragraph 8.3.2 has been amended to read “...and achieve modal shift in the LN6...”. Paragraph 8.3.7 has also been amended slightly with additional text, and now reads “...connecting will into the existing public rights of way network...” to reflect the additional text included within the policy.

6. Proposed Approach in Draft Local Plan

- 6.1. The Draft Local Plan includes a new policy relating specifically to walking and cycling. This policy seeks to ensure that walking and cycling related issues are taken into account in the planning process and that appropriate walking and cycling infrastructure is provided.
- 6.2. The inclusion of a specific policy in relation to walking and cycling will also help to deliver objectives of the Local Transport Plan and the Transport Strategies for Lincoln, Gainsborough and Sleaford.

7. Reasonable Alternative Options

- 7.1. The following alternative options have been considered for this policy (option 1 being the preferred option).
- 7.2. Option 2: To have no local policy and rely on national policy. This option was discounted as it would not provide certainty around potential sustainability impacts as it would not provide any locally specific guidance.
- 7.3. Option 3: No specific policy but incorporate walking and cycling infrastructure requirements in site allocation policies. This option was discounted as although it would have some clear positive effects, these would be limited to only the largest of developments, and therefore would not provide as great a level of benefit as the preferred option.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1. This Evidence Report demonstrates the rationale for the proposed policy as contained in the Proposed Submission Draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. This helps bring together relevant evidence that has informed this policy and how we have responded to comments received during the plan making process, as well as how the latest evidence and national guidance has been taken into account.