

- 7.23 The Specified Road Network (SRN) includes the principal roads carrying the majority of traffic in the Borough. As identified the SRN currently receives the majority of new investment of highways in order to improve safety and capacity. This allows traffic calming and other environmental improvements to be introduced in other areas. In those cases where new road schemes supersede sections of the network currently identified the classification of relevant sections will be amended when the Plan is reviewed.
- 7.24 If traffic generated by any individual development or in combination with that from other developments gives rise to excessive congestion or delay on the Specified Road Network the transportation costs to business and commerce will be inflated and motorists will be inclined to seek out alternative routes. These secondary routes by definition will be of a lower design standard and therefore less capable of satisfactorily accommodating heavy traffic flows without undesirable environmental consequences and additional hazards to road users and affected communities.
- 7.25 Where roads or road improvements are proposed in addition to those included in the national road programme and the County Council's programme or in association with new developments, the Borough Council, when consulted, will consider their environmental impact, the need for the scheme including the likely levels of traffic relief and extra traffic generation, the means of funding and the implications for improving transport choice in the Borough. New schemes will be judged in relation to their capacity to:
- i) improve public safety;
 - ii) protect communities from large volumes of unnecessary traffic;
 - iii) provide relief in urban areas which enable environmental improvement such as pedestrian preference schemes;
 - iv) achieve significant and sustainable environmental benefits in terms of need, routing, scale, design and layout;
 - v) avoid prejudice to the implementation of other road schemes already programmed;
 - vi) contribute to the overall availability of transport choice and avoid inducing additional traffic and increasing pressures on other parts of the road network.
- 7.26 Over the plan period it is likely some existing traffic problems will worsen, or new problems emerge, as traffic flows increase. Higher volumes of traffic on inadequate roads, heavy lorries in sensitive areas, and pressure on particular junctions, will be the obvious signs of such problems.
- 7.27 Where road-related measures are proposed to tackle the most significant and pressing problems they may be considered favourably where a need is demonstrated, the anticipated benefits outweigh the environmental and economic costs and no other means is realistically available to remedy the particular problem.

Safeguarding Areas for Programmed Strategic Road and Highway Improvement Schemes

7.28 POLICY TR/2

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the construction of new roads or the improvement of the existing highway infrastructure within the reservations shown on the Proposals Map and listed below:

Road Schemes

- i) A6004 Epinal Way Extension to the A6 south of Loughborough;**
- ii) A6 Loughborough Inner Relief Road between Bridge Street and Barrow Street;**
- iii) A607 Rearsby Bypass.**

Highway Improvement Schemes

- iv) **M1 Widening;**
- v) **A512 Ashby Road, Loughborough (between J23 of the M1 and the A6004 Epinal Way roundabout);**
- vi) **A6004 Epinal Way/Warwick Way, Loughborough (between Ling Road and A6 Derby Road);**
- vii) **Greenclose Lane, Loughborough (north west of Ashby Road to the Rushes).**

(see also in particular Policy CA/5)

Road Schemes

- 7.29 The Local Plan identifies reservations to safeguard from development the land required for new road schemes proposed by the Highway Authority for which provisions are made in the Structure Plan.
- 7.30 The Epinal Way Extension scheme as approved by the County Council comprises a single carriageway design from the end of the Quorn/Mountsorrel Bypass to a roundabout junction with the distributor road that will serve the proposed south of Loughborough housing development. The section from this junction northwards to the Park Road/Shelthorpe road roundabout is of dual carriageway design. The overall scheme has related landscaping and noise attenuation measures, crossing facilities and a segregated, joint cycleway/footway. Its implementation should benefit Shelthorpe Road and the A6(T) south of Shelthorpe Road, start to remove primary route traffic from the A6(T) through the town centre, enable the introduction of measures to improve access to the town centre along the A6(T) for non-car modes and facilitate the proposed residential development south of Loughborough.
- 7.31 The Epinal Way Extension will be fully funded by the south of Loughborough housing development.
- 7.32 The Loughborough Inner Relief Road will not of itself solve the problems of traffic circulation and congestion within the town. The road is intended only to provide an alternative to the existing town centre section of the A6 and to this extent it may be more appropriately regarded primarily as a traffic management measure. Problems caused by existing traffic flows and any growth will need to be addressed in other ways including the A6004 Epinal Way Extension, related highway improvements and the encouragement of alternative modes of transportation.
- 7.33 At present too many uncertainties remain to permit the design of a detailed scheme for a Loughborough Inner Relief Road. However, it is envisaged that the majority of the length of the road should be of single carriageway with dualling only being necessary at Bridge Street and between Barrow Street and Pinfold Gate. It is considered that some element of dualling will be unavoidable in that the new road will have to cater for existing junction traffic, plus A6 diverted traffic together with traffic generated from the identified "opportunity sites". The detailed design of the scheme, including provision for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists, will be the subject of further public consultation at the appropriate time. The Borough Council considers that it will be particularly important in finalising the design details for the Inner Relief Road to ensure that provision is made for cyclists and that frequent, adequate and safe pedestrian crossing facilities are provided to safeguard access for the benefit of those communities severed from the town centre by the new highway.
- 7.34 The scheme currently shows a very favourable rate of economic return which would suggest that it is deserving of a higher priority in the County Council's Roads Programme than it is presently assigned. A major attribute of the Inner Relief Road proposal is the very real prospect of attracting significant private sector funding through the enablement of potentially highly prestigious redevelopment initiatives within the identified opportunity sites and on other potential sites situated adjacent to the proposed road. Considerable redevelopment value is presently constrained by the twin disadvantages of severance from the core commercial area and inadequate vehicular access. In view of these factors the County Council may be persuaded to revise its roads programme in order to supplement any private sector contributions which may emerge over the plan period to enable the earlier implementation of the Inner Relief Road on a joint funding basis.

- 7.35 Planning permission was originally granted in 1992 for the approved route of an A607 Bypass of Rearsby extending from the eastern end of the Syston Northern Bypass to the existing A607 north east of Rearsby. The scheme is included in the Central Leicestershire LTP programme and construction should start in 2004.
- 7.36 The current A6006 through Wymeswold is of a poor standard and passes through a designated Conservation Area of high townscape value. Although the scheme is included in the adopted Structure Plan for construction by 2006 the County Council has not progressed the scheme. It is very unlikely to be funded publicly over the plan period. Given this context and the absence of development pressure along potential routes no corridor is safeguarded in this Plan.

Highway Improvements

- 7.37 In November 1996 the scheme to widen the M1 between junctions 21A and 23A was withdrawn from the Trunk Road Programme. Provision remains for hill climbing lanes on sections of this route, including for the southbound carriageway south of J23 in the plan area.
- 7.38 The principle and extent of the improvement lines along Ashby Road, Epinal Way and Warwick Way in Loughborough was established through the Loughborough Local Plan. These reservations give scope for improvements to the town's infrastructure consistent with the emerging TPP 'Loughborough/Shepshed' Package strategy. They could allow for bus lanes, even segregated bus ways, and cycle lanes rather than additional road capacity. Improvement works are currently dependent upon public funding but private sector contributions could emerge from related development.
- 7.39 The improvement of Greenclose Lane would enable traffic circulation to be improved and permit the implementation of priority measures for buses and cyclists as part of wider measures to improve the town centre. The reservation is intended to facilitate such improvement.

Local Highway Improvement Schemes in Loughborough

7.40 POLICY TR/3

Planning permission will not be granted for development which would prejudice the implementation of the local improvement schemes listed below within the reservations identified on the Proposals Map:

- i) **Southfields Road (between Packe Horse Lane and Albert Street);**
- ii) **Empress Road (north east of the Little Moor Lane junction);**
- iii) **Swingbridge Road (west side).**

Where permitted by redevelopment proposals the opportunity will be taken to secure these local improvements to enable the highway to fulfil its local traffic function more effectively and/or make pedestrian circulation easier and safer.

- 7.41 Southfields Road forms part of the gyratory road system serving the town centre. The reservation along Southfield Road safeguards land which would enable improvements along the route consistent with more sustainable transport policies. This could include, bus priority measures, or cycle lanes. The reservation would be enforced where redevelopment opportunities arise during the plan period. The scheme merits a specific policy given Southfields Road's importance in Loughborough's town centre road system.
- 7.42 The Empress Road and Swingbridge Road schemes are seen as necessary improvements to the road network in Loughborough to accommodate the demands and requirements of modern motor traffic. Where frontages are proposed for redevelopment the opportunity will be taken to achieve highway improvements along the identified sections of road.