

# 10. Transport & Movement



## 10. TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

### Key Facts

- North Beach is well served by public transport links, being close to the railway station and bus interchange points, while the tram service, currently undergoing renovation, runs along the coast through the west of the study area.
- There is a lack of long stay parking provision, a problem exacerbated by the fact that many hotels and other holiday accommodation do not have sufficient provision for guests.
- There are a number of safety issues relating to road layouts, particularly around Dickson Road and Springfield Road. The quality of the road surfaces, particularly to the west of Dickson Road, is also poor.

### Introduction

- 10.1 This section draws upon the work undertaken by transport consultants JMP as part of the previous North Beach work, summarises transport and accessibility issues within the North Beach area. This section will be used to inform the AAP and should ensure that baseline transport and accessibility considerations are accounted for. The Blackpool Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2) forms the basis of the Local Accessibility section.

### Summary

- 10.2 The North Beach area is located around Dickson Road to the North of Blackpool town centre. The area is characterised by commercial property in the form of Hotel accommodation which is of low quality; housing lies to the east of High Street on the boundary of the North Beach area. There is also an industrial estate which lies east of Claremont Road. The Study area lies within close proximity to both the North train station on High Street, and the bus station on Talbot Street, both of which are accessible on foot.
- 10.3 Dickson Road is the main street running through the North Beach area hosting a variety of retail and service outlets. It forms part of the Town Centre Distribution Route (TCDR), illustrated on Figure 53 which is the main corridor of traffic from the town centre to Gynn Square.

10.4 There is access to the tram system operating along the Promenade, which provides transport along the Fylde Coast from Fleetwood to Starr Gate for both visitors and local residents. Massive capital investment has been made to repair and upgrade the tram line, with the majority of the line set to be replaced. The latest phase of this work was completed in spring 2008. A renovated system with new trams will be in place from Spring 2012.

10.5 The area defined as the Talbot Gateway lies to the immediate south of the study area. This is currently undergoing investment as a focal point for arrivals from Blackpool North train station and coach station. The Gateway's public realm design will improve pedestrian provision convenience and safety. Talbot Gateway will also improve the provision of parking for the town centre.

10.6 This section is divided into two parts-

- **Strategic:** Examines North Beach with regard to its links to the wider North West and beyond.
- **Local:** Identifies the local movement hierarchy in the context of local service providers.

## Strategic

### Highways

10.7 Blackpool is well linked to the North West and wider area. The M55 provides access to the M6, which within the region runs to Lancaster in the

north and Preston and Wigan to the south. The A585 is the main access route from the M55 to the Fylde Coast. It suffers severe traffic congestion in the high tourism season. The A583 lies to the south of the study area and connects to the M55 and Preston. The A583 also connects to the A584, which enters Blackpool on the coast near Blackpool Airport and runs north along the coastline for approximately seven miles. The six mile stretch between Starr Gate and Bispham is the site of the Blackpool Illuminations from the end of August to early November.

### Rail

10.8 The railway station lies just to the south east of the study area at the junction of High Street and Springfield Road. It is encompassed within the Talbot Gateway redevelopment scheme; work is to be carried out on the area to improve its public transport accessibility, along with measures to reduce unnecessary traffic within the vicinity.

10.9 Access to Blackpool North Station off High Street causes congestion and increases drop off/pick up time due to its effects on the flow of traffic along Talbot Road, part of the previously mentioned TCDR system.

10.10 Strategic public transport is available within walking distance from Blackpool North railway station, with four services per hour available to Preston, half hourly connections to Bolton and

Manchester, and an hourly service to Leeds and Liverpool. A service also operates to Manchester Airport. Table 30 summarises the frequency of rail services from Blackpool North.

**Table 30: The frequency of rail services from Blackpool North**

Route	Operator	First Service	Last Service	Frequency
Blackpool – Preston – Blackburn – Burnley – Halifax – Bradford – Leeds	Northern Rail	05:30	21:13	Hourly
Blackpool – Preston – Bolton – Salford – Manchester Victoria – Hazel Grove	Northern Rail	06.19	23.13	Half Hourly
Blackpool – Preston – Bolton – Salford – Manchester – Airport / Stockport – Buxton	Northern Rail	00:45	23:14	Hourly
Blackpool – Preston – Wigan – Liverpool	Northern Rail	09:25	22:03	Hourly

*(Source: Blackpool Transport, 2008)*

10.11 A hourly service operates out of Blackpool South railway station to Colne via Preston, Blackburn and Burnley. This station lies well south of the site and serves Blackpool Pleasure Beach.

### Airport/Ferry

10.12 Blackpool Airport is located to the south of the town at Squires Gate, with daily connections to destinations within both the UK and Europe. Additionally, Fleetwood provides passenger ferry sailings to Larne in

Northern Ireland. The terminals for both are served by local public transport, and have the potential to bring visitors into Blackpool from locations not easily accessible by road or rail.

### Local

10.13 Figure 53 shows the transport infrastructure of North Beach.

### Highway Links

10.14 Dickson Road is the principal route through the study area; running parallel with the Promenade. Movement onto Dickson Road is restricted at the junction with Springfield Road, with southbound movements towards Talbot Road currently diverted east via Springfield Road and High Street. It forms part of a wider one-way system, which may be amended as Talbot Gateway is developed.

10.15 Traffic calming has been implemented on Dickson Road, incorporating multi-textured road surfacing at bus stops and pedestrian crossings. On-street parking is enforced by a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to limit waiting, and is restricted to one side of the road in order to prevent obstruction to through traffic.

10.16 A one way system operates to the east of the North Beach study area, near Blackpool North railway station. It flows from the northerly end of High Street south to Cocker Street; west down Cocker Street to Lord Street; south down Lord Street to

Springfield Road, intersecting with the one way system flowing round Blackpool North train station

10.17 The dual roundabout format at the junction of Pleasant Street and Dickson Road creates pedestrian safety issues at present on what is a main desire line in land from the Promenade. There is no formalised crossing provision, and the presence of circulating traffic makes it unsafe to cross on an ad-hoc basis.

10.18 In general, the quality of the road surface within North Beach is poor and requires attention, particularly on the streets west of Dickson Road. As well as impacting on safety, it creates poor visual perception, which is further exacerbated by the poor quality of the pavements.

### Parking

10.19 Within the North Beach area, metered on-street parking has a 2 hour limit with a 4 hour no return policy. The main off-road parking facilities in Blackpool town centre are summarised in Table 31 which includes details relating to type (multi-storey or surface), access points and spaces available.

10.20 There is inadequate long stay car parking provision in the study area to meet the demands of the tourist industry. This is because a large incidence of the accommodation within the North Beach area does not have sufficient parking for their potential occupancy. The only off-street parking facilities in North Beach are the two small council owned sites currently used for surface car parking. This creates on-street parking

issues, especially during the summer months. A TRO is in place on Dickson Road to ensure on-street parking does not affect vehicle circulation through limiting the length of stay.

**Table 31: Summary of Car Parking Provision in Blackpool Town Centre**

Car park	Type	Access from	Pay type	Spaces	CCTV
Hounds Hill	Multi-storey	Coronation Street	Pay & display	750	No
Talbot Road	Multi-storey	Deansgate	Pay & display	740	No
West Street	Multi-storey	West Street	Pay & display	241	Yes
Chapel Street	Multi-storey	Chapel Street	Pay & display	390	Yes
Wilkinson Store	Multi-storey	Dickson Road	Pay on exit	500	Yes
Central	Surface	Central Drive / Seaside Way	Pay & display	101	No
East Topping Street	Surface	East Topping Street	Pay & display	825	Yes
Bank Street	Surface	Bank Street	Pay & display	300	No
Queen Street	Surface	Queen Street	Pay & display	40	No
Bonny Street	Surface	Queen Street	Pay & display	141	No
Seed Street	Surface	Seed Street / Talbot Road	Pay & display	210	No
Swainson Street	Surface	Swainson Street / Talbot Road	Pay & display	141	No

(Source: Blackpool Transport, 2008)

10.21 Direct coach borne business is important to the North Beach area due to the density of hotels and accommodation. This is especially the case outside of the main season. The large hotels may have on-site parking, but in many parts of the area this business can be restricted by both on-street loading problems and the lack of suitably located and sufficiently secure overnight parking areas that can be used by coaches.

10.22 The Local Transport Plan recognises the growing contribution of coach travel to the Blackpool economy. During the Illuminations, coach trips could potentially reduce the impact of cars on journey times and congestion, while also encouraging a larger number of individuals to stay in the area rather than driving through.

### Pedestrian/Cycling

10.23 The National Cycle Network (NCN 62) runs east to west from Talbot Road to Staining, as illustrated in Figure 53. As a national route, this is well maintained and signed throughout. The Promenade forms a 'T' shape with this cycle run, as it runs north to south along the sea front.

10.24 There has been consultation between a steering group and relevant cycling officers to review the cycle network in the study area. The objective was to identify a network for the Fylde Coast. The issues identified of relevance to the North Beach Master Plan were:

- The Promenade route from North Shore should be extended beyond the Blackpool boundary.

- Dickson Road does not have any cycling provision, making it potentially difficult for cyclists due to the high level of on-street parking and vehicle speed and flow. The 2006 Local Transport Plan discusses how cycling provision for Blackpool as a whole might be improved.

10.25 Personal safety and security has been highlighted as a concern especially amongst females and the vulnerable. This is due to poor lighting and fear of anti-social behaviour, especially on routes linking Dickson Road with the Promenade.

10.26 Dickson Road has narrow footways in the northern section of the study area, with the poor quality of surfacing and dropped curbs making access difficult for elderly and disabled users. As referred to in the highways section, the pedestrian provision around the dual roundabout area of Pleasant Street is unsatisfactory.

10.27 Dickson Road has two pedestrian crossings to the north and south and a pedestrian refuge at the junction with Springfield Road.

### Bus

10.28 The key bus routes running through the area are illustrated in Figure 53. The No. 15 bus route is the main direct route through the study area, which runs northbound to Poulton via Dickson

Road. The frequency is approximately 2 buses per hour along this route.

- 10.29 There are two further bus routes (No. 3, No. 4) that run along parts of Dickson Road but deviate into the housing estates to the west. The No. 3 service runs from Tesco at Mereside to the Gardeners Arms with a frequency of 3 buses per hour during the day and a reduced frequency in the evening.
- 10.30 The No. 4 route runs from Tesco at Mereside to Cleveleys Park with the same service frequency to the No. 3 service, providing a very regular service through North Beach and the surrounding area, both linking into the town centre.
- 10.31 Table 32 shows the bus routes and frequencies. This does not include early morning partial routes. Where appropriate the evening partial routes are provided. The No. 1 route is shown due to its substitution for the tram service over winter 2007/2008. The service times are from Monday-Saturday.
- 10.32 There are two bus stops on Dickson Road, both served by the 3, 4 and 15 bus services. Towards the north of the study area the bus stop has a marked area on the road for stopping; the two stops possess timetable information, but do not provide shelters or seating.
- 10.33 Blackpool Transport Services (BTS) is the main local operator, accounting for 95% of services. Stagecoach provides additional services around the Talbot Road area.

**Table 32: Bus Routes and Frequencies**

Service No.	Full Route	AM	PM	Total Daily Provision (Full Route)	Service Provision Notes
<b>No 1</b>	Starr Gate-Fleetwood	07:20	23:00	38	Starts from 6:00am but only serves part of the route, including the North Pier.
	Fleetwood-Star Gate	06:40	24:00	52	
<b>No15</b>	Poulton-Tesco	07:37	19:07	22	Partial route until 23:15, further 8 journeys
	Tesco-Poulton	08:07	18:07	22	Partial route until 23:45, further 11 journeys
<b>No 3</b>	Tesco - Gardeners arms	07:20	22:50	38	
	Gardeners Arms-Tesco	07:50	23:45	32	Partial route serves a further 8 journeys
<b>No 4</b>	Tesco-Cleveleys Park	07:00	23:20	42	
	Cleveleys Park-Tesco	07:28	23:15	42	

(Source: Blackpool Transport, 2008).

## Trams

- 10.34 The Blackpool tram network runs along the Promenade, and provides a frequent service linking Fleetwood in the north to

Starr Gate in the South via the major tourist attractions of the town such as the piers, the Tower and the Pleasure Beach (see Figure 52)

**Figure 52: Blackpool Tram Route**



10.35 Due to maintenance works, the tram service was suspended over winter 2007/2008. The No. 1 bus, which usually services the Promenade line in the summer time period only, has provided a replacement service. The works to the trams are due to a lack of infrastructure investment over a long period of time. In addition to replacement and renewal of tram lines, new modern trams are also being purchased to replace the existing stock, although a heritage fleet will continue to run.

10.36 There have been suggestions that the tram system could be extended to serve Blackpool North train station, as originally identified in the Talbot Gateway planning brief. However, this would be subject to funding being made available.

10.37 Table 33: North Pier Trams and Frequencies shows the first morning and last evening route times for trams stopping at the North Pier tram stop, and their daily frequency.

**Table 33: North Pier Trams and Frequencies**

Service	Route	Time arriving at North pier		
		Am	PM	Frequency
Standard Service	Starr Gate-Fleetwood	05:40	23:40	Every 20 minutes
	Fleetwood-Starr Gate	06:51	01:20	
Winter service	Winter	09:05	18:05	
	Winter	09:54	18:51	

*(Source: Blackpool Transport, 2008)*

### Local Accessibility

10.38 There is a high incidence of households per Super Output Area (SOA) without access to a car. The approximate range for the North Shore area is 60-115 households per SOA without access to a car. The area also has some of the largest concentrations of Job Seeker Allowance claimants in the Blackpool region, used

as an indicator of unemployment. In Blackpool as a whole, 37% of inhabitants are without immediate access to a car.

- 10.39 Access to local healthcare is good, with links to the Victoria Hospital, south east of the study area, which is accessible by bus within 15 to 30 minutes. Access to a GP's surgery is around 10 minutes walking time at maximum.
- 10.40 Access to education is good with the longest travel times being to the North East of the area, at around 15-20 minutes. Further education is accessible within a 30-45 minute catchment for the whole area
- 10.41 Public transport has been subject to investment, with bus routes colour coded for ease of use. A NoW card (smart card system) has been implemented, initially for concessionary fares, which has improved speed and access of bus use. This extends easy access to the wider area and Lancashire.
- 10.42 Time taken to access major work places (100 or more employees) is in the range of 10-20 minutes for the area. This is due to the location of the eastern industrial estate and the high density of major work places situated to the north of Blackpool.

## Current Transport Studies and Proposals

### Promenade Movement Strategy

- 10.43 In May 2007 JMP Consultants completed a **Movement Strategy** for the Promenade (**Blackpool Seafront Experience-JMP Consultants**) for the

Council and ReBlackpool. The strategy set out several key recommendations including the following relating to the South Beach area:

- Various new pedestrian crossing points linked to new Headlands
- One way traffic route along Waterloo Road (District Centre west east direction)
- Suggested vehicle exit route along Station Road/ Lytham Road and Waterloo Road
- Potential link road between Yeadon Road and Lytham Road/ Station Road Junction (to be investigated in more detail by Central Corridor Phase 3 Study)
- Identified potential pedestrian routes between the Central Corridor car parks and the Promenade

- 10.44 The Council are currently re-designing one of the crossing points at Crystal Road, linking to the already completed St Chad's Headland.

### Tramway Project

- 10.45 The Council is currently undergoing a programme to renew and upgrade the tramway across inner Blackpool. This will affect the layout of the promenade between Cocker Square and Talbot Road.

## Paramics Modelling

10.46 The Council has commissioned a comprehensive traffic “Paramics” model for the town, including the South Beach area which will provide useful information relating to traffic flows and issues within the area.

## SWOT Analysis

### Strengths

- Proximity to Town centre.
- Access to high frequency bus links from Talbot Road station along Dickson Road.
- Access to Rail from Blackpool North Station.
- Close proximity to the Promenade and Tram links.
- Benefits from proximity to investment areas including the Talbot Gateway.

### Weaknesses

- Poor Air Quality (Nitrogen Oxide). Dickson Road and Springfield Road identified in LTP Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).
- Limited available local services on Dickson Road.
- Narrow footways.
- Ad-hoc on-street parking.

- Limited crossing opportunities restricting access to the Promenade and disrupting pedestrian flows.
- Pedestrian and cyclist safety across and along Dickson Road and Springfield Road.
- Complex roundabout system at Pleasant Street and Dickson Road.
- Poor perception of personal safety and security.
- Poor off-street parking provision, especially long stay.

### Opportunities

- Multiplier effect of the Talbot Gateway project, increasing confidence within the area.
- Provision of improved parking catering for long stay tenures.
- Provision of improved public transport access through the re-organisation of Talbot Road, including the potential extension of the tram system to serve the railway station and proposed public transport interchange.
- Improve the legibility of the residential area, and provide improved opportunities for pedestrian and cyclist movement along and across Dickson Road, plus connections to major service providers.

### Threats

- Limited capacity for expansion of roads and footways.
- Ongoing poor perception of area to through-traffic.
- Ongoing safety issues created by existing highway layout.
- Ongoing decline of local services.
- Limited capacity to increase long stay car parking, particularly considering the need to provide open, green space.

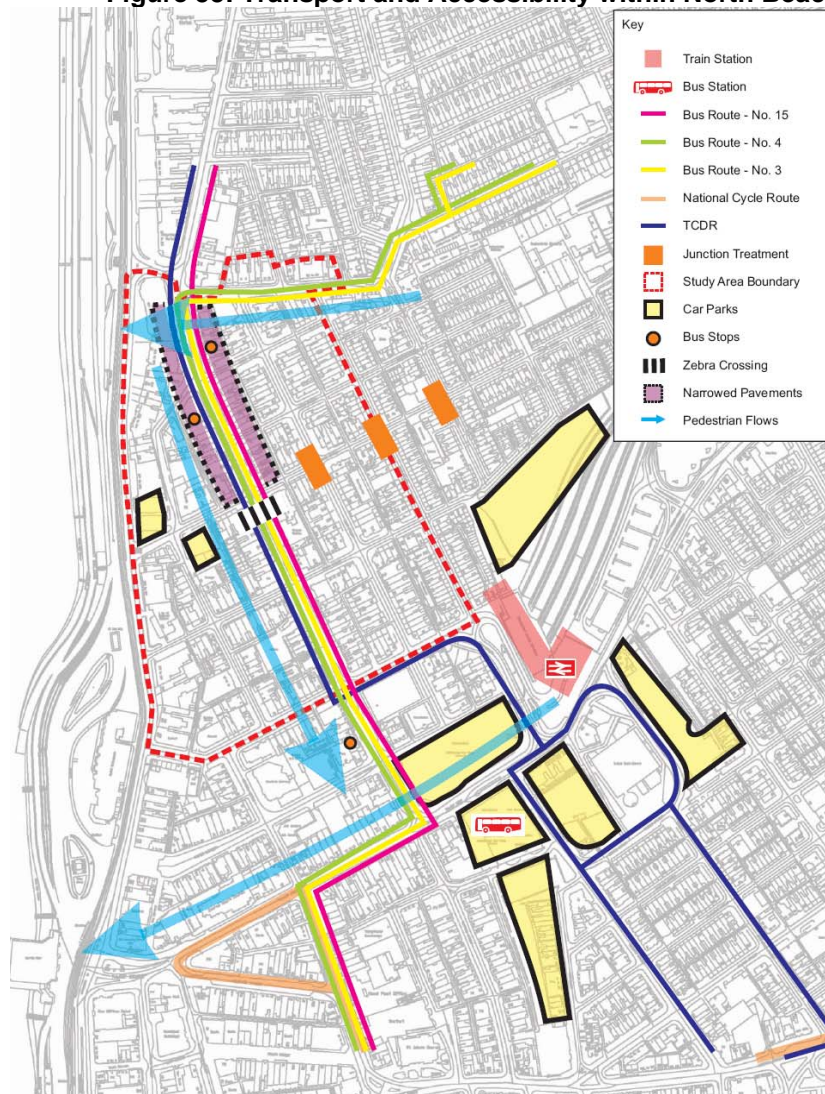
10.47 The street widths are generally narrow, and as such tend to be congested with parked cars. Conversion over time to B&B/small hotel usage has created extra demand for car parking. As a result, a relatively high number properties have lost their boundary walls to provide more in-curtilage car parking opportunities. The narrow alleyways around the small pockets of industrial buildings are utilised for servicing, and therefore are often entirely inaccessible due to large-vehicles blocking access.

- Blackpool Promenade Movement Strategy - 2007

### Key Evidence Sources

- Blackpool Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2)
- Blackpool Transport team

**Figure 53: Transport and Accessibility within North Beach**



(Source: JMP, 2008)