

# Appendix 1

## Transport Working Party 26<sup>th</sup> April 2006

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### 1.0 REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

- 1.1 A new Regional Transport Strategy has been produced in draft by the North West Regional Assembly. It forms an integral part of a new Regional Spatial Strategy which is the proposed framework for the physical development of the region over the next 15-20 years. This is a key, statutory document which has a major influence on investment in transportation infrastructure and facilities at all levels. It is prepared for submission to the Secretary of State (DPM) who will ultimately decide on the final form for adoption later this year. The draft is now out to formal consultation until 12<sup>th</sup> June and it is intended to report the Working Party's recommendations to the Executive as part of an overall Council response in due course.
- 1.2 The new RSS aims to contribute to a "step change in the quality and impact of development and investment decisions...(by delivering) sustainable outcomes. It steers development to the most sustainable locations within the region's cities, towns and other settlements – making most use of existing and planned transport networks to ensure that any increases in journeys to work, pollution and congestion are manageable." Its fundamental approach to transportation is to make better use of existing infrastructure and facilities whilst reducing the need to travel. There is little new in the Table 10 lists of transport schemes with any benefit to West Cumbria and in such a policy context it will be very difficult to make the case for infrastructure improvements to assist regeneration here.
- 1.3 The difficulty is compounded by the concentration of most development in the cities and regional towns. In Cumbria, Carlisle and Barrow are to be regarded as the principal locations for investment and the previous RSS designation of West Cumbria as a "Priority Area for Regeneration" is no longer included (conforming to the NWDA's new Regional Economic Strategy's approach). However, there is a short section on the sub-region of Cumbria and North Lancashire which via Policies CNL1 and 2 calls for "enhancing economic and social regeneration within West Cumbria through developing the roles of the existing centres" – Whitehaven and Cleator Moor are mentioned (but not Millom or Egremont). The West Cumbria Strategic Forum's sub-regional masterplan is identified as an important means of achieving this, specifically noting that it will "require investment in increased employment opportunities *and the related*

*transport infrastructure*". This latter point, made in para 15.7 of the draft document, is our main opportunity to link infrastructure improvements to post-nuclear economic restructuring and regeneration.

1.4 The main section on transport is Chapter 10 which is reproduced here as Appendix 1 (together with related appendices from the document itself) to assist debate at the Working Party's meeting. The main policy areas are as follows:

- Public Transport Framework – maintaining and improving links; integration between modes; enhanced accessibility through the settlement hierarchy, particularly links to locations providing employment, education or training opportunities from areas of need
- Functional Road Hierarchy – improving safety/security; reducing congestion; emphasis on making best use of existing infrastructure and reducing car trips and pollution (22% of the region's CO<sup>2</sup> emissions are road traffic-related according to the document). The A595 as far as Calderbridge is the only part of the Functional Road Hierarchy in Copeland
- Airports
- Ports
- Framework for Management of Freight Transport – makes right noises about lorry possible restrictions modal shift to rail, waterways and coastal shipping but only the Kingsmoor site at Carlisle is identified as a specific contribution in Cumbria
- Parking – Confirmation of maximum parking standards (previously minimum requirements) as a disincentive to car use; use of travel plans; greater on-street parking controls/enforcement; more secure bicycle and motorcycle parking facilities; more Park and Ride facilities
- Framework for Cycling and Walking – develop integrated networks via action plans; ensure opportunities to enhance facilities through development are taken
- **Regional Priorities for Transport Investment and Management** – where one might expect to see how and where the policies are to be delivered. Unfortunately there is little of importance for West Cumbria to report:

The A595 Parton-Lillyhall Improvement is included as a £26.6m committed scheme for a 2006/7 start

There are also committed schemes on the A74T (M-way upgrade), A66T (Temple Sowerby) and Carlisle N. Development Route which will benefit the Borough to some degree

Otherwise there is very little to be encouraged about:

An A66T improvement between Penrith and Scotch corner is identified as a "second priority for investigation" post 2021 along with a Carlisle Southern Relief Road.

For some reason a West Cumbria scheme is included in the investigation list for early work (“post 2006”) for cycleway network works but no description/explanation is given.

Improved rail access to the Lake District is included (“post 2021”) but only involving Windermere.

Overall, the indication is that the Regional Assembly is proposing even less than the previous report on Access to West Cumbria and Furness which was the subject of universal condemnation locally.

### 1.5 **Recommendations:**

- That the Assembly/Secretary of State be requested to give greater weight to the economic and social regeneration of West Cumbria as a **Regional Priority**.
- That a package of infrastructure improvements be agreed as part of the Sub-regional Masterplan, directly related to the Regeneration Strategy and particularly focussing on the need to improve access to and within West Cumbria and that the Assembly/Secretary of State be requested to make provision within RSS to accommodate such a package.
- That greater weight is given to the potential of tourism in developing the Cumbrian Coastal Railway and that this be included with reference to a new modal interchange facility adjoining Whitehaven station in Table 10.2
- That Policy CNL1 be amended to include reference to Egremont and Millom.