



**Report of the New Generation Transport Team (City Development)**

**Inner North West Area Committee**

**Date: 10 December 2009**

**Subject: New Generation Transport (NGT) Scheme: Current Position and Public Consultation Results**

<p><b>Electoral Wards Affected:</b> Hyde Park &amp; Woodhouse Headingley Weetwood</p> <p>Plus various others throughout the City</p>	<p><b>Specific Implications For:</b></p> <p>Ethnic minorities <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Women <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disabled people <input type="checkbox" value="Y"/></p>
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Council Function

Delegated Executive Function available for Call In

Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report

**Executive Summary**

The report outlines progress on the development of the New Generation Transport scheme and provides Members with feedback from the summer consultation process and recent Major Scheme Business Case submission. The next stage and proposed timeframe for submission of the Transport and Works Act Order are outlined.

**1.0 Purpose Of This Report**

- To provide an update on NGT progress since the previous committee attended (18 June 2009)
- To provide a timeline / anticipated forward programme for the scheme
- To provide a summary of key headlines from the Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC) submitted to the Department for Transport on 30 October 2009
- To report back the results of the summer formal consultation and ongoing discussions / consultation
- To outline the current approach to key issues raised by Members and the public during the consultation process
- To outline the Transport and Works Act Order procedure including the Request for Information process

## 2.0 Background Information

Metro and Leeds City Council are working in partnership to develop a bus-based rapid transit system for Leeds known as New Generation Transport (NGT). The project management board consists of senior officers from both organisations. The NGT scheme represents a major investment in the City of Leeds aimed at providing a high quality transport system to support the ongoing growth of Leeds' economy, to improve the local environment and relieve congestion. It aims, along with other transport and public transport measures, to provide a step change in the way public transport operates within the City. The preferred option is for the scheme to operate using electric trolleybuses running on rubber tyres and powered from overhead wires.

£250 million has been allocated to the scheme in the Regional Funding Allocation. This figure, supplemented by the required 10% local contribution will allow for the initial development of a core 3 line network at an overall cost in the order of £280 million. The local contribution (and any overrun cost) is a joint liability between Metro and Leeds City Council. The Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC) outlines how this local contribution will be accounted for:

- Provision of Leeds City Council & Metro owned land – approx £13m
- Allowance for development costs (including some incurred from the predecessor Supertram scheme) – approx £14.5m

The attached plan shows the proposed routes being developed which incorporate a central loop around the City Centre and the three radial routes:

- North Leeds through Headingley along the A660 to a park and ride site at Bodington
- South Leeds through Hunslet to a Park and Ride site at Stourton
- East Leeds to St James's Hospital

There is also scope for future extensions and alignments to the Easel and Aire Valley areas as well as west Leeds, although these do not form part of the current funding allocation and design work.

The extension of NGT to Holt Park has always been a key aspiration of the Project Team, however the Regional Funding Allocation was awarded on the basis that the North Route finished at the P&R at Bodington. The operational benefits to NGT and the ability to link to an important local centre and residential area forming a 'destination' coupled with the relatively straightforward infrastructure required mean the extension makes strategic and economic sense.

The extension has been included within the MSBC as a sensitivity test and the modelling shows that with the extension in place the Cost Benefit Ratio increases from 2.6:1 to 2.7:1 (see section below on the MSBC). Powers are likely to be sought at the Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO) stage to construct and operate the extension. The current funding does not allow for the £11m costs associated with the extension but should certain high risk costs reduce elsewhere on the network then it may be possible to integrate it into the northern route from the start.

### **3.0 Major Scheme Business Case (MSBC)**

This document is the application to Department for Transport (DfT) for NGT Programme Entry status and was formally submitted on 30 October 2009. The Leeds City Council Executive Board approved a draft MSBC document at their meeting on 14 October 2009, confirming the Council's commitment to the scheme and requirements for the local contribution towards the total scheme cost.

Programme Entry is the next step in the process for confirming funding for NGT which allows the Promoters to go forward to seek approval for the required powers to construct and operate the system. The Promoters have confirmed through this submission that they will fund the £27m local contribution. Programme Entry status is an indication that the Government regards the NGT proposals as value for money and are minded to provide the Regional major scheme funding allocation of £250m. The DfT has indicated that given the tight scheme programme it will endeavour to approve Programme Entry (if minded to do so), by the end of January 2010. The DfT has indicated that this quick turn-around should be achievable as a result of the detailed consultation and input that has taken place between the Promoters and DfT prior to MSBC submission.

The document fulfils DfT's requirements for a MSBC submission. It sets out NGT's:

- Strategic Case
- Value for Money Case
- Delivery Case
- Commercial Case
- Financial Case

The Strategic Case sets out the scheme context and includes a description of the problems and issues which NGT will help to resolve. It sets out the scheme objectives and describes how the Preferred Trolleybus Option was developed. The Strategic Case demonstrates that NGT will make a strong contribution to meeting national, regional and local policy objectives.

The Value for Money Case demonstrates the economic worth of the project. This includes a Cost Benefit Analysis which shows that with a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 2.6:1 the scheme represents strong value for money and will deliver a high level of benefit against the investment made. The scheme meets the Government's criteria for funding support.

The document concludes with a summary of the appraised NGT options outlining the many benefits of NGT and demonstrating the strong contribution that it will make to the future transport network in Leeds. It highlights the positive impact the scheme will have on encouraging modal shift and more sustainable travel, whilst helping to maximise the Leeds economy by enhancing its competitive position and facilitating future employment and population growth. Finally, the section highlights the contribution NGT will make to improving accessibility from some of the more deprived areas of Leeds to enable improved access to opportunities and an improved quality of life.

The costs input into the Business Case are based on the 'Design Freeze 2' consultation plans dating from July 09. However, the initial Limits of Deviation (extent of land required for works) for the Transport and Works Order submission have been drawn to give flexibility to

the ongoing design modifications which will continue to be amended and refined up until and beyond the Transport and Works Act Order application next year.

#### **4.0 Transport and Works Act Order (TWAO)**

The next stage in the process of securing powers, approval and full funding for the NGT scheme is the Transport and Works Act Order (1992) application. This package of plans and reports, in essence is similar to a large planning application, is submitted to the Local Planning Authority but then 'called in' by the Secretary of State.

The TWAO seeks to obtain the powers required to:

- compulsorily purchase land
- designate roads
- operate a trolleybus system
- procure the trolleybus vehicles and operate them
- deliver enforcement strategies including Traffic Regulation Orders and cameras
- remove trees and relocate utilities
- implement mitigation measures (to offset the negative impacts of the scheme)

In conjunction with the TWAO process the Promoters will be seeking:

- deemed planning consent for the whole scheme
- approval of the required Conservation Area and Listed Building applications

The deemed planning consent is comparable to an Outline planning consent with the principle of the extent of works (limits of deviation) approved, along with indicative proposals but with the very detailed measures conditioned. The responsibility of discharging these conditions then lies with the Local Planning Authority.

The TWAO package will contain among other items:

- formal request for the S.90 direction (deemed consent)
- consultation report
- proposed planning conditions
- various plans at different scales and detail
- Design Statement
- Transport Assessment
- full Environmental Statement including Sustainability Appraisal
- Planning Statement

The application will result in local advertisement, local notices and a 42 day period for members of the public and other interested parties to inspect the application and make representations to the Secretary of State, with the probability that these will then be referred to a public local inquiry. All documents will be made available to view at Leeds City Council / Metro offices with a version accessible on-line.

Prior to the TWAO submission further approval will be sought from the Leeds City Council Executive Board, following on from the current consultation with Ward Members and the public including the local Area Committees.

The current anticipated TWAO timetable is as follows:

- June 2010 – TWAO application made
- June to August 2010 – formal objection period
- January-February 2011 – Public Inquiry
- December 2011 – Secretary of State decision

Work has been ongoing through the TWA Order Working Group in developing the extent of the TWA Order submission plans and the limits of deviation. It has been assumed by the group that the limits will remain quite broad until the Promoters are happy that all works to be undertaken by the Project are contained within the agreed limits. The consequences of broad limits however mean that the number of affected parties remains quite large. To draw in the limits at this stage would restrict ongoing design and restrict opportunity to make amendments in response to negotiations and discussions with potential objectors.

This 'Land Referencing' exercise is now entering the next critical stage. Ardent Property Consultants have been appointed by the Project Team to undertake land referencing in order to assist in developing the extent of the Order Limits, identify affected parties and input into the NGT Consultation / Objection Management strategy.

The TWAO 'Rules' require that a 'Book of Reference' must be submitted as part of the application. The Book is required to contain many details including the names of all owners, lessees, tenants or occupiers impacted by the scheme. In order to be able to identify all the parties affected and those who have to be served with notices of the TWAO application it will be necessary to commence carrying out this Request for Information exercise from mid December onwards.

In the first instance, the intention is to send out letters to all affected parties advising them that they could be affected by the scheme, and inviting them to contact the appointed consultants. If no response is received a statutory Request for Information will be served which gives the respondent 21 days to reply.

The initial letter will outline the purpose of the request and also include a 'pack' of information (including who to contact if there are concerns and queries, FAQ, etc) together with an offer of a site visit and explanation of the proposals.

Ward Members will be notified before any RFI's are issued in their Ward.

## **6.0 Public Engagement on the proposed scheme**

A two-stage approach to public engagement on the NGT project has been implemented. The first stage in late 2008 concentrated on high level issues. A more detailed consultation on specific scheme proposals ran for 12 weeks starting on 8<sup>th</sup> June this year.

The initial period of NGT public engagement commenced with a series of public exhibitions held jointly with the Transport for Leeds project in Leeds City Centre in November 2008. The purpose of these exhibitions was to raise awareness of the emerging NGT proposals and to

seek feedback from the public on certain key attributes of the scheme. The exhibitions were extremely well attended with over 1,000 people visiting over a four day period.

An NGT project website was also launched in November 2008 to provide general information about the project and to provide an online facility for people to complete the NGT questionnaire. The NGT website can be found at [www.ngtmetro.com](http://www.ngtmetro.com). This website is kept up-to-date with project progress, key reports and future milestones including full reports from both consultations periods.

The summer 2009 consultation consisted of six public exhibitions each lasting two to four days across Leeds including evenings and Saturdays with nearly 1400 people attending. Information was also available on the internet, in libraries, to local groups and distributed to members of the public on-street. Nearly 19,000 consultation packs were distributed to the public and feedback was sought via a questionnaire which over 2,500 people completed. The questionnaire responses showed a positive reaction to the proposals and 77% of all respondents supported/strongly supported them. The main reasons for such support related to:

- Reduced car use/congestion;
- Environmental reasons;
- Provision of reliable/ quick/ good quality, modern public transport; and
- Positive impact of the scheme on Leeds.

A similar level of support was shown for the use of trolleybuses, which were primarily supported due to environmental reasons. Over 70% of all respondents supported/strongly supported the introduction of Park & Ride sites at the end of the North and South routes; such support was even higher amongst car owners. The feedback questionnaire asked about potential use of NGT and 88% of those living within a ten minute walk of one of the routes said they would consider using it. 42% of car owners responding said they would consider using one of the Park & Rides.

A number of comments and suggestions were received in relation to the NGT proposals. Common themes from all responses included the following:

- A desire for more NGT routes and wider coverage across Leeds;
- The need for low fares to encourage use;
- The need for competitive Park & Ride pricing to encourage car drivers;
- Concern about how NGT would integrate with existing bus services – some feel it is not necessary if existing services are improved; and
- The impact of the scheme on traffic, with some concerns that NGT would create additional congestion.

The 10 most frequently made comments about the North Route were (further details can be found in the consultation report):

- Welcome idea (203 comments)
- Alternative / additional routes needed (156 comments)
- Route currently congested (112)
- Other concern – various (106)
- Favour preferred option – NGT on bypass section (93)

- Suggestion about scheme (73)
- Other comment about new link road (56)
- Favour alternative option – road bypass and public transport to front (54)
- Would not reduce congestion (48)
- Need to segregate from traffic (45)

Cycling issues were raised by 27 people commenting on the North Route.

## **5.0 The North Route**

The current NGT proposals follow an alignment similar to that of the Supertram scheme between the City Centre and a park and ride site at Bodington. The proposed route leaves the City Centre Loop at the junction of Park Row with the Headrow heading up Cookridge Street. It then travels through Millennium Square and onto Woodhouse Lane with a stop in front of the Rose Bowl development. The route then follows the A660 all the way to Bodington with a NGT bypass around Headingley Centre.

The potential extension to Holt Park will turn off Otley Road opposite the Bodington P&R and run up Otley Old Road before turning onto Holtdale Approach towards the District Centre. The route assumed and costed within the MSBC then turns onto Holt Crescent with a terminus in front of Asda adjacent to the car park (see attached plan).

The key policy and technical issues as well as those raised by Members and the public during the recent public consultation are as follows:

- Impacts on cyclists and pedestrians particularly on Headingley Hill section
- Car parking – overspill from the Park & Ride site and informal P&R close to other stops
- Environmental impact – loss of mature trees and grass verge areas (both on and off the highway) and increase in highway infrastructure
- Heritage and townscape impact in Conservations Areas and on Listed Buildings including the impact of overhead line equipment (OLE), demolition of buildings and setting back of stone walls
- Potential impact / land take at Woodhouse Moor
- Impacts on bus services north of the Ring Road
- Lack of demand management to discourage car use
- Restrictions in turning movements and road closures
- Safety for the visually impaired
- Benefits of scheme
- Extension to Holt Park

### **Cycling and Pedestrians**

The NGT scheme across the network will have numerous benefits for cyclists and pedestrians including lengths of new bus / NGT / cycle lanes, new off highway cycle and pedestrian routes and a significant number of new controlled pedestrian crossing points. There are, however, constrained locations where the desirable standards simply cannot be met – at these points there are critical decisions still to be made and a balance to be achieved.

The proposed full signalisation of the Lawnswood Roundabout will make it safer and more attractive for cyclists with the opportunity to provide Toucan crossings on the arms for less experienced cyclists. The off-highway alignment to the rear of the Arndale Centre in Headingley being provided for NGT (often referred to as the Headingley bypass), incorporates a cycleway segregated from all vehicles, thus allowing through cyclists to avoid the busy central Headingley section and associated accident black spots. Additional cycle lanes are being considered on the southbound approach to Hyde Park Corner from the point where they currently stop. The new bus and NGT lanes across the NGT network are being designed to be wide enough to comfortably accommodate cyclists and buses wherever this is practical.

It is accepted, however, that there is a potential issue on a section approximately 500 / 600m in length between the southern end of the bypass and the widening works at Hyde Park Corner ('Headingley Hill' section). The implementation of an outbound NGT lane at this location is vital to the scheme, without which journey time delays and unreliability would significantly increase seriously impacting on the scheme objectives and economic case. The heritage and environmental constraints are many in this narrow section and the NGT proposals are seeking to balance these conflicting demands. This section is currently being assessed in some detail looking at combinations of lane widths and more localised widening where achievable however it will not be possible to maintain continuous cycle lanes. We will provide a verbal update of the outcome of this work at the meeting.

An independent review of cycle facilities has recently been undertaken by the Leeds City Council Senior Cycling Officer and a series of workshops have been set up with representatives of the Leeds Cycling Consultation Forum to work through the design issues.

### **Car Parking**

It is very difficult to predict how NGT might impact on parking across the network. Currently modelling shows a demand for up to 800 spaces at the Bodington Park & Ride site. It is expected that some of the existing demand for informal park and ride associated with commuter and University staff and students will be absorbed by this facility, though we cannot guarantee that it will resolve the problem altogether. While this aspect of the scheme will be looked at as part of the Transport Assessment, it would be premature for NGT to fund measures or introduce parking controls that inconvenience local residents and businesses that may not ultimately be necessary.

Consideration will need to be given to identifying the most appropriate means for resolving post implementation problems, including parking, should they arise as a result of the NGT scheme.

### **Mitigation and Enhancement**

The environmental impact of the NGT scheme is currently being assessed for the Environmental Statement, the outcome of which will determine the mitigation works required. The project's Urban Design and Landscape consultants are producing a Design Statement which will be classified as an Informal Planning Statement carrying material weight at the planning stage. This document will build on the extensive work undertaken for the Supertram scheme for which a Design Standards Guide was produced. The guide will

outline principles of the scheme, produce contextual plans including mitigation and landscaping details and where impacts are the greatest will provide detailed mitigation plans.

It must be noted that 90% of the scheme is being funded by the Department for Transport, who have made it clear that while the NGT impacts are to be mitigated against, they cannot be used to resolve existing problems and shortfalls that exist unless a clear benefit to NGT can be shown. Obviously the Conservation Area status of much of Headingley and Weetwood does have an important bearing on the impacts the NGT will have and the consequent required mitigation works to be included in the scheme design.

In a similar way to the previous scheme, deemed planning consent and the individual Listed Building and Conservation Area consents are required. These will incorporate a series of stringent planning conditions relating to replacement walls, protection of remaining trees, replacement trees, road and footway surfacing and these conditions attached to the consents will need to be discharged by the Planning Authority prior to work commencing. The Design Statement will include specific measures to mitigate impacts within Conservation Areas.

### **Woodhouse Moor**

There are two key aspects to this section:

- i. the need to signalise the junction of Rampart Road and Woodhouse Lane to safely cater for the increase in turning movements caused by the improvement scheme at Hyde Park Corner (this junction is currently number 35 in the Councils list of 'Sites for Concern' due to the high number of accidents caused by the narrow central reserve)
- ii. the need to provide some priority for NGT in the inbound direction on the approach to the busy junction with Clarendon Road (this is the only area where some priority can be given between the end of the Headingley bypass and the front of the Parkinson Building)

The NGT engineering consultants have recently completed a study of this section looking at a large number of options including some of those proposed by Members and the public during the consultation phase. This is being reviewed and we hope to present some of the outcomes and preferred solution at the Committee meeting. The work has showed that a solution which minimises road widening is likely to have other knock on effects such as diverting traffic onto adjacent roads or building cycle tracks across the Moor.

It should be noted the NGT team see this area as one where full mitigation measures would be justified as well as one where there is an opportunity to deliver significant tree planting to reinforce the tree avenue and upgrade of Monument Moor to create a much more inviting and usable space for the public. The proposed addition of two new pedestrian crossing points across Woodhouse Lane along this section should also be highlighted, providing much safer routes along key desire lines from the large residential area of Woodhouse to the main park area and beyond.

### **Other bus services**

The potential impact of NGT on commercial bus services across Leeds is an acknowledged issue that any publicly controlled rapid transit system must assess and resolve. The project team is giving detailed consideration to this issue. There are a number of complex scenarios depending on the procurement route taken, potential partners / operators of NGT, the

implementation of Quality Partnerships / Contracts, potential for interchange at the P&R sites; and the timing of any extension to Holt Park. Metro as the Passenger Transport Executive has a remit to coordinate high quality public transport services on behalf of all the people of West Yorkshire and could be responsible for subsidising lost routes to North Leeds. As such it is very much within the joint promoter's interest to ensure that any bus service changes that do occur do not disbenefit those residents north of the Ring Road to the point that existing services become non-viable. The approach to be taken will become clearer as time progresses and will be considered in some detail at the Public Inquiry.

### **Car use / Economic Assessment**

The NGT proposals have been drawn up on the basis that traffic across the network would not be unduly delayed. This is for a number of reasons:

1. The current LCC administration has specified that public transport schemes should not be at the expense of existing highway capacity
2. The DfT's New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) measures the economic costs and benefits of transport schemes. Within the calculations, disbenefits to existing users in the form of increased delays are counted against the benefits from the scheme itself. Therefore increased queues will very quickly worsen the value for money case and lead to no scheme at all or require more extreme and costly interventions on the part of NGT
3. Long queues of cars also hold up other bus users, cyclists and even NGT where no priority can be accommodated, such as inbound between the bypass and Hyde Park Corner.

The aim has been to maintain a 'status quo' for private motorists, although at certain junctions where NGT is given priority there will be small additional delays. At Hyde Park Corner there is additional capacity for all users (to help maintain free flowing inbound traffic where NGT has no priority), but turning vehicles will have to use the alternative routes via Cliff Road and Rampart Road, while those straight ahead cars will have to negotiate new signals at these junctions.

### **Restrictions in turning movements and road closures**

Some restrictions in turning movements at junctions are necessary to minimise road widening and provide pedestrian crossings whilst still maintaining traffic capacity. These are being tested in the highway modelling and only put forward where alternatives routes can be provided. The closure of Kepstorn Road is being reconsidered and likely to be open in at least one direction.

### **Safety for the visually impaired**

This is being considered from a number of angles. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been conducted of the whole scheme, and discussions are underway with local groups such as the Shire Oak Centre and Older Persons Reference Group. The detailed design will be to the appropriate standard and the introduction of an audible warning system to the vehicles themselves will be required. The NGT team is looking to build on the good practice and relationships built up during the Supertram detailed design work.

## **Extension to Holt Park**

At the time of the summer consultation the Holt Park extension was included in plans as a 'future aspiration' with no defined route shown. Because of the status of the extension at that point no formal consultation took place north of St Chad's in Headingley. However nearly 70 responses were received from residents in the Cookridge, Holt Park and Lawnswood areas and over 70 comments were included in the questionnaires stating that NGT should be extended to Holt Park.

If the Holt Park extension is to be successfully incorporated into the core NGT network then further consultation work will be required. This Area Committee is seen at the first step in this process and Committee comments on how to progress the process further are sought. Discussions are taking place with the promoters of the Wellbeing Centre with a view to potentially 'piggy-backing' onto any future consultation events that they may hold in the future.

## **6.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance**

The scheme is in line with headline Council objectives set out in the Strategic Plan for improving the local economy for the benefit of all residents; improving connectivity for local neighbourhoods; providing a sustainable environment; and engaging local people in decisions about their neighbourhood.

The NGT proposals are being incorporated within the emerging Local Development Framework and Area Action Plans.

## **7.0 Legal and Resource Implications**

A joint LCC and Metro project team is developing the scheme, with a Project Board consisting of senior officers at Directorate level from both organisations meeting on a regular basis.

Scheme development costs are currently being met jointly by Metro and Leeds City Council, but once the Major Scheme Business Case is approved by the Department for Transport a significant proportion of scheme costs will become rechargeable to the Regional Funding Allocation.

## **8.0 Recommendations**

Area Committee Members are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report, and in particular the forthcoming Request for Information process
- Provide any feedback on the consultation / objection management process
- Advise the Leeds City Council NGT Coordinator if further information or briefings are required

**Background papers:** None