

**Appendix I**  
**Published Papers – Freight Strategy**

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### **Worcestershire County Council implements its Freight Strategy**

Worcestershire County Council have recently embarked upon implementing its Freight Strategy, a key component of its Local Transport Plan (2001-2006). The strategy had been developed to solve many of the freight problems existing in Worcestershire including the lack of information for lorry drivers, congestion and HGV intrusion into sensitive areas. It is acknowledged that one of the main ways of investigating and solving such problems is through the work of a Freight Quality Partnership (FQP), hence this paper examines the work that Worcestershire have undertaken in formulating and implementing it's FQP.

### **Three prong approach**

The Worcestershire Freight Strategy clearly identifies that the movement of freight on Worcestershire's roads cannot be treated in isolation. In general, Freight either originates in, is delivered to, is transferred within, or passes through the County boundary. Hence, Worcestershire have adopted a three-pronged approach to developing FQP's, that addresses the regional, countywide and local impacts of freight related issues.

#### Regional FQP

Firstly, as many of the problems associated with freight transfer are not unique to Worcestershire, its officers are part of a Regional FQP for the West Midlands. Initially, good practice has been spread amongst the group members which consists of local authority officers and freight associations. The partnership seeks to solve common problems across the region and Worcestershire are members of the Steering Group.

#### Countywide FQP

Secondly, the Council has also set up a Countywide FQP which is split into a working group and an update group. The working group (meeting quarterly) is tasked with delivering an action to address issues across the county to agreed timescales. This has broad representation, from highways, parish council, police, operators, freight associations and environmental interest groups. Many of these members are also represented on the update group. Members of the update group report any new issues arising and are updated on the working groups progress at a yearly seminar. The terms of reference set out the Worcestershire FQP as an on-going partnership of interested organisations and bodies, who have the aim:

*"To ensure the efficient transportation of freight within Worcestershire, such that it supports a strong local economy, but increasingly does not compromise the existing or future needs of our society or environment"*

#### Local FQP

Thirdly, as many of the specific problems are local issues, the last prong of the approach is the development of a 'Local' Freight Quality Partnership concentrating on a specific area. One of these partnerships is currently being developed in the Vale of Evesham, an area which falls across county boundaries and so involves a great amount of cross boundary liaison. The Vale covers an area in the south east of Worcestershire but also takes in parts of Gloucestershire and Warwickshire. Worcestershire County Council have taken the lead in setting up a Vale of Evesham Local FQP with the assistance of the two other counties, along with the three districts (Cotswold, Stratford and Wychavon), the Freight Transport Association and the Road Haulage Association.

## Measures

The Freight Strategy identified a number of potential measures that would mitigate the impact of freight movements within the County. The inaugural County FQP seminar in March 2002 prioritised these measures, and it was agreed that a highest priority was the development of a 'Lorry Route Map for Worcestershire'. Examples of best practice were gathered, including notably a Freight map developed in Kent, which provided a basis for establishing the requirements for Worcestershire. There was no sense in 're-inventing the wheel' as to speak and Kent were happy for their concept to be developed. Data was collected which showed more local detail than a standard road atlas and following Kent's example this included industrial estates, low bridges and an 'Advisory Lorry Route Network' (SEE EXCERPT).

From the Countywide FQP feedback the level of detail was refined to include information regarding HGV fuel filling stations, areas of reported peak time congestion, steep inclines, local place names, width limits, maximum gross weight limits and HGV parking / laybys. The key has also been replicated in Spanish, German and Italian, recognising the number of Foreign speaking lorry drivers that pass through and deliver in Worcestershire. These were all issues raised by the Countywide FQP members that would be useful to any driver that was not familiar with the area. The map was produced by including the above and on the reverse side, local delivery maps were drawn to the industrial and trading estates. The map was produced on an A1 sheet which conveniently folds to a readable A4 size, the size suggested by lorry drivers to most conveniently fit within the lorry cabs.

The value of consultation with members of the Countywide FQP in the development of this map cannot be underestimated, as many ideas and amendments have been suggested by operators and those who use delivery maps as part of their day to day business.

Having developed this map and received credit from lorry drivers and freight associations for its clarity, we would recommend the development of a national standard for authorities producing maps (e.g. with similar keys) which could lead to a combined national lorry driver's atlas. This would be a useful tool and would not require a lorry driver to carry a plethora of individual maps or "A to Z's". Indeed, the key for Worcestershire's Lorry Route Map has been adopted as a common starting point across the West Midlands region as a first action of the Regional FQP. Work is also well underway on the production of town centre local delivery maps. The first of these in Worcestershire is currently being developed for Kidderminster. A workshop session at a recent County FQP update enabled participants to highlight what was right and wrong with an early draft.

Some of the other measures currently being taken forward include: investigations into new lorry parking; lorry driver information boards; improved signing to industrial estates; targeted enforcement in delivery areas; measures to relieve congestion; providing education on fuel efficiency; as well as investigations into clear zones and low emission zones.

Many of these measures fit into the Freight Strategy in Worcestershire's Local Transport Plan (2001-2006). The table below summarises the relationship between the LTP Freight objectives and progress made to date:

LTP Aim / objective	LTP Target	Progress to date
1. Assist local businesses to improve their efficiency of local distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To fully consider the implications of pedestrianisation schemes on freight movement and accommodate such considerations in the decision making process.</li> <li>• To ensure that all local businesses have access to a County 'lorry route' map</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of town centre delivery restrictions to take place by April 2004. Any new pedestrianisation schemes to take deliveries into full consideration</li> <li>• County 'lorry route map' published in June 2003 and available on county council website</li> <li>• Local delivery maps to be provided for each town. Kidderminster Local Delivery Map underway.</li> </ul>
2. Assist local businesses to improve their timing of distribution	To fully consider the implications of pedestrianisation schemes on freight movement and accommodate such considerations in the decision making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of town centre delivery restrictions to take place by April 2004. Any new pedestrianisation schemes to take deliveries into full consideration</li> <li>• To provide localised business maps, provide lorry driver information boards through Countywide FQP</li> </ul>
3. Minimise congestion caused by road freight transport	To implement a Countywide Freight Quality Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countywide FQP Working Group and Update Group set up March 2003 with congestion a specific area being examined</li> </ul>
4. Minimise pollution from freight transport	To reduce airborne pollution to less than the National Air Quality Requirements by 2003 (BVPIA 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worcestershire Districts' Air Quality Review – future investigations into clear zones and low emission zones</li> <li>• Supporting Transport Energy Best Practice programme through Countywide and Local FQP. Presentation given at Countywide Seminar March 2003.</li> </ul>
5. Reduce noise and disturbance from freight movements	To reduce the number of complaints associated with freight movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Worcestershire Citizens Survey baseline data to be obtained by April 2004</li> </ul>
6. Identify and implement approved freight routes, operating conditions and enforcement mechanisms	To implement a Countywide Freight Quality Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countywide FQP Working Group and Update Group set up March 2003</li> </ul>
7. Encourage the development of freight interchanges where appropriate and support development of facilities for water-borne and rail movements	To ensure consideration of rail and water-borne freight movement with all employment planning applications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full district council involvement in Countywide FQP process achieved by March 2003</li> <li>• Investigations into transfer of freight onto River Severn November 2002</li> <li>• Investigations into transfer of freight onto rail at Ashchurch, Glos. March 2002</li> </ul>

## Guidance

The recent guidance produced on FQP's by the Department for Transport is welcomed and justifies much of the work that Worcestershire has done.

The involvement of all interested parties in an FQP is seen as being instrumental in its success. This broad membership enables everyone to appreciate what are often completely different views, and it allows relevant bodies to work together to establish priorities leading to a common goal.

It is acknowledged that lessons will be learned in the implementation of Worcestershire's freight strategy in the future. However, Worcestershire remain open minded and therefore receptive to new ideas to dealing with freight issues old and new.

The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of Worcestershire County Council
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