

# The first Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan

## Chapter 1

**1.1** This is the first full Local Transport Plan (LTP) to be produced by the ten Greater Manchester district councils and Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (GMPTA). It builds on the strategy set out in the Provisional LTP which received widespread support from both the local community and the Government.



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**1.2** Our approach continues to reflect the Government's aims of developing an integrated transport system, improving safety and accessibility, and protecting the environment. We believe that transport policy plays a vital role in supporting local strategies for sustainable economic development and regeneration, land-use planning, community safety, improving the local environment, health, and education.

**1.3** The policies and proposals in this LTP are designed to support the continuing revitalisation of Greater Manchester. Its objectives are fully in line with those in the Government's 1998 Transport White Paper *A new deal for transport: better for everyone*.

**1.4** Much work has been done in Greater Manchester in recent years to improve the local transport network and to integrate different modes. This has been recognised by Government who designated the County as the first public transport Centre of Excellence – and in this LTP we are seeking to extend this status to the transport system as a whole.

**1.5** The introduction of the LTP process has allowed us to build on our successes and further develop our strategy. Since the submission of the provisional LTP we have:

- *undertaken wide-ranging consultation on both LTP objectives and local schemes*
- *agreed a set of performance indicators and targets to monitor future outcomes from the LTP*
- *further developed our Integration Project with bus, rail and Metrolink operators and have taken significant steps towards the introduction of Smartcard ticketing*
- *begun planning for the construction of the programme of Metrolink extensions*
- *refined our plans to make town and city centres more competitive and attractive*
- *further developed our Road Traffic Reduction strategy following our interim report*
- *continued to monitor air quality and started work on our Management Strategy*
- *supported and planned for continuing sustainable growth at Manchester Airport*
- *produced plans to develop the key walking and cycling elements of our strategy*
- *continued the assessment of principal highway and structural maintenance needs*
- *completed a study to help us to understand the needs of the freight industry better*
- *continued to introduce decriminalised parking enforcement*
- *developed a strategy for the future development of the 'fixed-track' network*
- *contributed to the national debate on demand management through the Charging Development Partnership*

**1.6** In addition, work on elements of the strategy and programme which we outlined last year is, in many cases, already under way. Projects taken forward in the last year include:

- **successfully constructing the Metrolink extension to Eccles via Salford Quays**
- **further construction of Quality Bus Corridors and site-specific bus enhancements**
- **introducing enhanced public transport information through the Integration Project**
- **continued implementation of the regeneration masterplan for the Regional Centre**
- **work aimed at creating safe and sustainable local communities and HomeZones**
- **providing comprehensive sets of measures to ensure safer travel to schools**
- **adoption of travel plans by several more major employers across the County**
- **traffic management and safety measures to enhance the viability of local centres**

## Structure of the document

**1.7** There are three sections to this document. Part I (Chapters 1-6) sets out our strategic vision and core objectives and shows how they have been based on an understanding of local problems and opportunities and the views of local people. It goes on to demonstrate a justification for our public transport led strategy, outlines the part played by public participation in developing the plan and ends with a brief summary of the five-year programme.

**1.8** Part II (Chapters 7 to 10) examines public participation mechanisms, and analyses the outcomes of consultation, showing how these are reflected in the strategy. It then explains the strategy in more detail, showing how it relates to Government objectives and guidance, and sets out our five-year programme for capital investment and how it is supported by revenue expenditure. Finally, it describes the performance indicators – and the base data and targets – against which our LTP will be assessed, with results from early monitoring.

**1.9** Part III (Chapters A1-A11) contains short annexes prepared by each district council and the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority. These describe the relationship between the LTP strategy and Unitary Development Plans (UDPs) and set out how the key elements of our transport strategy are being delivered at local level. Technical appendices, including the Appraisal Summary Tables and Finance Forms, complete this part of the submission.



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**1.10** A number of supporting documents have also been produced. The following are submitted with this document:

- *a Road Traffic Reduction Act (RTRA) report*
- *a report on highways and structures capital maintenance*
- *separate appraisal documents for each of the major schemes in this LTP*
- *the Metrolink extensions funding application cost-benefit appraisal*

Further documents to be made available later, or on request, include the following:

- *a freestanding summary of the LTP*
- *detailed strategy documents for individual policy areas*
- *the second Integrate Annual Report, 1999/2000*
- *review of the Greater Manchester Strategic Planning Framework (August 1999)*
- *a report on the results of the Transport matters consultation*
- *a consultation document on air quality review and assessment*
- *district documents explaining local transport programmes*

## The County and its regional context

**1.11** Greater Manchester covers some 500 square miles and is home to 2.6 million people. It comprises the ten Metropolitan Districts of Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan – members of the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and GMPTA.

**1.12** The two conurbations of Greater Manchester and Merseyside, which lie at either end of the Mersey Belt, dominate the North West – containing almost 60% of its population. This Belt contains most of the region's areas of deprivation – from the Merseyside Objective One area through the inner-city parts of Manchester and Salford to the designated East Manchester regeneration area. The Greater Manchester authorities and the region aim to focus development in these urban areas.

**1.13** Manchester is the regional capital serving as both administrative and service centre for the whole of the north west. It caters for a wide range of activities including financial and banking services, the media, culture, shopping, sport, and higher education and research. Since the IRA bomb in 1996, the successful re-planning and rebuilding of the centre has enhanced that role even further and laid the basis for the successful regeneration of the inner-city areas around it.

**1.14** The benefits to the region in having a major international city at its heart are both economic and social and it is vital that Manchester's regional capital role is reinforced for the good of the region as a whole.



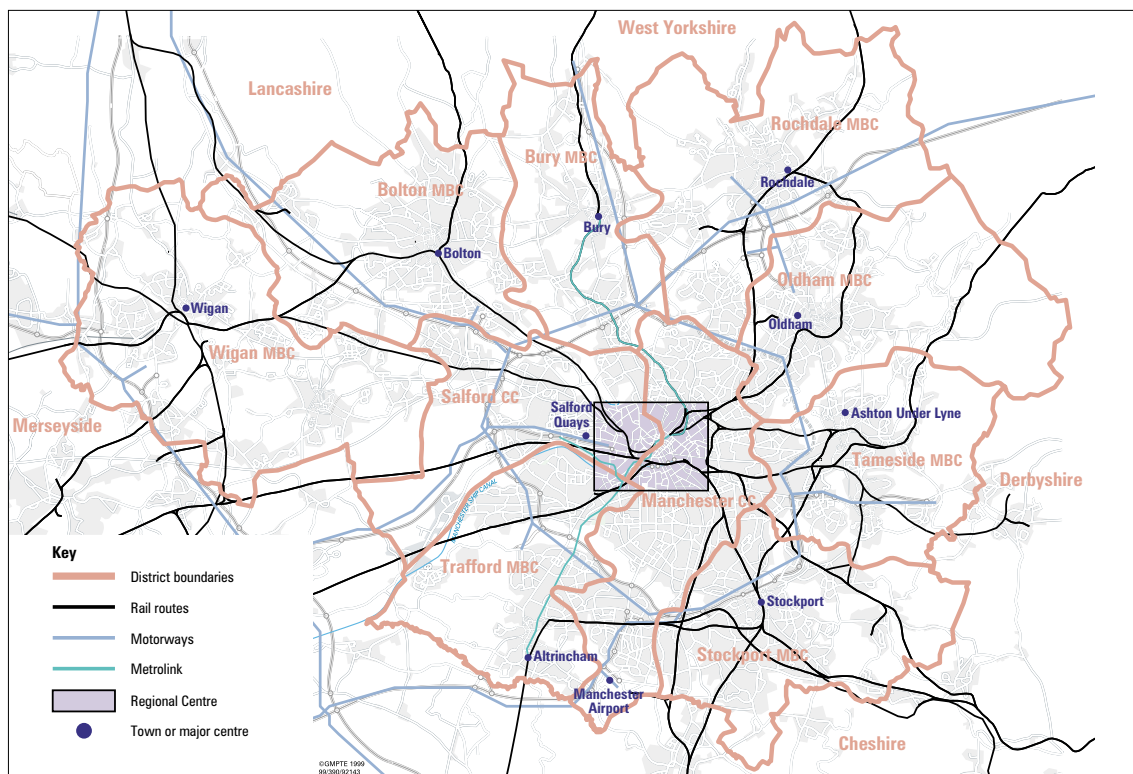
**1.15** However, unlike many other urban areas, which are dominated by a single city, Greater Manchester has developed as a polycentric conurbation. The County has many industrial towns associated with the former dominant industries of coal, cotton and engineering. Manchester, and parts of Salford and Trafford, lie at the heart of the County and form the Regional Centre. This is ringed by the large towns of Bolton, Bury, Rochdale, Oldham and Stockport and smaller ones such as Heywood and Stalybridge. Further west, the mining industry created dispersed settlements around the centres of Wigan and Leigh. All the towns are surrounded – and to an extent separated – by rural and green belt areas.

**1.16** The County has a number of major retail and employment centres which generate significant numbers of trips and are the focus of local road and public

transport networks. In addition to the town centres, Manchester Airport, Trafford Park and Salford Quays are major concentrations of employment. The Airport – the ‘gateway’ to the north of England – is the third largest in the UK and is served by the M56 and a dedicated rail spur.

**1.17** The flagship regeneration areas of Salford Quays and Trafford Park, where former Ship Canal docks have been transformed into business parks, extend west of the Regional Centre. These areas now play an increasingly important role in leisure and retail activities – Manchester United’s ground is here, together with the newly-opened Lowry arts centre and the Imperial War Museum of the North. The Trafford Centre, opened in 1998, is one of the UK’s largest out-of-town malls and is a major source of employment.

**Figure 1: Greater Manchester County (showing administrative boundaries)**



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**1.18** The East Manchester regeneration company, New East Manchester, aims to revitalise some of the City's hardest-hit areas of economic decline. This area includes the Sportcity development – the site of the 2002 Commonwealth Games – along with a pilot New Deal for Communities area and three SRB areas.

### **The communications network**

**1.19** The road pattern associated with the growth of Greater Manchester is made up of major radial routes extending from Manchester City Centre to and through each of the satellite towns. A secondary network of routes radiates from each of the larger towns. Some of these link the satellite towns together and form orbital routes around the County. The tram network until the 1940s and the railway network – which is centred on Manchester City Centre – echoed this radial/orbital pattern. The exception to this pattern is the Borough of Wigan, which is characterised by sinuous routes connecting small towns and villages, split by the north-south axis formed by the West Coast Main Line and the M6 motorway.

**1.20** Historically, the locations of economic activity reflected the transport network. Initially concentrated in the inner parts of towns, industry expanded along rail routes and spine roads and housing developed nearby. Later, residential areas grew up further out along the commuter rail lines of south Manchester, Trafford and Stockport. Until the post-war period the dominant means of travel to work were walking, cycling and public transport.

**1.21** Today, Greater Manchester has an extensive motorway network, including the soon-to-be completed M60. This orbital route links to the east-west M62, serving Liverpool and communities across the Pennines, together with the M67/A628 route to South Yorkshire, the M61 and M66 serving south Lancashire and the M56 to Chester, North Wales and Wirral. Trans-Pennine rail routes offer an alternative mode of travel to many of these destinations along the Liverpool-Manchester-Leeds-York and Manchester-Sheffield-Hull lines, as does the northern route to Preston and Blackpool.

**1.22** The main north-south links to the West Midlands, Cumbria and Scotland are the M6 and the West Coast Main Line. The project to upgrade this line for high-speed services will enhance the quality and range of the inter-regional links provided by the rail network.

**1.23** Within Greater Manchester itself, Metrolink, the light rail system which links Bury, Altrincham and Eccles via Manchester City Centre, is a major success and now stands to be substantially extended. The rail network is the most extensive outside London with over 100 stations. Commercial bus routes serve much of the conurbation. The public transport network as a whole could play a more significant role, and the LTP gives emphasis to realising this potential.