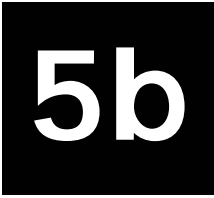

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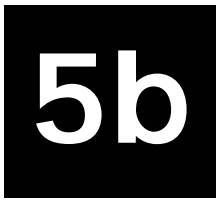


Hinckley, Earl Shilton Area

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Hinckley, Earl Shilton Area

Insert map

DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA

5b.1 The area comprises the county town of Hinckley and the surrounding urban areas of Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton. It covers approximately 37 square km and has a population in the region of 60,000. The area has affinity with Nuneaton in Warwickshire, which lies 7km to the south west of Hinckley. Hinckley lies 20 km south west of Leicester and 17 km north east of Coventry.

5b.2 The area is bordered on the south east by the M69, which links the M6 to the M1 near Leicester. On the southwestern side it is bordered by the A5(T) Trunk Road, which also forms the border with Warwickshire. These two routes intersect at M69 Junction 1.

5b.3 The A47 connects Nuneaton to Leicester, parallels the M69 and caters mainly for local traffic originating in the vicinity of Hinckley and Earl Shilton. The A47 previously passed through the centre of Hinckley but has recently been re-routed following completion of the Hinckley Northern Perimeter road. The A47 passes through the centre of Earl Shilton and there are proposals for a bypass. The A447 connects the Hinckley area to the Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Coalville areas.

5b.4 For journeys by road between the Hinckley area and Leicester motorists can choose between the M69 and A47. Traffic travelling to and from Leicester can use either Junction 1 or Junction 2 of the M69.

ACCESSIBILITY OBJECTIVE

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Bus Transport

5b.5 Inter-urban bus services operating to Hinckley are a mixture of commercial and contract operations. The main service links Leicester and Nuneaton via Hinckley and most services operate commercially although Sunday services are secured under contract to the County Council.

5b.6 Other inter-urban services include County Council contract services to Lutterworth and a commercial service to Coalville.

5b.7 Services to local villages are a mixture of commercial and County Council contract operations. The frequency on some of these routes has recently been increased through the Rural Bus Grant.

5b.8 Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton local services are largely commercial operations provided by the dominant operator, Arriva Fox County. Evening services, which were a County Council contract operation, are now also provided by that operator though still with some County Council subsidy.

5b.9 Hinckley area services have remained broadly stable over recent years.

5b.10 There is considerable scope for improving the quality and quantity of present bus services to provide a better service to the public. A Hinckley Quality Bus Partnership has been established between the County and Borough Councils and Arriva Fox County. This body has sought to build on the experience gained with Quality Bus Partnerships in Central Leicestershire and in Loughborough, details of which are given in Chapter 4.

5b.11 The Quality Bus Partnership is pursuing several initiatives, including:

- real time information and priority at signals;
- bus shelters;
- town centre arrangement – Regent Street;
- town centre arrangement – bus station;
- timetable information.

5b.12 At present there is a mixture of commercial and publicly owned shelters. Surveys have revealed many busy stops have no shelters and many of the shelters are old. Some relocation or new provision of shelters is necessary to ensure maximum benefit to passengers.

5b.13 Negotiations for a new bus shelter contract will be commencing during 2000, with a view to preparing for a better deal when the

existing bus shelter contract terminates in April 2002.

5b.14 A programme of providing footways and access to the buses is being pursued to facilitate access for disabled people, young people and people with pushchairs.

5b.15 Research and monitoring work is being undertaken on how the Quality Bus Partnership could be most effective in improving bus services on the Hinckley/Earl Shilton corridor. Improvements to bus stops and shelters and intelligent transport systems (ITS) such as real-time information and related traffic signal priority for buses are being assessed for implementation. The longer term strategy is to extend this programme to all routes in the area.

5b.16 Taxis / Private Hire Vehicles

5b.17 Taxis are an important form of public transport and at present there are around 93 taxis and 9 private hire vehicles licensed or registered to operate in the Hinckley and Bosworth area.

5b.18 In order to accommodate the large number of taxis in the Borough a Traffic Regulation Order has recently been implemented, close to Hinckley town centre, which removed a length of public on-street parking to dedicate the road space to taxis.

5b.19 In addition to standard licensing procedures the Borough Council carries out knowledge tests where the driver's awareness of the rule book, Highway Code, numeracy and area geography are all analysed. Ad hoc vehicle/driver tests are also undertaken and, if necessary, warnings issued to correct a problem, and powers to suspend applied if the warning is not respected.

5b.20 The Borough Council has also established a fare charging regime for taxis, which stipulates the maximum a driver can charge.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INFORMATION

5b.21 A comprehensive timetable book has recently been launched which was joint funded by the Quality Bus Partnership and distributed

door to door in Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton. The book includes colour coded timetable pages, colour coded route maps, details of travel concessions for the elderly, disabled or unemployed, and services for mobility impaired people. In addition bus operators have provided timetable displays.

5b.22 The public transport information plan for the early part of the LTP period includes a gradual extension of existing Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) systems and the local application of countywide initiatives.

5b.23 The priorities for implementation of ITS have been split into three bands:

- Priority 1 - Route 81, which has a high patronage and experiences the worst delay problems;
- Priority 2 - Routes 82, 72, 7 and 158, which follow similar routes and are reasonably well used;
- Priority 3 - Other bus routes and other signal controlled junction to complete the picture.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE

5b.24 Hinckley has a small bus station and also a number of on-street terminal stops. However, there is little effective interchange between services.

5b.25 In 1998 the Borough Council undertook a retail, commercial and leisure study of Hinckley town centre. The study identified the feasibility of development sites in the town centre, particularly the area around Hinckley bus station and another site around the Co-op. After considering the two sites, it was concluded that there were good prospects for developing the area around Hinckley bus station and that the Borough Council could have a proactive role in promoting this area of the town centre.

5b.26 An outline scheme has been developed by a supermarket chain for the site, which includes a new bus station with toilets and information kiosk, a supermarket, several non-food retail units, offices, a family pub and car parking.

5b.27 The new bus station will have strong links with the proposed supermarket, shops and offices and will be designed so that is accessible to all. Safety and security will be important features.

5b.28 The Borough and County Council have been holding discussions with the developers to progress transport related issues, including provision of measures to improve facilities for pedestrians linking the retail development site and the town centre. A formal planning application has not yet been submitted, but a Transport Impact Assessment (TIA) is being prepared and the car parking arrangements are being established. The development site occupies a significant existing town centre car park but the developer is preparing plans with car parking allocation satisfying the newly adopted maximum (rather than minimum) standards.

PASSENGER RAIL

5b.29 The area has one railway station, 600m from Hinckley town centre, on the Leicester – Birmingham railway line served by Central Trains. There are direct trains to Coventry and Birmingham and Leicester (20 min) but journeys to London require a change at Leicester or Nuneaton.

5b.30 There is scope for improvement of the rail station. It is out of the town centre, not staffed after 1.00 p.m. and there are no monitors or public announcement systems. It also suffers from a low level of service. Improvements would bring the station up to current standards, and reduce the frustrations of travellers using the station.

5b.31 The Borough Council, County Council and Arriva Fox Bus Company have been proactive through the Quality Bus Partnership (see 5b.10 above) in through ticketing to encourage passengers to make journeys on various bus routes. It is intended to explore this further, to cover bus/rail journeys.

5b.32 A cycle network plan has been developed (see 5b.65ff), and this includes links to Hinckley Railway Station. During discussions with the Cyclists Touring Club identified areas for improvement include the facilities for cyclists leaving bicycles at railway stations, and the delays in waiting for trains

with appropriate facilities for cyclists who do not wish to store their bicycle at a station.

5b.33 The County Council intends to apply for Rail Passenger Partnership funding to provide an enhanced Loughborough/Nuneaton service. This should secure a high frequency and more even service to Leicester, Coventry and Birmingham. The improved service will help towards the aspiration of increasing frequency of services to Coventry and Birmingham.

DISABILITY

5b.34 A shop mobility scheme has started in Hinckley as a result of a partnership between public, private and voluntary sectors including the Council of Voluntary Services (CVS), Hinckley Disability Action Group, the Borough and County Councils, Hinckley Chamber of Trade, businesses and retailers.

5b.35 The scheme provides a small office/storage facility within the Britannia Centre car park to accommodate motorised wheelchairs and scooters, which are loaned to members of the public who have difficulty getting around. The scheme is a great benefit to disabled people.

5b.36 A Disability Action Group involves the Borough Council, local CVS and members of the community. The group meets regularly and identifies sites where disabled people experience problems with mobility, particularly relating to access on the public highway. Shop owners within the area are encouraged and assisted in improving access for disabled people to their premises. Work has also been undertaken to provide dropped kerbs where problems are identified. There is clear evidence that the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act are being implemented.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVE

TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT - HINCKLEY

Background

5b.37 In 1997/8 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council carried out a wide ranging consultation exercise to establish a vision for the town centre for the future. Questionnaires were distributed and public workshops held to establish common themes that were causing concern and how these issues could be progressed. The key requirements which emerged were to:

- reduce the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles;
- provide improved pedestrian links;
- green Hinckley town centre;
- provide adequate car parking;
- improve public and visitor facilities in the town centre;
- improve access for people with mobility and sensory impairment;
- improve the range and quality of shops in Hinckley town centre;
- improve the vitality of Hinckley;
- foster a sense of civic pride.

Hinckley Retail Study

5b.38 A retail and commercial leisure study of Hinckley town centre and surrounding areas was undertaken in 1998. The recommendations for action include the following:

- a need for environmental improvements, particularly in secondary areas including Regent Street and the rail station;
- improvements to pedestrian links, including to and from the leisure centre, the theatre and the bus station, for example, by the introduction of safer and easier road crossings, signing and footpath widening where appropriate;

- improvements to public transport accessibility by locating additional bus stops along Regent Street;
- enhanced 'legibility' of car parking through better signing;
- 'living over the shop' type initiatives, which minimise the need to travel to work, should be investigated.

Hinckley Town Centre Improvements

5b.39 After extensive public consultation, and in partnership with the County Council, the Borough Council has launched the Hinckley Town Centre Initiative. The aim of the initiative is to provide a long-term programme to revitalise the town centre through a range of environmental improvements and proposals to bring new investment to the town. Traffic management measures and improvements for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users are proposed as part of the scheme.

5b.40 Following the public consultation a partnership was formed between businesses, public bodies, organisations and individuals to promote the regeneration of the town centre and secure the commitment of both the public and private sectors.

Regent Street

5b.41 Regent Street (B590) is a Local Distributor road within the secondary town centre shopping area in Hinckley and within the town centre conservation area. The amount of through traffic in Regent Street is substantial, and this has a significant impact on the environmental quality of the area. Pollution, public safety and noise are issues that detract from use of the area, and these need to be addressed to aid regeneration.

5b.42 The overall aims for the Regent Street project are:

- making the area more attractive for visitors, businesses and residents;
- reducing the speed of traffic and making the area safer for pedestrians;
- providing additional amenity space;
- creating a sense of civic pride;

- ensuring good accessibility for buses and cyclists;
- removing signage clutter;
- introducing trees into the street scene.

5b.43 The County and Borough Councils are working in partnership to progress the design of a suitable scheme for Regent Street. It is intended to reduce the traffic flow by displacing traffic on to suitable alternative routes. Therefore, the study area has been widened to ensure a comprehensive set of measures is considered, especially links with the privately financed bus station redevelopment.

5b.44 Traffic surveys have been undertaken in Regent Street and the outer town centre road network to enable modelling work to be carried out. This has revealed that several junctions, particularly to the north of the town centre, will require minor modification to avoid potential congestion and consequential rat running in adjacent side roads if traffic is displaced from Regent Street.

5b.45 Discussions with statutory authorities and public transport operators, along with other interested parties, have enabled a clear picture to be developed for the progression of this scheme. A public participation exercise to enable public views to be heard on the details is programmed for the second half of 2000.

5b.46 Once the above exercise has been carried out, further design work will be completed and it will be possible to establish a programme of works. The Borough and County Councils are jointly funding the scheme and have identified significant sums in capital estimates during the next three years. The County Council's anticipated LTP funding that will be required is shown below:

2000/01	£25,000
2001/02	£250,000
2002/03	£250,000
2003/04	£100,000

5b.47 The Borough Council has indicated that expenditure of around £400,000 of funding is available to support the scheme, £60,000 in 01/02 and £180,000 02/03 with additional funds at a comparable level in 03/04. It is also

expected that developer contributions will be available to fund the scheme.

Bus Station Development

5b.48 Extensive redevelopment of the bus station site is planned to create a high quality shopping facility and bus station in this key town centre location. The Borough Council is collaborating with a developer on this project and it is intended that this will complement and enhance the Regent Street improvement scheme. Details are given in Public Transport Interchange section.

Other Regeneration Initiatives in Hinckley

Single Regeneration Budget

5b.49 The Bridging Communities SRB6 bid seeks support for the economic and environmental regeneration of Hinckley town centre.

Development Control

5b.50 Several high density residential flats have been granted planning approval close to the town centre. Lower car parking standards have been adopted with these sites as there is easy access to public transport and consequently the need to travel by car diminishes. The success of this will depend particularly on development of the public transport system in Hinckley.

North-South Walkway

5b.51 Heritage lottery funding has been provided to do a study to improve pedestrian access between the north and south of the town. This builds on the Hinckley town centre initiatives and is supported by the Hinckley Economic Partnership. Work on this initiative has commenced with draft designs of a North-South walkway linking Mount Road to Stockwell Head proposed.

5b.52 The original purpose of the project was wider public access to urban parks and gardens. Because of the layout of the town, this can be extended to provide better pedestrian links to shops as well as town centre businesses.

TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT - EARL SHILTON

5b.53 About 15,000 vehicles a day pass through Earl Shilton town centre and the problems suffered by residents and businesses can be grouped into three broad categories:-

- high vehicle speeds through residential areas on the western approach to the town;
- varying footway and carriageway widths through the area of shopping and community facilities in the town centre, where there is conflict between vehicles and pedestrians, including shoppers and children;
- terraced residential properties, closely fronting the main road to the east of the town centre, which are subject to traffic noise and pollution.

5b.54 To alleviate these problems it is proposed to introduce an integrated package of traffic management and town centre improvements for Earl Shilton. These would be carried out upon completion of the Bypass (see 5b.81ff), as removal of the through traffic, especially freight vehicles as outlined in the section below, would be needed before the measures could be implemented.

5b.55 Extensive public consultation is essential to establish the details of the town centre improvements, but at this stage in the development of the scheme the preliminary objectives are to:

- create a safe environment in the residential areas, the town centre and in the vicinity of the schools;
- further discourage through traffic by reducing speeds on through routes and prohibiting HGV through movements thereby sustaining the environmental benefits of the scheme;
- improve the pedestrian environment in the town centre for the benefit of shoppers and local commerce;
- improve pedestrian and cycle links into and through the town centre to encourage these alternative modes of transport for local journeys;

- improve reliability and accessibility to public transport.

FREIGHT

5b.56 The area is predominantly urban and whilst there are some major industrial estates there are numerous individual industrial premises throughout the area requiring heavy goods vehicle access.

5b.57 The County and Borough Councils are committed to minimising the impact of Heavy Goods Vehicles on inappropriate areas. The Councils are therefore developing a local lorry management strategy, and will continue to work through the Freight Quality Partnership to secure environmental improvements.

5b.58 Due to the limited headroom under the railway bridge across the A5(T) Trunk Road, overheight vehicles have to divert through residential areas. As mentioned in 5b.77ff, the Highways Agency has consulted on proposals for improvements to the A5(T), and, as it would be desirable to concentrate heavy goods vehicles on the A5(T), it is giving further consideration to increasing the headroom under the railway bridge. The LTP participation exercise revealed strong support for improvements to the A5(T) and reducing the low headroom of the bridge.

HEALTH OBJECTIVE

AIR QUALITY

5b.59 The Borough Council is in the process of reviewing its air quality as required by the Environment Act 1995 and has identified road traffic as a significant source of air quality problems in the area. Assessments have been made which indicate that the annual mean for Nitrogen Dioxide may exceed the air quality objective of $40\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (21 ppb) for 2005 adjacent to the A5(T).

5b.60 Detailed modelling and continuous monitoring has been carried out to validate the model, which will be completed in the near future in conjunction with Leicester City Council and several other District Councils. This will determine whether Air Quality Areas will need to be declared. Consultation, especially with the Highway Agency, and

partners of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Quality Forum will continue. Measures to reduce air pollution on the problem routes will be identified through the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Air Quality Forum.

WALKING

5b.61 The County and Borough Councils undertake improvements to facilitate walking and encourage pedestrian movement, such as the crossing facilities implemented at Hinckley Road and Sapcote Road, Burbage. Pedestrian improvements are also included in the town centre proposals, where the main emphasis is improving the environment for pedestrians.

5b.62 In order to achieve a more co-ordinated and strategic approach the Borough and County Councils are proposing to develop a local pedestrian strategy. This will identify a network of pedestrian routes to improve access for all sections of the community to local facilities.

Yards/Walkways Regeneration

5b.63 There are many yards and walkways in the Hinckley area that have lost their original character. To facilitate development in some of these areas, surveys have been undertaken to establish their present condition. Details of existing street furniture, surfacing, accessibility and safety, including lighting, are being reviewed with a view to formulating a programme of works for improvement.

CYCLING

5b.64 In response to the National Cycle Strategy the Borough Council has prepared a Cycle Network Plan for the Hinckley Urban Area comprising Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton. It is also working closely with the County Council to develop a detailed strategy for Leicestershire, which will have due regard to the rural area as well as other important cycling issues. These include the provision of changing accommodation and showers at the workplace, and secure parking facilities to help tackle cycle theft.

The Cycling Network Plan

5b.65 An important element in the preparation of the Cycle Network Plan has been the setting up of a steering group. The street group comprises Members and officers of the Borough and County Councils, representatives from the Earl Shilton and Burbage Parish Councils, trade and community groups and members of the Cycle Touring Club (CTC). The group has met on several occasions to discuss cycling issues and identify cycle routes.

5b.66 The Cycle Network primarily concentrates on providing the following:

- ❑ safe cycle routes to schools to try and encourage more children to cycle to school and help combat traffic problems associated with the 'school run';
- ❑ radial cycle routes leading into and linking the four town centres: Barwell, Burbage, Earl Shilton and Hinckley;
- ❑ safe cycling links to residential and employment areas, local shopping centres, community and leisure facilities, public transport interchanges and educational establishments;
- ❑ links into the countryside to enable people to enjoy cycling as a healthy pursuit.

5b.67 Measures to help increase cycle use in the Hinckley urban area and improve road safety for cyclists will be implemented. These include on-street cycle routes using traffic calmed roads, traffic signals to facilitate the crossing of busy roads and segregated cycleways. In the town centres of Hinckley, Barwell, Burbage and Earl Shilton it is proposed to designate 20 mph zones, which will improve road safety for cyclists.

5b.68 The Cycling Network Plan was consulted on over a two month period in May and June 1999. The consultation included a public notice and press release, exhibitions, information leaflet/questionnaire, and a cycling report showing the proposed cycle routes. Neighbouring authorities and other organisations considered likely to have an interest in cycling matters were consulted directly for their views.

5b.69 Progress on the cycle network will depend on the availability of funds. Work will be prioritised into primary and secondary routes, with finance targeted at the primary routes. Initial emphasis will be given to the establishment of safe routes to schools, and radial routes leading to the town centres, linking important public facilities and educational establishments.

5b.70 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council adopted the Hinckley Area Cycling Network Plan in November 1999 as Supplementary Planning Guidance.

SAFETY OBJECTIVE

ROAD CASUALTY REDUCTION

5b.71 Analysis of personal injury accidents has identified a number of existing accident cluster sites in the area. These will be investigated further to establish the most appropriate methods to address the particular problems identified.

5b.72 The Borough Council, in conjunction with the County Council, is currently carrying out a programme of schemes to improve road safety close to schools where there are high pedestrian flows, poor accident records and problems with speeding vehicles. These are discussed in more detail in 5b.98ff. It is intended that at least one of the pilot school travel schemes in the County will be in this area.

5b.73 The Highways Agency is conducting a study into signalising the A5(T)/M69 junction, to address economy and safety issues.

PERSONAL SECURITY

5b.74 The Borough Council has employed a Community Development Officer to implement a crime reduction strategy. Issues of concern to the local community have been vital in establishing the strategy.

5b.75 The Borough Council, has also made a successful bid for Home Office funding for CCTV, extending the existing scheme with mobile cameras and a dedicated system in Earl Shilton. This will encourage more

pedestrians to use the town centre facilities by reducing fear of crime.

5b.76 Consultation with communities highlighted issues of concern regarding inadequate lighting on footpaths. This has resulted in additional Borough Council funds being provided to address the problem.

ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVE

HIGHWAY NETWORK

A5(T) Study

5b.77 In the light of the Local Plan Inspector's recommendations regarding the location of development near to A5(T) the Highways Agency commissioned a study into the operation of this section of the road from the M69 to Longshoot Junction. It has established a strategy for the road's operation and improvement in conjunction with development over the next 15 years. It anticipates that a significant proportion of any improvement would be funded by contributions from developers.

5b.78 The strategy recognises that upgrading the A5(T) Trunk Road to a high standard to accommodate all possible traffic demand would not be viable in either economic or environmental terms.

5b.79 The strategy also recognises the need to promote integration and encourage cycling, walking and public transport so that the need for car journeys is reduced. The strategy was publicly consulted on in 1999.

5b.80 Further examination of ways to improve headroom at the railway bridge over the A5(T) is currently underway.

Earl Shilton Bypass

5b.81 The LTP contains a bid for construction work to be commenced on the Earl Shilton Bypass in the final year of the plan period.

5b.82 The proposed route of the Bypass was established following extensive public

consultation in 1985, itself brought about by concerns about the accident records for the A47 through Earl Shilton and environmental problems this route caused. The studies looked at both northern and southern bypasses, as well as additional links onto the M69, but following public meetings and economic assessments it was concluded that the southern route was the preferred option. The Bypass was included in the Hinckley Area Local Plan, which was adopted following a public inquiry in 1989.

5b.83 The scheme attracted no opposition and was further endorsed at the 1997 Public Inquiry into the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan. A reservation for it is included in the Local Plans for Hinckley and Bosworth (nearly adopted) and Blaby District (adopted).

5b.84 The scheme is included in the existing adopted Structure Plan to 2006, and is one of five major schemes in the Leicestershire LTP area included in the Deposit Draft of the revised Structure Plan. It is envisaged that three of these will be fully funded by developer proposals, and the Earl Shilton Bypass is seen as the second priority for public funding after the Ashby Bypass, for which Government funding has now been approved.

5b.85 The existing A47 through Earl Shilton is a winding single carriageway road of continually changing width with continuous frontage development. It passes through the focal point of the town, bisecting shopping and community facilities and creating conflicts between traffic and pedestrians.

5b.86 The absence of the bypass would mean that the high traffic flows through the town would continue. It would be very difficult to encourage people to use alternatives to the car as cycling and walking close to the A47 is threatening, and the environment is suffering because of the traffic problems, and consequentially there are health risks.

5b.87 Between August 1994 and August 1999, 95 injury accidents were reported on the A47 between the proposed terminal points of the Bypass.

5b.88 East of the town centre, terraced houses are as little as 1.2m from the kerb. As traffic enters the town from the west, passing

through a residential suburb, there are problems of traffic speed. Many of the junctions and accesses are substandard. Often the only means of vehicular access to buildings is by parking on the highway.

5b.89 The Bypass would improve conditions along the A47 by reducing through traffic in the main business, community and shopping areas of the town, resulting in improved road safety and an enhanced town centre environment for pedestrians, cyclists, shoppers and residential areas fronting the road. Construction of the Bypass, along with dedicated cycle lanes, would also create advantages to public transport operators, ensuring a better guarantee of journey times.

5b.90 Following construction of the road it will be possible to implement complementary improvement measures in Earl Shilton town centre to slow down traffic, provide a better environment for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users and encourage through traffic to use the Bypass.

5b.91 Following the roll forward of the Structure Plan, which specifically earmarks Earl Shilton amongst the main urban areas for housing, employment, services and leisure, the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council will roll forward its Local Plan. It will need to know at the outset that the Earl Shilton Bypass has progressed at least to an advanced stage, enabling the provision of new development to be considered with confidence. Uncertainty over the future of the Bypass would be likely to frustrate the land use planning process.

Support for the Scheme

5b.92 In 1999 the Earl Shilton Bypass Action Group formed with a committee and many supporters. In summary, the following issues are their primary concerns;

- traffic has already grown to an unacceptable level and, even ignoring any future growth, the bypass is needed now;
- the number and size of freight vehicles running through the East Shilton is threatening and dangerous to pedestrians, cyclists and other road users;
- at peak times traffic is slow moving on the A47 and splits the community, and it is dangerous and difficult to cross. The vitality

of businesses suffer because of the access problems;

- ❑ pollution and noise creating difficulties for all those either working, living or walking along the A47;
- ❑ the safety record of the A47.

5b.93 During the LTP participation exercise there was strong local support for a bypass.

5b.94 Large freight operators in the area include Crowfoot Carriers and Caterpillar, and these support the bypass.

Scheme Progress

5b.95 During the current LTP time period design work, land acquisition and all necessary Statutory Orders should be completed, with a start of construction programmed for autumn 2005.

5b.96 The anticipated expenditure profile is:

	£000
2000/01	35
2001/02	180
2002/03	130
2003/04	120
2004/05	130
2005/06	2,420
Post LTP period	5,970

5b.97 In summary, construction of the Earl Shilton Bypass:

- ❑ will remove traffic from unsuitable narrow built-up streets;
- ❑ will improve the safety, noise and air quality environment for vulnerable road users, frontage residents and businesses;
- ❑ has overwhelming support from the County and District Councils, and from local residents;
- ❑ will enable the implementation of town centre safety and environmental improvements;
- ❑ is likely to be essential for the planning process in the roll forward of the Local Plan.

SCHOOL TRAVEL

School Safety Scheme

5b.98 Since 1996 the Borough Council has allocated funds additional to those of the County Council for traffic safety schemes close to schools. Following requests from just under forty schools a ranking system was established to determine priorities. The factors include: traffic flow, pedestrian flow, existing traffic speed, and accident statistics. Due to limitations on funds the schemes implemented to date have been aimed primarily at driver persuasion.

5b.99 The initial schemes involve the use of

- ❑ illuminated school warning signs on yellow backing boards on both sides of the carriageway;
- ❑ realignment of kerbs to increase the footway width;
- ❑ coloured panels across the full width of the carriageway;
- ❑ improved street lighting;
- ❑ extensive use of carriageway markings, including centre warning lines, slow, school keep clear, white 'H' bars across driveways;
- ❑ guard rails to protect pedestrians;
- ❑ concrete bollards on grass verges to reduce potential for parking.

5b.100 The intention has been to create a better environment for pedestrians, reduce available on-street parking and reduce the speed of traffic. These types of measures have been introduced in Earl Shilton, Barlestone, Burbage, Market Bosworth and Hinckley.

5b.101 In addition to the countywide initiatives the Borough Council is developing links with schools and businesses to encourage them to improve their environmental management. As activities in this area develop, opportunities to promote green travel will increase. The Borough Council's initiative to draw up an Urban Cycle network, as outlined earlier, identifies safer cycle routes to high schools and community colleges as its highest priority. As the network begins to take shape opportunities will be taken to raise travel awareness in the entire school community.

5b.102 The participation process revealed strong support to alleviate issues outside school and Safer Routes to Schools initiatives will be given a high priority throughout the life of this LTP.

To improve safety at schools in the area the Borough Council spent approximately £145,000 on improvements to Burbage Road, Brookside, and Tudor Road, which are main school access roads for three schools. A further scheme is being implemented in 2000 on Stoke Road. Measures to improve safety around schools will complement proposed future School Travel Plans.

BUSINESS TRAVEL PLANS

5b.103 The Borough Council is keen to reduce the environmental impact that results from staff travel. A staff travel survey has been conducted and the Council has approved an Internal Environmental Management programme that focuses on many transport items, including:

- targets to minimise the levels of mileage on Borough Council business;
- assistance in the purchase of pool cycles;
- promotion of car sharing;
- raising awareness of CO₂ emissions.

5b.104 When negotiating with developers pursuing large employment proposals the Council now insists on the preparation and subsequent implementation of a Business Travel Plan, for example Hammonds at Nutts Lane, Hinckley, and Caterpillar at Desford. These initiatives are proving to be varied, but common themes emerging are:

- facilities for cyclists* - access to the site, provision of secure cycle sheds, shower facilities and financial incentives;
- facilities for pedestrians* - access to the site, financial incentives;
- public transport partnerships* with local operators to subsidise travel to the site by

public transport, public transport facilities within the site;

- car sharing* – encouragement of staff to share, availability of car sharing database;
- car parking* – Pay and Display staff car parks.

PARKING MANAGEMENT

Parking in New Developments

5b.105 The Borough Council expects to adopt the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan in summer 2000. Parking policies in the plan seek to impose maximum levels of parking for new development rather than minimum standards as previously applied. This also allows for lower standards at sites served by a realistic choice of transport modes, and better provision for cyclists and motor cyclists.

5b.106 Recently several high density residential developments (flats) have been granted planning approval with low car parking provision. The sites are close to the town centre and well accessed by public transport.

5b.107 The redevelopment of the bus station site will have car parking below current parking standards as it is predicted that a high percentage of journeys to the site will be undertaken by bus, a bus station being part of the development.

Public Car Parks

5b.108 The Borough Council controls eight short stay car parks (557 spaces) and nine long stay car parks (482 spaces) which are subject to a charging regime to ensure their most efficient use. The location of the car parks has been carefully considered to concentrate short-term car parking close to the town centres and to restrict long term car parking further afield. Regular enforcement ensures an efficient turnover of spaces and thus the maximum benefit to the town centre. The last charging review introduced significant increases for long term parking in the short stay car parks to discourage car borne commuters.

5b.109 For the last two years the Borough Council has organised a temporary park and ride scheme operating between Safeway

Supermarket on the Hinckley Northern Perimeter Road and Regent Street in the town centre. The scheme operated in 1999 at a 10 minute frequency between 8.30 am and 5.00 p.m. for the four Saturdays leading up to Christmas. After the initial success of the project in 1998 the frequency of the service was improved by increasing the number of buses from 2 to 3. In order to encourage use the service was subsidised by the Borough Council. It is planned to continue the scheme.

On-street Parking

5b.110 Close to Hinckley town centre there are significant areas of residential development with no off-street parking provision. There is competition to park on-street in these areas, with residents often suffering. In order to address this problem, the Borough Council is pursuing experimental Traffic Regulations Orders to provide residents only or shared parking in roads close to the town centre. Depending on the success of these experiments, these restricted zones will be extended around the town centre.

INTEGRATION OBJECTIVE

LAND USE PLANNING

Local Plan

5b.111 It is envisaged that the Borough Council's Local Plan will be adopted in summer 2000 and a review started in 2001. The review will take full account of the transport policy developments contained in both the new Structure Plan and the Local Transport Plan.

5b.112 Hinckley and Earl Shilton are earmarked as priority locations for development in both the current and Deposit Draft Structure Plans. As a result of uncertainty surrounding the Earl Shilton Bypass little new development has been allocated in the soon to be adopted Local Plan. If further development at Earl Shilton is not to be continually frustrated then a commitment to its construction needs to be given. In that event, it is quite possible that developer contributions could be obtained towards its construction from any new development allocated in the roll forward of the Local Plan.

5b.113 Current development proposals in the Local Plan are focused on Hinckley and it is anticipated that in addition to local transport improvements those developments will make significant contributions to the programme of improvements to the A5(T) being planned with the Highways Agency.

Developer Contributions to Transport Infrastructure

Figures in circles relate to development sites shown on Figures 5b.1 at the start of this chapter.

Earl Shilton Bypass ①

5b.114 A 5 Ha housing development is proposed in the Hinckley Local Plan, now nearing adoption, which requires that the primary vehicular access to the site will be accessed directly from a new junction on the Earl Shilton Bypass, and that the developer will make a contribution. Land assembly is to be finalised, and a planning brief will be prepared.

Sketchley Road ②

5b.115 Funding from the proposed industrial development has been made available to improve the Hinckley A5(T) / Sketchley Road junction. The scheme improves access across the junction for cyclists and provides priority for buses.

Hinckley Bus Station Development ③

5b.116 A private developer is redeveloping the area round the existing Hinckley bus station to provide retail and office accommodation. Part of the proposed redevelopment is the provision of a new bus station. The current bus station is under-utilised as it is away from the main town centre shopping facilities. However, it is anticipated that the proposed redevelopment's associated facilities and reduced car parking would increase the attractiveness of a bus station at this location. More details of the development are given in 5b.24ff.

Coventry Road, Hinckley ④

5b.117 Conditional planning permission has been granted for this employment/housing development, which will provide:

- ❑ traffic signals on the A5(T)/A47 junction, which is an identified road traffic accident cluster site;
- ❑ a right turn lane and toucan crossings at the accesses to the site;
- ❑ a cycleway along Coventry Road;
- ❑ a signalled junction with pedestrian/cycle crossings;
- ❑ the signalisation of the canal bridge on Nutts Lane to provide single-lane operation, thereby reducing the use of the road by inappropriate traffic, reducing accidents and improving conditions for pedestrians.

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Corporate Plan

5b.118 The Borough Council's Corporate Plan objective is to enhance the quality of life of all people in the Borough. Several key areas have been identified to ensure this will be delivered, one of the areas being transport. The task associated with transport is 'to achieve a transport system which meets requirement for access and economic development in a sustainable way' and five action areas have been identified to achieve this:

- ❑ improving access to everyday facilities to reduce reliance on the private car;
- ❑ supporting the local economy and accommodating economic growth in suitable locations;
- ❑ improving air quality and encouraging walking and cycling;
- ❑ reducing traffic accidents and the fear of accidents for cyclists and pedestrians;
- ❑ reducing the impact of traffic on people and on the environment.

