Question on objective / "outcome" D

Why don't you feel confident that the policies within the proposed Local Transport Plan 4 will **protect and enhance Hampshire's natural and historic environments, resulting in an overall net environmental gain?**

WinACC draft response:

There is little hint of the practical steps that HCC will take and no convincing specific analysis of what needs to be addressed. This theoretical commitment needs more detailed strategic proposals if it is not to be dismissed as merely sentimental. Some reference to the elements of biodiversity specifically under threat, proposals for actively increasing biodiversity rather than merely minimising damage, and an outline programme for restoring/improving historic environments from transport-based degradation would help give these aspirations more credibility.

There is a need for a specific set of annual targets and a convincing approach to monitoring with annual targets *677 characters / 1000*

Relevant extracts from the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal

- Objective D highlights the importance of respecting and protecting the wider natural and historical environments. This is particularly important given the relatively low proportion of the country is afforded designation; the Objective's wording ensures that respect and scope of protection is not limited to these areas.
- Objectives C and D acknowledge that the Plan should go further than simply protecting and maintaining and that transport represents opportunities for gain over the long term.
- It is worth noting that the transport system offers opportunities not just to support, but to improve the environmental and economy and social environment and this is not currently captured. Use of the word 'create' is misleading; some places are already high quality, use of the word 'support' does not sufficiently capture the role transport can play in providing opportunities to betterment where they may not have otherwise occurred.

Relevant extracts from the Draft LTP4

Success would mean (p 39)

- A net gain in biodiversity generally (i.e. a greater variety of plants and animals), and more green infrastructure for walking and cycling.
- No net degradation of other aspects of the natural and historic environment, moving towards an overall net environmental gain by 2050.
- A transport network that promotes access to the countryside for residents and visitors from all walks of life, whilst also preserving and protecting our natural and historic environment.

(P 73) Implementation of Policy C9 will be supported by:

- reducing the need to travel and reducing dependency on the private car (see various Core and Theme Policies), in order to improve air quality and reduce noise disturbance from transport;
- assessing schemes to understand their carbon impact and resilience to the effects of climate change (see Core Policy C4);

- using materials and processes with a lower carbon footprint and resilient to the effects of climate
- change (see Asset Management, Policy AM1);
- increased use of sustainable products and processes, and recycled materials (to reduce waste) (see Asset Management Policy, AM1);
- ensuring all LTP4 schemes are assessed from the early stages of development to understand any potential environmental impacts, and where possible, avoid or mitigate any negative impacts identified and enhance any positive impacts;
- ensuring Environmental Impact Assessments and Habitat Regulations Assessments are undertaken for all new transport infrastructure schemes requiring planning permission, and act on their findings;
- requiring all new infrastructure schemes involving works outside of the existing carriageway to deliver a net gain in biodiversity (with a target of 10% or greater across the whole programme)

We will:

a) require an overall **net gain** in biodiversity as a result of new transport infrastructure schemes;
b) aim for an **overall net environmental gain** by 2050 (whereby the benefits of transport schemes balance out the negatives);
c) seek to **minimise and mitigate** the adverse impacts of traffic and travel on our natural and built environment - look for opportunities to deliver environmental enhancements through new or upgraded infrastructure schemes,maintenance and operational procedures.

(P 100) Policy RT1 – Maintaining accessibility in rural areas, and providing realistic alternatives to reduce dependency on the private car

We will:

a) seek to **improve access** to employment, services, community facilities, and other
b) opportunities in rural areas;
c) support **new technologies** which enable **innovative sustainable transport solutions**
d) **in rural areas** (see also Section 7.2, Public
e) Transport, Policy PT3, and Section 7.3, Future
f) Mobility, Policy FM1);
g) enable local communities to deliver **community-led place and transport improvements**, where there is funding to do so;
h) **work with transport providers** (bus, rail, taxi, community transport operators and the voluntary sector) to improve transport services in rural areas;
i) encourage the **providers of public services** (e.g. health, education, libraries, etc.) to bring services to rural areas, or to co-locate transport and local services at 'mobility hubs', to reduce the need to travel into urban areas;
j) f) support the roll out of **superfast/gigabit broadband** in rural areas to support home working and access to online services, retail and social opportunities, and reduce the need to travel.

(P 103) Policy RT2 – Sustainable access to the countryside

We will:

a) work with others to ensure that residents and visitors can **access and enjoy the countryside** (including key visitor attractions), where suitable funding can be identified and where schemes do not adversely impact highly sensitive environments;
b) seek to improve the accessibility and connectivity of the Rights of Way network;
c) support and seek opportunities for leisure and commuter walking and cycling in rural areas, where external funding can be identified;
d) base our decisions regarding investment in rural walking and cycling infrastructure on **Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans**, and the **Countryside Access**
e) **Improvement Plan** and affiliated user groups, to focus on those routes that will provide the most benefit to residents, visitors and the local economy.