

CHAPTER 2

The wider context

Introduction and overview

2.1 LTP2 must take account of the wider implications of transport and look beyond the five-year period in setting a direction for the longer term. As well as considering transport problems and opportunities, it must recognise the many interests that depend on the effectiveness of the transport system, and thereby influence the demand for transport. Transport is a means to an end, and the overall effectiveness of our transport strategy will ultimately be measured by the extent to which it contributes to achieving the wider objectives of our county.

2.2 This chapter sets out a broad view of transport in Leicestershire and how its future development needs to respond both to national and regional policies and to the wider policies and strategies of the County and District Councils. The results of consultation are presented, with a summary of the views of the many partner organisations, other stakeholders and many individuals. These influences are drawn together in defining a longer-term transport strategy and setting the overall priorities in transport for the five-year LTP period.

National and regional context

2.3 LTP's are vital to the delivery of much of the national transport agenda, and they therefore need to reflect properly the various national and regional priorities. Regional government, in particular, is becoming increasingly influential, with a new role in advising government on transport spending in the region on roads and railways.

2.4 The regional transport strategy is one of several parts of the regional spatial strategy for land use and development. It incorporates the spatial and transport aspirations of the regional economic strategy, and highlights the regional components of government transport strategy, emphasising the proposals and actions required of LTP's. Regional spatial strategy is set out for the medium and longer-term and has an important influence on County and District Council local plans and development frameworks.

National context

2.5 National transport strategy is set out in the Government White Paper of July 2004 entitled "The Future of Transport". This is supported by the December 2003 White Paper "The Future of Air Transport" and the second July 2004 White Paper "The Future of Rail". Government policies for local transport are further developed in the December 2004 "Full Guidance on Local Transport Plans" and subsequent supporting documents and guidance.



2.6 The Government transport strategy is centred on three themes:

- Sustained investment over the long term to continue to deliver improvements to transport networks
- Improvements in transport management to get better value from expenditure on existing and new infrastructure
- Planning ahead to deal with the long term trends in travel, and establish how road networks might best be managed to accommodate the needs of road users.

2.7 The Future of Air Transport White Paper sets out government strategy for aviation growth and airport expansion throughout the UK. For Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA), near the M1 in the north of Leicestershire, the strategy supports the major forecast growth in air passenger numbers and air freight, but with stringent controls on night noise and its mitigation. Although aviation issues are outside the scope of LTP's, the national strategy expects airport operators to produce master plans for airport expansion in some detail up to 2015, including proposals for surface access. NEMA is consulting on its Masterplan in spring 2006.

2.8 The Future of Rail White Paper is mainly concerned with medium term problems relating to recent rail industry performance, reforming the structure and bringing costs under control. Whilst there has been recent growth in passengers and freight, it is unclear what the long term will bring, and to what extent the railway will be able to accommodate the increasing demand for passenger and freight transport. The LTP2 strategy for passengers by train has been influenced by DfT Rail (formerly the Strategic Rail Authority) route utilisation strategies. For the county and its surrounding areas, the route utilisation strategy for the midland main line envisages a period of consolidation in the medium term with no significant changes to local or longer distance train services. However, re-franchising of midland main line and other East Midlands rail services in 2007 will finally determine the shape of the services for a period stretching well beyond LTP2.

2.9 For local transport the Government strategy envisages a number of outcomes to be delivered by this and future LTP's, as follows:

- More, and more reliable, buses, enjoying more road space (with Leicestershire quoted as an example on the Leicester - Loughborough - Shepshed corridor)
- Demand responsive transport services using buses, car sharing, minibuses, taxis and private hire vehicles to provide accessibility to areas, and to sections of the community, where conventional transport services are unsuitable
- Looking at ways to make services more accessible, so that people have a real choice about when and how they travel
- Exploiting the potential of existing and new technology, for example in managing demand for transport services, improving the capacity of existing networks, improving safety, and providing better and more reliable transport information
- Joined-up transport and land use planning so that new developments do not cause congestion to worsen
- Promoting the use of school travel plans, workplace travel plans and personalised travel planning to encourage people to consider and use alternatives to their cars
- Creating a culture, and improved local environment, so that cycling and walking are seen as attractive alternatives to car travel in both urban and rural areas
- Freer flowing local roads, delivered through a range of measures including congestion charging, and powers under the Traffic Management Act 2004.

2.10 In July 2002 the Government and Local Government Association agreed seven shared priorities, covering a range of local government functions, including the raising of standards across schools, transforming the local environment and meeting transport needs more effectively by:

- Tackling congestion
- Delivering accessibility
- Safer roads
- Better air quality.

2.11 Government policies on planning are set out in Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) and Planning Policy Statements (PPS). LTP2 will contribute to the following key policies by:

- PPS1 - promotion of more sustainable modes of transport
- Draft PPS3 - delivering sustainable travel opportunities to residential developments
- PPG13 - integration of land use planning and transport to make sure appropriate sustainable infrastructure is provided in new developments
- PPG13 - through the accessibility strategy, identifying measures to improve accessibility to places of work, education, health care, shopping and leisure so that people have a real choice about when and how they travel
- PPG7 - through the congestion strategy, identifying measures to make the best use of the existing infrastructure
- PPS12 - LTP2 input to emerging Local Development Frameworks.

Regional context

Regional Transport Strategy

2.12 We continue to ensure our policies have strong links with, and are consistent with, those of our regional partners. This is reflected in a DfT report published in March 2004 called “The Integration of Regional Transport Strategies with Spatial Planning Policies”, which describes the East Midlands region as “a region where sub-regional issues have been given emphasis”.

2.13 The Regional Transport Strategy is part of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the East Midlands (RSS8) produced in March 2005. The LTP has been developed to help deliver the Regional Transport Strategy and is set in the context of wider objectives and policies for developing the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the region. The core 10 objectives for RSS8 are:

- To address social exclusion, through regeneration of disadvantaged areas and reducing regional inequalities in the distribution of employment, housing, health and community facilities
- To protect and where possible enhance the quality of the environment in urban and rural areas so as to make them safe and attractive places to live and work
- To improve the health of the region’s residents, for example through improved air quality, the availability of good quality well designed housing and access to leisure and recreation facilities
- To promote and improve economic prosperity, employment opportunities and regional competitiveness

- To improve accessibility to jobs, homes and services across the region by developing integrated transport, ensuring the improvement of opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of high quality public transport
- To achieve effective protection of the environment by avoiding significant harm and securing adequate mitigation where appropriate, and to promote the conservation, enhancement, sensitive use and management of the region's natural and cultural assets
- To bring about a step change increase in the level of the region's biodiversity, by managing and developing habitats to secure gains wherever possible, and ensuring no net loss of priority habitats and species
- To promote the prudent use of resources, in particular through patterns of development and transport that make efficient and effective use of existing infrastructure, optimise waste minimisation, reduce overall energy use and maximise the role of renewable energy generation
- To take action to reduce the scale and impact of future climate change, in particular the risk of damage to life and property from flooding, especially through the location and design of new development
- To promote good design in development so as to achieve high environmental standards and optimum social benefits.

2.14 The Regional Transport Strategy part of RSS8 has six core strategy and regional transport objectives:

- Support sustainable development in the region's principal urban areas and sub-regional centres
- Promote accessibility and overcome peripherality in the region's rural areas
- Support the region's regeneration priorities
- Promote improvements to inter-regional and international linkages that will support sustainable development within the region
- Improve safety across the region and tackle congestion, particularly within the region's principal urban areas and on major inter-urban corridors
- Promote opportunities for modal shift away from the private car and road based freight transport across the region.

2.15 Policy 43 specifies sub-area objectives. Most of the County is in either the Eastern sub-area or the Three Cities sub-area. The objectives applicable to Leicestershire are:

- Developing opportunities for modal switch away from road based transport in the nationally important food and drink sector
- Reducing peripherality (particularly to the east of the A15) and overcoming rural isolation for those without access to a car
- Reducing the number of fatal and serious road traffic accidents
- Reducing the use of the car in and around Nottingham, Derby and Leicester and promoting a step change in the quality and quantity of local public transport provision
- Improving public transport linkages between Derby, Leicester and Nottingham, and to London and other key national cities
- Improving public transport surface access to Nottingham East Midlands Airport

- Developing opportunities for modal switch away from road-based transport in the manufacturing, retail and freight distribution sectors
- Reducing congestion and improving safety along the M1 corridor and the highway network generally.

2.16 The Regional Transport Strategy specifies a further 12 transport policies, 10 of which are of particular relevance to LTP2. These mainly reflect DfT guidance on LTP's and other national transport policies, including the development of Nottingham East Midlands Airport. Policy 54 is for the development of a regional freight strategy, which was published by the East Midlands Regional Assembly in July 2005.

2.17 The Regional Freight Strategy seeks to influence the commercial freight market through a series of policies implemented by regional and local partners. Key amongst the partnerships is the proposed regional freight advisory group, which will co-ordinate implementation and monitoring of the freight strategy action plans.

2.18 LTP2 has been developed to reflect fully the policy framework set out above, and a certificate of conformity has been prepared by the County Council and approved by officers of the East Midlands Regional Assembly. This certificate is included in Appendix C.

2.19 The regional assembly is currently undertaking a partial review of the Regional Spatial Strategy and, within that, key issues within the transport strategy will also be updated. These cover:

- Further work on behavioural change, in which the region is working with the Highways Agency to develop a regional approach to reducing the growth in road traffic. This includes a number of projects such as the development of a regional transport model to assess the impacts of land use developments. On a similar theme locally, we are also working jointly with the Highways Agency and Charnwood Borough Council on local development framework options papers relating to future development area issues, including sharing information from our Loughborough transport model
- Development of the Master Plan for Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA), and particularly for improved surface access. The Government's White Paper on the future of transport indicated that all airports with scheduled services should establish Airport Transport Forums and prepare Airport Surface Access Strategies to feed into the LTP process. The key objective of the forums is to increase the proportion of journeys made to airports by public transport and to reduce the proportion of journeys made by private car. The County Council is a member of the Nottingham East Midlands Airport Forum, and has had a role in the development of the Strategy. In addition, the Government expects operators of larger airports to draw up a Master Plan, setting out how they intend to implement government policy. NEMA is currently consulting on its draft Master Plan 2006, which sets out the vision of how the airport will develop over the next 25 years. We will respond to this consultation, ensuring that transport issues in Leicestershire are addressed. The recent successful application for Kickstart funding compliments the above approach in developing effective public transport links to the airport from Leicestershire and Central Leicestershire
- A review of car parking standards – we are currently working jointly with EMRA on reviewing regional car parking standards
- Regional Transport Funding Priorities for the East Midlands - The Government has indicated that the East Midlands region will be allocated £871m between 2005/06 and 2015/16 to spend on major transport schemes, including those promoted by the local authorities and Highways Agency schemes on trunk roads that are not on the strategic national network. The technical assessment carried out for the regional assembly

considered 84 schemes and proposals and we contributed fully to this work. The assembly reported to government in January 2006 on where these funds should be allocated. The final decision on funding of schemes is awaited from the Secretary of State. For the Leicestershire LTP area the schemes recommended for the first five year period are:

- A453 widening (M1 J24 to A52 Nottingham) Highways Agency (top priority category)
- Loughborough Town Centre Transport Scheme (medium priority category)
- Earl Shilton Bypass (low priority category).

2.20 Other Leicestershire schemes, including the Melton Mowbray Bypass, are included in the provisional list for later years.

Sub regional strategies

2.21 Key sub regional strategies which have influenced development of LTP2 include those for the Three Cities and for Milton Keynes and South Midlands.

Three Cities Sub Regional Strategy

2.22 The Three Cities Sub-area is one of five within the East Midlands Region and has the objective of developing relationships between Derby, Leicester and Nottingham to create more sustainable patterns of development and movement and promote economic competitiveness.

2.23 It is proposed that the Regional Planning Body, working with the relevant local authorities, the East Midlands Development Association and other interested bodies should develop a Sub Regional Spatial Strategy for the Three Cities Sub-area as part of the next Regional Spatial Strategy Review. The Strategy will contain long term policies and proposals to promote:

- Sustainable patterns of development and movement within and between the three principal urban areas and other settlements within the sub-area and beyond
- The use of public transport for both local and inter urban movements
- An improvement to the quality of the environment, including the provision of semi-natural green space in urban areas
- An improvement to the collective economic performance of the sub-area and a reduction in deprivation
- An approach to optimising the economic benefits of Nottingham East Midlands Airport consistent with sustainable patterns of development and movement
- A consideration of the extent of Green Belt designations.

2.24 The strategy advises that development in the Three Cities Sub-Area development plans, local development frameworks, LTPs and economic development strategies should support the continued regeneration of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham, and maintain and strengthen the economic, commercial and cultural roles of all three cities. This will be achieved by ensuring that provision is made:

- For a mix of housing types
- For employment land to meet the expansion needs of indigenous manufacturing and distribution uses and to encourage new investment
- To regenerate deprived inner urban areas and outer estates

- To enhance the transport links and accessibility both within and between the cities
- For retailing, office, residential, entertainment and service uses within central areas, to provide for a mix of uses to support the vitality and viability of the city centres.

2.25 The strategy advises that outside Nottingham, Leicester and Derby, employment and housing development should be located within, and adjoining, settlements. Such development should be in scale with the size of those settlements, in locations that respect environmental constraints and the surrounding countryside, and where there are good public transport linkages. Development associated with Nottingham East Midlands Airport should be focussed, where possible, in surrounding urban areas, in particular the principal urban areas of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham and the sub-regional centre of Loughborough.

2.26 We work corporately and with our district councils on all transport aspects of spatial planning. Our work in transport includes providing local transport input to the Three Cities Sub-Regional Strategy. Examples of our input include:

- Collaborative development with all six sub-regional transport authorities, the Highways Agency, DfT, emda, EMRA and NEMA of a strategic, integrated land-use and transport model for the Three Cities sub-region (Planning, Transport and Land-use for the East Midlands Economy - PTOLEMY). This model builds on our existing transport models in Loughborough and Central Leicestershire and similar work in neighbouring counties and cities. It is designed to provide a system to enable future land use planning and transport policy initiatives to be assessed in an integrated fashion. PTOLEMY is able to examine the effects of adopting the Regional Spatial Strategy and to test options for strategic land use changes, including the effects of the three cities sub-area attaining 'Growth Point' status. PTOLEMY is also able to test the impact of strategic transport changes, such as the introduction of road pricing at a sub regional level
- Regional Planning and parking standards - including input to the regional transport scheme prioritisation process and co-ordination of parking standards through the East Midlands parking survey
- The East Midlands Rail Forum – where we work with the rail industry, emda and EMRA to provide a forum for discussion on regional rail issues such as the Midland Mainline train service route utilisation study and the Central Trains franchise
- Nottingham East Midlands Airport - through our representation on the airport access group we have been proactive in working with all six sub-regional transport authorities. Recent successes include the improvements to the NEMA to Derby and Loughborough airline shuttle service that was extended in July 2005 to 18 hours a day operation using funding from Kick Start, emda, NEMA and the local authorities. Further improvements to this service are proposed in 2006 when it is extended to hourly frequency, 24 hours a day, served by a larger, low-floor fleet
- Road safety initiatives including the 'Shiny Side up' Partnership, which is made up of local authorities across the East Midlands, all with the shared aim of reducing motorcycle casualty rates. Recent initiatives have included good practice sharing and the 'to die for' and 'think bike' roadside campaigns
- Congestion charging - The potential role of congestion charging and other demand management mechanisms to fund much-improved transport infrastructure and manage car use is recognised throughout the 3 cities area. The six transport authorities within the area are working on a joint bid for pump-priming money from the Government's Transport Innovation Fund in summer 2006 to carry forward investigatory work. More details are provided in Chapter 3

- 3 counties design services procurement – Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire County Councils are in the process of inviting bids from a private sector partner to join them in a collaboration on highway design services, intended to even out peaks in workload and hence deliver greater efficiency. More details are given in Chapter 9
- Smarter Choices: Influencing travel behaviour in the East Midlands - input to developing regional wide smart choices work
- We also have a substantial agenda of other issues we intend to take forward on a sub-regional basis, including:
 - Regional connectivity, including the promotion of an inter-urban coach network
 - Ensuring a consistent shared policy and approach on workplace parking provision
 - Consistency on freight issues, including the location of lorry parks, freight on rail and freight access to bus lanes
 - Signing consistency - including real time driver information
 - Consistency of work with the Highway Agency - motorway and trunk road improvements
 - Developer contributions, in particular to develop shared approaches for standardising contributions to transport infrastructure, possibly by regional tariffs.

Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy

2.27 The implementation of the Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub Regional Strategy will have an impact on the East Midlands Region, Leicestershire and our LTP2.

2.28 In Northamptonshire the focus for growth will be on Northampton, Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough. The close proximity to Leicestershire of this accelerated growth will provide scope for residents of southern Leicestershire to take advantage of new employment opportunities in Northamptonshire. Furthermore, it is hoped that this accelerated growth should in time provide positive 'spin offs' for the economic prosperity of Leicestershire.

2.29 We will work closely with neighbouring local authorities on transport projects and infrastructure improvements to deliver this strategy, with the objective of improving access to employment and other facilities.

2.30 We recognise that there will also be associated risks. These may include the following issues, which were raised in our transport input to the County Council response to the Strategy :

- Concerns about the expected congestion on three-lane sections of the M1 not planned for widening
- Concerns about the likely inadequacy of only four Midland Mainline platforms at the new St Pancras station in London
- Concern that transport to the south of England and mainland Europe could become slower and more expensive from Leicestershire and the East Midlands Region.

2.31 We intend to monitor these issues and, where appropriate, manage them effectively to prevent any future problems.

Regional Economic Strategy

2.32 The regional economic strategy “Destination 2010” of March 2003 also recognises the importance of transport. This strategy was formulated by the East Midlands Development Agency, and its longer-term planning framework and transport needs are provided by RSS8 and the RTS contained within.

2.33 The strategy is geared to making the East Midlands one of the top 20 regions in Europe, a position already attained by the London, Eastern and South East regions of the UK. In 2003 the East Midlands was rated 35 out of the 77 regions in Europe and the following initiatives are identified for improving the rating:

- Employment and Skills: to create high quality employment opportunities and drive up skill levels
- Enterprise and Innovation: to develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation within which entrepreneurs and world class business can prosper
- A Climate for Investment: to improve the quality of the region’s physical infrastructure.

Local context

2.34 Our transport strategy must reflect the pursuit of wider objectives. To ensure this is achieved we have worked closely with all County Council departments and the District Councils in developing it as well as with our key partner, Leicester City Council. This joint working is not confined to strategy preparation but continues on a day to day basis across many aspects of transport, including close working with the District Councils as local planning, environmental health and housing authorities, and with their parking and taxi licensing functions. This section illustrates both how we have used this corporate dimension to inform the transport strategy, and how we implement joint working day by day.

Community Strategy

2.35 Leicestershire Together is the local strategic partnership (LSP) for the County, and brings together a wide range of organisations and partnerships responsible for delivering public services in Leicestershire. The LSP seeks to improve the quality of life for Leicestershire people and to improve the quality and co-ordination of public services in the County. It works closely with the LSP’s for each of the seven district areas and, to strengthen the links further, the Chairs of the districts LSP’s also serve on the County LSP. The County LSP has, in total, representatives of 28 member agencies and partnerships.

2.36 The members of Leicestershire Together are committed to developing:

- A vibrant and thriving county in which to live, work and play
- A county where all have access to quality services
- A county which looks to the future by maximising opportunities for its young people.

2.37 These commitments form the basis of the three main chapters of the Leicestershire Community Strategy, which has been recently revised and was adopted in June 2005. Table 2.1 shows in turn how LTP2 has been informed by our Community Strategy.

Table 2.1 Community strategy and links to LTP2

Plan objectives and vision	Delivering our objectives and vision	Links to LTP	Action
<p>The Community Strategy sets out the main priorities for public agencies for the next 2 to 5 years and seeks to:</p> <p>Improve the quality of life for Leicestershire people</p> <p>Improve the quality and co-ordination of public services in the county.</p> <p>Leicestershire Together has identified that Leicestershire people want, amongst others:</p> <p>Quality services for all, which includes reliable, safe and comfortable public transport (buses, trains and community transport) and integration with walking and cycling facilities, so that people can more easily access essential services such as education, shopping, employment, health and leisure</p> <p>Safer roads, where there is less speeding, and reduced congestion</p> <p>Clean roads and pavements in a good state of repair.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Identify new opportunities for joint working and encourage partners to share skills and knowledge</p> <p>Promote social inclusion and ensure that all sections of the community have the chance to contribute to, and benefit from, our work.</p> <p>Ensure people live safely in a high quality environment</p> <p>Involve communities in planning and delivering services.</p> <p>Enhance the quality of life for Leicestershire residents, whilst taking into account future generations.</p> <p>Provide high quality and value for money services</p> <p>Evaluate our activities and projects to operate more effectively.</p>	<p>We will build on the success of LTP1 by:</p> <p>Improving access to employment and services particularly in areas of greater social deprivation</p> <p>Reducing road casualties</p> <p>Creating a safer environment in which to walk and cycle</p> <p>Making roads safer by reducing the impact of speed</p> <p>Tackling congestion to reduce the impact of traffic on the environment</p> <p>Ensuring we get best value for money from existing assets.</p>	<p>Measures and initiatives that we have introduced, and will continue to implement, to achieve the objectives of the Community strategy include:</p> <p>Focusing on schemes that will maximise benefits and provide good value for money</p> <p>Increasing patronage on commercially run and County Council contract bus services</p> <p>Providing reliable, safe and comfortable public transport to reduce use of private cars</p> <p>Further improving the condition of our roads and providing better information on roadworks</p> <p>Keeping roads and pavements clean with good street lighting</p> <p>Implementing new procedures to build on our successful casualty reduction work</p> <p>Implementing local measures to improve air quality.</p>

Medium Term Corporate Strategy

2.38 Our second full Medium Term Corporate Strategy (MTCS), which was adopted in March 2006 after extensive public consultation, sets out the County Council's own plans, taking account of the Leicestershire Community Strategy. The MTCS sets out our priorities for the 4 year period up to May 2009 and is key in guiding our service and financial planning. The MTCS includes a range of specific priorities and commitments under three overarching aims, which are to:

- Improve quality of life for people
- Improve quality of life in communities
- Improve services so they are high quality and offer value for money.

2.39 The MTCS has the following vision:

We will listen to the views of Leicestershire people and, by working with them and our partner agencies, ensure they enjoy the quality of life which they expect: to live in a County and region which is safe, healthy, attractive and prosperous

2.40 To deliver our vision we will:

- Provide community leadership for the County
- Focus on the needs of service users
- Work to promote equality and reduce disadvantage
- Work in partnership and identify and exploit new opportunities for joint working for the benefit of Leicestershire people
- Value and support a highly motivated and well trained workforce
- Protect and enhance the environment of Leicestershire and take account of the needs of future generations.

2.41 Table 2.2 shows how LTP2 has been informed by our Medium Term Corporate Strategy.

Table 2.2 Medium Term Corporate Strategy and links to LTP2

Plan objectives and vision	Delivering objectives and vision	Links to LTP2	LTP2 actions
<p>The MTCS supports the Leicestershire Community Strategy and the longer term vision currently being developed for the County to 2025.</p> <p>It sets out the key priorities and targets for Leicestershire County Council for the four year period to May 2009.</p> <p>Our vision for improving life in Leicestershire is to listen to the views of Leicestershire people and, by working with them and our partner agencies, ensure they enjoy the quality of life which they expect: to live in a County and region which is safe, healthy, attractive and prosperous.</p> <p>To achieve our vision we aim to:</p> <p>Improve quality of life for people and communities and improve services so they are high quality and offer value for money.</p> <p>To do this we aim, amongst others, to create a better transport system for Leicestershire that delivers safe and efficient transport whilst safeguarding the environment, and improve quality and cost effectiveness through initiatives such as procurement, recycling and quality assurance.</p>	<p>In our previous strategy we delivered 57 of the 65 priorities which were set.</p> <p>To deliver our vision we will:</p> <p>Provide community leadership for the County</p> <p>Focus on the needs of service users</p> <p>Work to promote equality and reduce disadvantage</p> <p>Work with partners to and identify, and exploit, new opportunities for joint working for the benefit of Leicestershire people in such services as road safety and waste.</p> <p>Value and support a highly motivated and well trained workforce</p> <p>Protect and enhance the environment of Leicestershire and take account of the needs of future generations.</p> <p>Our transport strategy will play a key part in improving Leicestershire's environment, for example through our approach to school and workplace travel plans.</p>	<p>In delivering the new strategy we will build on lessons learnt during LTP1, ensuring that we continue to deliver effective measures that provide good value for money.</p> <p>Our transport plans for the County, as outlined in the MTCS, will:</p> <p>Reduce road casualties</p> <p>Tackle congestion</p> <p>Improve air quality</p> <p>Reduce the impact of traffic</p> <p>Improve access to facilities</p> <p>Improve the condition of our roads, pavements, bridges, and street lights</p> <p>Improve customer satisfaction with the highways and transportation service.</p>	<p>Measures and initiatives that we have introduced, and will continue to improve, to achieve the objectives of the MTCS include:</p> <p>Implementing new procedures to build on successful casualty reduction work</p> <p>Undertaking consultations to inform strategies and schemes</p> <p>Introducing a strategy to relieve congestion, including park and ride and improved bus corridors</p> <p>Increasing bus usage and bus satisfaction</p> <p>Reducing car dependence through development of school and workplace travel plans</p> <p>Managing road works to reduce delays</p> <p>Investigating measures to reduce the impact of traffic on communities</p> <p>Implementing our transport asset management plan</p> <p>Introducing improved pedestrian and cycling facilities.</p>

Local Area Agreement

2.42 In June 2005 the Government confirmed that Leicestershire would be part of the second round of pilot Local Area Agreements (LAA's). These are a new way of working to build a more flexible and responsive relationship between the Government and local areas on the priority outcomes that need to be achieved locally. The aim is to improve the way in which government works with local authorities and their partners to improve public services. Our LAA will look to the LTP in its wider context to make an important contribution to many aspects of the quality of life in Leicestershire. As an example, the Accessibility Strategy detailed in Chapter 5 has been developed closely with our LAA.

2.43 The LAA has been developed through the Leicestershire Together Local Strategic Partnership. It provides a co-ordinated approach to developing proposals to meet local priority outcomes and targets. Initially approximately 30 funding streams are expected to be either pooled or aligned to support the LAA and it identifies seven blocks, or themes, as follows:

- Older People
- Healthier Communities
- Children and Young People
- Stronger Communities
- Safer Communities
- Cleaner and Greener
- Economic Development.

2.44 The LTP and other local transport funding, not directly part of the LAA process, will contribute to the LAA outcomes under all of these headings.

2.45 Our LAA sets out what the priorities are for Leicestershire, how the different funding streams can be pooled or aligned and how new initiatives, and new ways of partnership working, can focus on those priorities. Transport officers contributed to the process, identifying ways in which transport can support core outcomes, in consultation with relevant groups. Table 2.3 summarises some of the proposed outcomes of the LAA and the contribution that the LTP makes to achieving these.

Table 2.3 Local Area Agreement and links to LTP2

Relevant key LAA outcomes include:	Links to LTP2
Older people – improve the quality of support for older people living at home and the range of activities that older people participate in.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase / improve access to healthcare facilities • Increase / improve access to healthier food outlets • Reduce the fear of crime to encourage more walking.
Healthier communities – to give priority to reductions in cancer, coronary heart disease and strokes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote walking (e.g. through the Rights of Way Improvement Plan) and cycling strategies, whilst improving the standard and scope of network and facilities to help increase the level of fitness in communities and reduce the impact of serious illness and disease • Encourage adoption of more workplace and school travel plans to the same end • Reduce road casualties through safety schemes, speed management, improved road safety education and publicity • Promote employers’ duty of care for employees whilst driving in connection with work • Improve access to healthier food outlets • Improve access to leisure facilities for all sections of the community.
Children and young people – to reduce the level of childhood obesity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School travel plans which encourage more cycling and walking and less reliance on private car journeys • Cyclist and pedestrian training that improves confidence and ensures children are safer when cycling and walking • Improve access to healthier food outlets by public transport, walking and cycling • Improve access to leisure facilities
Stronger communities – local people feel part of the decision making process and have a role in planning the future of their community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and encourage local communities and parish councils in consultations. These are undertaken to inform strategies and schemes. Use Citizens’ Panels, publicity and consultation, engaging partners, stakeholders, parishes and the public • Respond to requests on maintenance issues and repairing highway faults, for example through Roadline • Act on residents’ concerns, for example safety and speed issues • Improved information about planned roadworks in communities.
Safer communities – to reduce the level of antisocial behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved street lighting to discourage anti-social behaviour and encourage walking, cycling and use of buses in the evening • Better layouts for new developments to maximise visible areas and minimise poorly lit estates • Better access to leisure facilities for young people.
Cleaner and greener – improving the quality of the environment in town and village centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving air quality through tackling congestion • Encourage alternatives to private car use • Repair or replace damaged street furniture, roads etc • Better maintenance of facilities, cleaner areas, bus shelters etc • Joint town centre environmental initiatives with other agencies, as for example in Ashby in spring 2006.
Economic development and enterprise – increase the number of businesses starting up, expanding and locating in the county.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attract new business to towns and villages by reducing effects of congestion • Encourage pedestrians by reducing impact of traffic • Improve public transport access to centres of employment

Structure Plan

2.46 The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan 1996-2016 replaced the Leicestershire Structure Plan that covered the period up to 2006. The Plan was prepared jointly by Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and Rutland County Council.

2.47 The Structure Plan sets out the broad planning strategy for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland. It contains policies on the amount and general location of land for new homes, businesses, shops and leisure facilities. It sets out measures and schemes to protect and enhance the environment and to improve transport networks.

2.48 The Structure Plan is required to interpret national and regional planning guidance. It provides a strategic context for local plans and local development frameworks that contain more detailed land use policies and earmark specific sites for development. The Plan therefore provides a strategic planning framework for development and use of land consistent with national and regional policy.

2.49 The Structure Plan consists of:

- A written statement of policies and proposals, illustrated by a key diagram
- An explanatory memorandum which justifies the policies, presents the information on which they are based, and explains their relationship to national and regional planning guidance.

2.50 We work corporately and with our district councils on all transport aspects of spatial planning. Our work in transport includes:

- Transport input into the updated Structure Plan to ensure land use and transport policies are properly integrated
- Advising the district councils on the transport implications of designating specific areas of land for house building. These land-use decisions are crucial to safeguarding the future of our transport networks with regard to the demand for travel, safety and congestion
- The provision and maintenance of a comprehensive web-based code of practice for highways, transportation and development. This sets out detailed policies and procedures for development, and places a major emphasis on the high quality design of appropriate safe road layouts in areas of new housing
- Working with district councils and developers to ensure that the transport requirements of individual developments are properly accommodated. This activity, which covers all scales of development, has been pursued vigorously for many years and has produced major improvements to Leicestershire's transport infrastructure, including amongst others the road network in the M1 Junction 21 Area and the Epinal Way extension in Loughborough.

Corporate Equality Plan

2.51 The Leicestershire County Council Corporate Equality Plan 2005-2007 aims to create a culture where people of all backgrounds and experience feel appreciated and valued. We are committed to equality in service provision and have a long-established and structured approach to dealing with equality issues, including specific staff training and service analysis. We have taken equality issues fully into consideration during the development of LTP2 and have completed an Equality Impact Assessment of the Plan as detailed in Appendix D.

The change management programme

2.52 The County Council has adopted a radical new approach to managing the extensive programme of change which it faces. With advice from consultants Deloitte we have set up new programme boards covering the four main areas of development, we have re-prioritised to ensure that programmes are properly resourced and manageable, and we have improved our project management capacity along “Prince 2” lines. Three of the four programmes have substantial transport components, to which LTP2 contributes:

- Organisational efficiency – This manages primarily the projects necessary to deliver business efficiencies. Amongst the transport initiatives contributing to this and detailed in Chapter 3 are the new Integrated Passenger Transport Unit and our work with partners on highways service procurement
- Customer First – This manages all aspects of our relationships with customers, and amongst early priorities is the establishment of a corporate customer contact centre. Transport initiatives contributing to this theme include our widely-advertised “Roadline” free-phone number; the development of web-based information on all aspects of transport, including road works; and a new focus on annual measurement of customer satisfaction with different aspects of the transport service, followed by appropriate prioritised action to improve satisfaction further
- Children’s and Adult Services – This manages the many actions to re-structure the authority to meet the requirements of the Children Act. Transport contributes to this through our various different transport services for school children and social services clients, and through other strands such as road safety education and school travel planning.

2.53 The fourth theme, People and Performance, looks inward at the Council’s own workforce and its development.

2.54 We are also developing e-procurement, intended to streamline the process of purchasing goods and services. This forms part of our efficiency agenda, focusing on ‘back office’ systems, as well as contributing to the national target of having all transactions in an electronic format. Within the highways and transportation service we are focussing particularly on management and information systems, and the application of e-procurement to selection of contractors and award of contracts.

Summary of corporate aspects of our transport work

2.55 Corporate working on transport takes place at many levels and in many ways between County Council departments and with our district councils. There are eight particular local government functions with which we work on transport matters, and which have helped us to develop LTP2. For each of these, we give below practical examples of corporate working. These demonstrate how their interdependence with transport influences the LTP and engenders corporate ownership.

2.56 **Spatial planning** – We work corporately and with our district councils on all transport aspects of spatial planning. Our work in transport includes:

- Participation in transport aspects of the emerging Regional Plan (revised RSS8) including the Regional Transport Strategy as discussed in previous paragraphs. This includes the continuing lead role in the transport aspects of regional monitoring, which will be able to draw on transport indicators and targets in LTP2s throughout the region

- Transport contributions to the November 2003 Examination in Public of the draft Regional Spatial Strategy (then draft RPG8)
- Transport input to the County Council response to the draft Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-regional Strategy as discussed in previous paragraphs above
- Local transport input to the Three Cities Sub-Regional Strategy as discussed above
- The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan, which was adopted in March 2005, as detailed above, including the updated explanatory memorandum, with its indicators, targets and monitoring containing transport outcomes for bus patronage and transport access to facilities
- Transport input to local plans and local development frameworks, as noted above
- Transport input to development control, as noted above.

2.57 **Economic development** – We work corporately and with our district councils on the transport aspects of economic development. Examples of our transport work include:

- Transport input to the work of the Leicester Shire Economic Partnership (LSEP), a not-for-profit company established by the East Midlands Development Agency (emda). Work with emda is managed on a corporate basis, including the large number of LSEP-funded projects involving joint work with the districts
- The expanding Nottingham East Midlands Airport (NEMA) which, in the north of Leicestershire close to Derby and Nottingham, is a key influence on economic development in both the County and the region as a whole. Our involvement is co-ordinated at the corporate level so that issues of surface access by car, public transport and freight, as well as environmental impact and aircraft movements, are dealt with on an integrated basis. Recent successes described above include the improvements to the NEMA, Derby, Loughborough Airline shuttle service that was extended in July 2005 to 18 hours a day operation using Kick Start/emda/NEMA and local authority funding.

2.58 **Regeneration** – Corporate work on regeneration is closely linked to economic development and the activities of the LSEP. Examples of our transport work include:

- Implementing the recently revised Leicestershire Rural Strategy, for which we lead the transport programme team. This work is tied in with initiatives to improve the vitality of our market towns and a range of rural business support initiatives funded by the LSEP. Leicestershire was one of the first counties to adopt a rural strategy
- Transport and other County Council support for Charnwood Borough Council's Eastern Gateway Project in Loughborough. In this area around the main railway station, improved transport connections will include a better bus/rail interchange, with a new road to bypass residential streets and give access to development
- Transport input to the South Wigston Regeneration Masterplan. This includes initiatives for improving the town centre, better use of South Wigston railway station, and improved streetscapes in the Basset Ward conservation area
- Engineering work on schemes to reclaim derelict land, working jointly with other County Council functions including landscape design. Such schemes are an important part of regeneration, particularly in the former Leicestershire coalfield area.

2.59 **Education** – We work corporately on many aspects of transport relating to schools. Examples of our transport work include:

- Our School Travel Plan Steering Group involves working with the education access and welfare service to develop our strategy for school travel plans, promotions to individual schools, and links with our LTP2 routes to school investment
- On planning applications for the development of schools we advise the County Council planning service on highways development control matters, and conditions relating to transport assessments and mitigation, including school travel plans
- Work on routes to school and other road crossings where we provide 153 school crossing patrols.

2.60 Together with the education service, we work on improving transport access and other ways of promoting the take-up of education by 16 to 19 year olds through the 16 Plus partnership. From September 2006, we plan to offer students a choice of different types of bus pass, including unlimited travel passes. We expect this initiative to be cost neutral, to offer improved travel opportunities to young people and encourage 16 - 19 year olds to stay in further education. In addition:

- To help deal with poor behaviour, we run a series of initiatives in partnership with schools, including guidance to students and drivers, provision of bus escorts and the use of 12 buses equipped with CCTV. Our five single deck yellow school buses, designed to provide an example of best practice, operate with allocated seating, internal television surveillance, specially trained drivers, and systematic monitoring of satisfaction
- To improve access to school, in liaison with the education service we provide 22 schools special buses and offer spare seats on other buses run for those entitled to free transport. Our eligibility criteria for free transport are also much more generous than those required by legislation.

2.61 **Health** – We work corporately on the health priorities of the County Council and the four NHS Primary Care Trusts (PCT's). Our transport work includes:

- Working in conjunction with partner organisations on the pilot transport to health initiative in various areas of the county
- Helping identify and take forward a range of activities needed to deliver the joint health priorities of the County Council and PCT's, where joint working can deliver improved performance in meeting our shared objectives
- Preparation of action plans for the key priority of accident prevention, with the development of co-ordinated work programmes to achieve this
- Helping co-ordinate activities to promote the health and wellbeing of school age children with the identification of links to other corporate policies for health and education
- Promoting the employers' duty of care to employees whilst driving in connection with work. This builds on a number of work-related road safety initiatives in the main County Council service departments, and is also feeding into the work of over 400 medium size employers in Leicestershire.

2.62 **Social services** – We work corporately and with our district councils on various aspects of transport relating to social services. Examples of our transport work include:

- Together with the Valuing People co-ordinator, we are working with a major bus operating company to deliver driver training, including the skills and actions required to encourage bus travel by people with learning disabilities. We are also working on these actions with smaller bus companies
- Our concessionary travel scheme, in association with the districts, provides countywide, rather than just local, travel for all entitled people, and gives free and flat fare travel for many. The national free travel entitlement from April 2006 will enhance the arrangements, and free travel for disabled people will assist the Valuing People initiative, particularly with regard to handling money
- Working with social services and education colleagues, we are implementing the actions from a recent Best Value review of transport procurement. This includes a corporate approach to the duty of care to clients and passengers and will help to manage the supplier market and ensure consistent standards of provision across the range of contracts
- As part of corporate work on transport procurement, our community transport complements social services transport, and we have recently formalised and documented our operating arrangements with the voluntary sector for a wide range of services
- Provision of marked-out advisory on-street residential parking spaces for disabled people who are holders of blue badges and who need to be able to park as near as possible to their home.

2.63 **Housing** – We work corporately and with our district councils as both housing and local planning authorities. Our transport work includes:

- Advising the District Councils on the transport implications of designating specific areas of land for house building to meet the numbers of new homes required in each district by the Structure Plan. These land-use decisions are crucial to safeguarding the future of our transport networks with regard to the demand for travel, safety and congestion
- The provision and maintenance of a comprehensive web-based code of practice for highways, transportation and development. This sets out detailed policies and procedures for development, and places a major emphasis on the high quality design of appropriate safe road layouts in areas of new housing
- Street lighting provision and upgrading in housing areas is prioritised through district-based partnerships which include the police. This addresses issues of actual crime, fear of crime, and the need to engender a sense of personal security so as to encourage people to walk after dark rather than travel by car or stay at home.

2.64 **Environmental services** – We work corporately and with our district councils on environment-related work. Our transport involvement includes:

- We advise the County Council planning service in its production of the local development frameworks for minerals and waste. Both these have significant transport implications, with particular issues relating to lorry movements and potential rail freight
- The District Councils are the environmental health authorities with responsibility for assessing air quality, and the declaration or revocation of air quality management areas. Through the longstanding Air Quality Forum, we work with all seven districts, the Highways Agency and the City Council on all the transport issues

- The County Council environmental management service conducted the in-house, but independent, Strategic Environmental Assessment of LTP2
- The environmental management service also contributes to the assessment of larger transport schemes in the LTP, at the development stage, then through the planning application and subsequent statutory procedures including any public inquiries
- The above involvement with assessment of larger schemes is complemented by advice on environmental mitigation, and the subsequent landscape concept and detailed design, followed by contract preparation and supervision on site.

2.65 **Rights of Way** – We work corporately and with our district councils on rights of way as follows:

- The County Council environmental management service is leading development of the Leicestershire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (consultation draft attached in Appendix E). Rights of way capital investment is already fully integrated into LTP2
- Our five-year transport capital programme in LTP2 integrates rights of way improvement and maintenance schemes
- The rights of way network will be a significant asset group to be subject to asset valuation and integration into our transport asset management plan.

2.66 **Tourism and leisure** – We work corporately and with our district councils as well as the City Council on tourism and leisure. Examples of our transport work include:

- Significant improvements to the local travel information for visitors arriving at Nottingham East Midlands Airport, and working with the airport company to achieve this
- Provision of brown coloured road signs for tourist destinations, an important part of our work on road sign development and renewal. This area of activity will be one of the many services to be incorporated in our transport asset management plan
- Our Leicestershire hourly bus network, promoted through a free map distributed at tourist information centres, and offering scope to travel to a large number of tourist and leisure destinations
- A wide range of general involvement in transport and leisure, including scheduled bus services, demand responsive services, planning of leisure facilities, cycling for leisure, and extensive travel advice by telephone and on our website.

LTP2 influences

2.67 From the examples above, it is clear that LTP2 has been able to draw on many influences from a range of local government functions in Leicestershire, and that transport policy also influences other functions in return. These influences are embedded in the way that we work, and many stem from joint working arrangements established over many years.

2.68 LTP2 needs also to take proper note of influences from outside Leicestershire. At the local level, there are many cross-boundary issues with neighbouring counties which will reflect in our strategy. For example, many Leicestershire people depend upon major centres such as Coventry, Nottingham and Peterborough for essential services and our work to facilitate access to these centres can contribute to the success of the strategies of our neighbouring authorities. As another example, our work on HGV routes requires a consistent approach across the county boundary: the recent completion of our HGV network required co-operation with Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire over difficult and sensitive routing issues in the Vale of Belvoir.

2.69 The most important external influence is the City of Leicester. The draft Leicester Partnership Community Strategy has a vision for Leicester in 2025 as “a sustainable city, recognised as a model of excellence internationally, which minimises its impact on the global environment, and where no-one suffers from serious economic or social disadvantage.” The biggest single transport-related challenge for Leicester will be to accommodate all the new people movements that will flow from the delivery of the new vision for Leicester whilst controlling congestion and improving accessibility, safety and air quality. This vision particularly focuses on the city centre and a major expansion of both shopping and office facilities at the city’s heart. The links to our own longer-term strategy are obvious and substantial.

2.70 Amongst these many influences, a key role of LTP2 will be to help ensure that the land use planning system works in a positive way, with new development accommodated without detrimental impact on the transport networks. This two-way process is achieved through:

- Transport proposals based on LTP funding and resources to achieve LTP objectives
- Transport mitigation funded by land development in order to safeguard LTP objectives
- Land-use decisions taken in a way that helps safeguard LTP objectives.

2.71 The analysis above should help to illustrate why we are confident that we can work corporately, and with the districts, to achieve all our LTP targets.

Best practice

2.72 The following paragraphs summarise the key issues regarding how we share best practice, implement effective and innovative practices and receive recognition for our work practices, services and schemes.

Sharing best practice

2.73 Full details of how we share best practice are given in Appendix F. We are fully committed to both learning from others and sharing our own best practice, which is now a routine part of our daily work. We continue to be actively involved in best practice and benchmarking groups across the region.

2.74 Officers regularly attend a wide range of seminars, conferences and working groups which provides excellent opportunities for sharing and learning. We also take opportunities whenever possible to learn from Beacon Councils and Centres of Excellence. Our sharing of best practice is sometimes a two way process between us and another authority but is more frequently a continuous cycle of learning and developing ideas involving groups of other parties. Key examples of the way that we share best practice include:

- Benchmarking clubs, for example national highways best value benchmarking club and CTC midlands region cycle benchmarking project
- Benchmarking groups, for example midlands service improvement group and special interest groups
- Conferences and workshops, for example Local Transport Plan day.

Implementing effective and innovative practices

2.75 Again, full details are given in Appendix F and throughout the LTP. Examples of the ways that we have shared best practice and implemented effective and innovative practices include:

- Integrated passenger transport unit

- Star trak and star text messaging
- Best practice cycle guide
- Junior road safety officer (JRSO) scheme
- Highway management system
- Traffic management policies and standards document.

Receiving recognition for our work practices, services and schemes

2.76 Examples of wider recognition for our work are given throughout the LTP but recent examples include:

- Recognition of our lorry control strategy as best practice in a government White Paper
- A 'Considerate Construction' award for the A607 Rearsby Bypass
- Sustrans award for "consistently delivering the (cycle) network swiftly and imaginatively"
- The Midlands Safety Camera Partnership (MSCP) was presented with a commendation certificate in November 2005 by the Prince Michael International Awards in recognition of our 'outstanding contribution to road safety'
- The 'Shiny Side Up' partnership, of which we are a member, received the Prince Michael International road safety award.

Current transport trends

Introduction

2.77 This section summarises information on current transport trends. The focus is of course on Leicestershire but we need to set that in context by considering also the national and regional trends which will influence travel locally.

Traffic growth

2.78 Table 2.4 gives data from the DfT's National Road Traffic Survey 2004. This shows that traffic growth in Leicestershire is higher than the national average for England. However, growth is lower than in the other counties in the Three Cities sub area and lower than growth experienced in the East Midlands as a whole.

Table 2.4 Traffic growth in the Three Cities sub area of the East Midlands

Area	Traffic growth 2000 – 2004
Leicestershire excluding Leicester and Rutland	+ 7.9%
Leicester	+ 3.5%
Derbyshire excluding Derby	+ 8.7%
Derby City	+ 5.3%
Nottinghamshire excluding Nottingham	+ 9.4%
Nottingham	+ 2.2%
East Midlands	+ 8.6%
England	+ 6.0%

Source: Department for Transport National Road Traffic Survey 2004

2.79 As shown in Table 2.5 below, in absolute terms traffic flows on roads in Leicestershire are lower than traffic flows in Derbyshire, but higher than in Nottinghamshire.

Table 2.5 Traffic flows in the counties of the Three Cities sub area

City	Traffic flow million vehicle kilometres
Leicestershire excluding Leicester and Rutland	7,290
Derbyshire excluding Derby	7,418
Nottinghamshire excluding Nottingham	6,698

Source: Department for Transport National Road Traffic Survey 2004

Car ownership and costs

2.80 National statistics indicate that the cost of owning and running a car has fallen significantly in real terms during the first LTP period. The cost of new cars has fallen due to increased competition between manufacturers and the removal of trade barriers between EU states. Cars are also becoming more fuel efficient and this, coupled with the increasing use of diesel powered cars, has meant that the fuel cost per mile has fallen. Nationally, the real reductions in the cost of car use have helped to feed an increase in car commuting and an increase in commuting distance, all of which add to the levels of congestion.

2.81 Car ownership has also increased, as shown in Table 2.6. Between 1991 and 2001 the total number of households in Leicestershire increased by 13%. During the same period, the number of households with at least one car available increased by 17%.

Table 2.6 Changes in car availability in Leicestershire between 1991 and 2001

Households and car availability in Leicestershire	1991	2001	Percentage change
Total households	217,444	245,245	+ 13%
Households with no cars/vans	47,182	41,235	- 13%
Households with 1 car/van	100,387	107,027	+ 6%
Households with 2 cars/vans	57,296	77,479	+ 26%
Households with 3 or more cars/vans	12,578	19,504	+ 36%
Households with at least 1 car/van	170,261	204,010	+ 17%

Source: 1991 and 2001 Census data

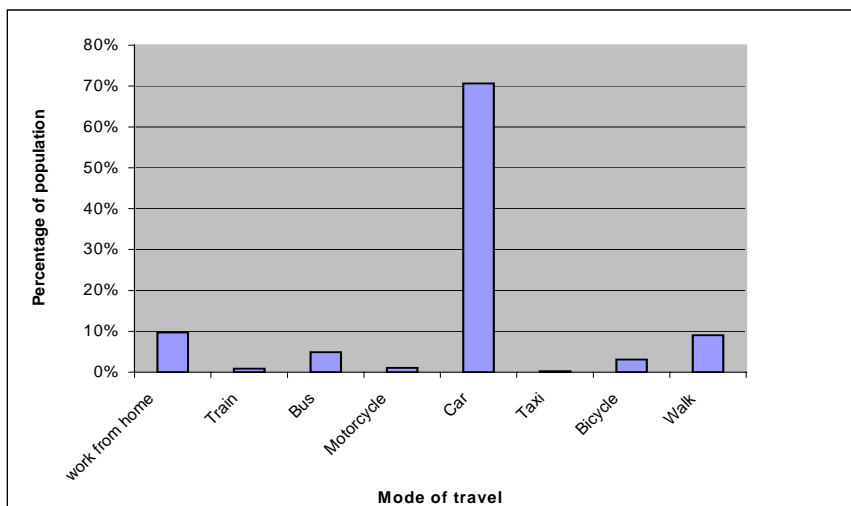
Travel costs

2.82 Nationally, whilst motoring costs have fallen, the cost of using public transport has increased significantly. Since 1984 motoring costs have, on average, fallen by 5%, whilst rail fares have increased by 30% and bus fares, outside London, have risen by 36% (Bulletin of public transport statistics GB 2003). Despite this competitive disadvantage, we have secured significant growth in public transport patronage, achieving our target of 1% growth per year.

2.83 Figure 2.1 illustrates the dominance of the private car as a mode of transport. It shows that, of all commuting trips, 71% of people travel to work by car or van (65% driving and 6% as passengers). Only 17% were made by more sustainable travel modes (9% walking, 5% bus, minibuss or coach and 3% cycling).

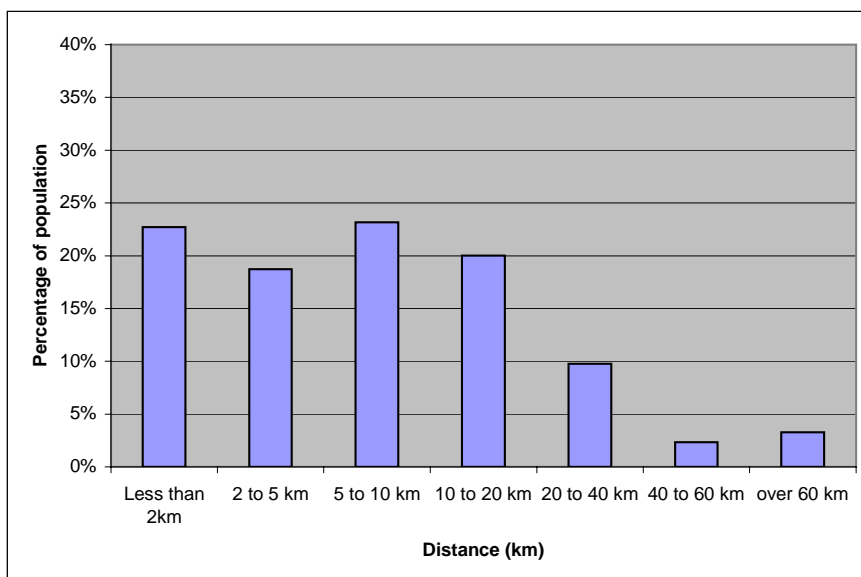
2.84 As shown in Figure 2.2, information from the 2001 Census shows that 42% of people resident in the Leicestershire LTP area travel less than 5km to their place of work and 43% travel between 5km and 20km.

Figure 2.1 Journey to work travel mode within Leicestershire from 2001 census



Source: 2001 Census data

Figure 2.2 Journey to work travel distance from 2001 census



Source: 2001 Census data

Pedestrian, Cycle and Rights of Way Networks

2.85 Improvements to the county's pedestrian network have continued to be a priority of our transportation programme. During the last 5 years, we have invested over £4m specifically in the provision of new and improved pedestrian facilities including road crossings, footways and pedestrian route improvements.

2.86 The revised guidance for the provision of pedestrian crossings published by the DfT in 1995 provided local authorities with greater flexibility in assessing requirements. Although

observed demand continues to be a key component of assessment, other factors such as community severance, the creation of safer routes to schools, and the needs of people with mobility impairments are given greater weighting than previously when considering the need, and type of facility to be provided. Overall, we have installed 48 new signal crossings in the last 5 years, bringing the total for the county to 333. In addition we are continuing to incorporate pedestrian crossing facilities in all of the county's urban traffic signal controlled junctions. By the end of LTP1 we will have achieved our target of 98% of all signal controlled pedestrian crossings being compliant with the Best Value Indicator 165, the percentage of pedestrian crossings with facilities for disabled people.

2.87 New links in the pedestrian network can often be provided at modest cost when combined with footway maintenance or developer funded works. During the last five years, our capital improvement programme has included allocations to take advantage of these opportunities as and when they have arisen, enabling us to add value to footway and Section 278 works.

2.88 In the last five years our cycling investment has provided over 45km of cycle lanes, 23km of cycle track, over 40 cycle parking schemes, 20 toucan crossing and 20 advanced cycle stop lines. Monitoring of specific schemes has shown an increase in cycle usage of over 300% on purpose built routes. Close liaison with developers and other partners has resulted in additional funding of approximately £2m, which has enabled us to introduce additional cycle infrastructure. In addition, our work with Sustrans has resulted in over 100km of national cycle route being added to our extensive cycle network. The award by Sustrans of the "most proactive local authority" in delivering the National Cycle Network, and the excellent report received by the Cyclist Touring Club in the National Benchmarking programme, recognises the work that we have undertaken during LTP1.

2.89 Leicestershire has more than 3000 kilometres of footpaths, bridleways and byways, of which nearly 600 km are byways and bridleways available to horse riders and cyclists. This network provides local routes linking communities and giving access to shops, schools and other facilities. It is also the best way to explore and enjoy the countryside. We have focused our investment in providing better paths close to people's homes, providing safer equestrian links to the carriageway network and providing dedicated cycle routes by for example converting sections of disused railway lines in partnership with Sustrans. We have developed our own 100 mile circular walk around the county as well as forming part of the Midshires Way.

Bus network

2.90 The main bus network is shown in Figure 2.3.

2.91 During the period of LTP1 County Council investment has resulted in a major improvement in the bus network, to the extent that three quarters of rural households, and 95% of all people in Leicestershire, now have access to an hourly daytime bus service. More-frequent commercial bus services operate in the urban areas of the county, particularly in the county part of Central Leicestershire for travel into the city. Away from the hourly bus network, most communities are served by less frequent scheduled bus services, or the increasing number of demand responsive connecting services in the most remote rural areas, nearly all supported by the County Council.

2.92 There has been only limited recent progress in developing park and ride services into Leicester. The original 500-space site on the A47 West just inside the city boundary has been a major success since its opening in 1997 and is now operating at capacity. Our plans for a further major expansion were, however, set back by an unfavourable government decision on funding in 2004, combined with planning difficulties with one of the three proposed new sites, on the south side of Leicester. One of the other two proposed sites, off the A6 north of Leicester, will be built with development funding during the LTP2 period.

Figure 2.3
HOURLY BUS NETWORK AND LOCAL RAIL

2.93 By the end of the first LTP period, we will have introduced ten improved interchanges on the public transport network; these are located in town centres, at railway stations and at Nottingham East Midlands Airport. They have involved the relocation of bus stopping places together with provision of good bus information and attractive waiting conditions. The busiest of these interchanges, at Loughborough railway station, has more than six trains and 10 bus departures per hour, providing frequent connections with the town centre and university, together with an hourly bus service to Nottingham East Midlands Airport.

2.94 As well as supporting the non-commercial scheduled bus network, and demand-responsive rural services, we support a growing countywide service of complementary public transport for disabled people and co-ordinate a considerable number of schools special bus services. Local bus travel is also enhanced by County and City Council joint working arrangements, including the main quality partnerships with bus operating companies. Other bus quality partnerships and the countywide concessionary travel scheme operate in partnership with the District Councils.

Rail Network

2.95 The main roads and railway lines in Leicestershire are shown in Figure 2.4.

2.96 The passenger rail network consists of the Midland main line running north-south through the County and the east-west line from Birmingham to Peterborough and beyond, via Leicester. The Midland main line carries half-hourly fast trains from Sheffield via Derby, or from Nottingham, to Leicester and London. Further half-hourly semi-fast trains from Derby or Nottingham to London provide a frequent longer distance service from the main Leicestershire stations at Loughborough and Market Harborough, which are also served by some of the fast trains.

2.97 The main east-west train services are the hourly direct trains from Birmingham to Peterborough, Cambridge and Stansted airport. With interchange at Leicester, these provide a range of longer distance journey opportunities from the Leicestershire stations at Hinckley and Melton Mowbray. Local travel by rail is partly provided by the longer distance train services running north-south and east-west through the county, described above. Elsewhere, on the line from Hinckley into Leicester, stations at Narborough and South Wigston are served by local trains from Birmingham.

2.98 On the Midland main line, an hourly local train service ran until June 2005 from Loughborough to Leicester stopping at Barrow upon Soar, Sileby and Syston. Since then it has been integrated into the revised service from Leicester to Nottingham and Lincoln. The service to the three stations is funded by the County Council and opened in 1994. It sees a year by year increase in passengers and is the fastest way of travelling into Leicester, particularly at peak times. The final railway station is at Bottesford in the north of the county, served by trains on the Grantham to Nottingham line.

2.99 The proposed East Midlands Parkway railway station is currently programmed for the LTP2 period, and has completed all the statutory processes. This station will be in Nottinghamshire, close to the Leicestershire boundary near the A453 trunk road just north of M1 junction 24. It will provide much-improved public transport access to the airport via a frequent connectional bus service.

Figure 2.4
ROAD AND RAIL NETWORKS

2.100 As in the East Midlands as a whole, around 90% of freight traffic in Leicestershire is carried by road on motorways, trunk roads and the county lorry route network, although an increasing volume of freight traffic is being carried by rail. North-south rail freight can be diverted away from the Midland main line at Syston and routed via Melton Mowbray and Corby to rejoin the main line at Kettering. However, the increasing volume of east-west rail freight through the county cannot avoid Leicester and is constrained by the limited track capacity between Syston and Wigston through the Leicester urban area.

2.101 High volumes of rail freight originate in Leicestershire, consisting mainly of coal and aggregates. In 2001 (the latest year for which information is available) over five million tonnes of rock and gravel was transported by rail out of the county. This represents over 30% of all such freight originating in Leicestershire and constitutes about 5% of all rail freight in Great Britain. This reflects the high priority the County Council, in its role as local planning authority for minerals, gives to protecting both local communities and the environment from the adverse consequences of transporting this material by road.

2.102 The Bardon Hill and Cliffe Hill stone quarry terminals, on the Leicester to Burton line near Coalville, send aggregates by rail for the construction and rail industries in London and elsewhere. The stone quarry terminal on the Midland main line at Mountsorrel sends up to 35 trainloads per week to 12 terminals around the country, as does the similar terminal at Croft on the Hinckley to Leicester line.

Road Network

2.103 The main change to the management of the road network in the last five years has been the de-trunking in 2004 of the A6 north and south of Leicester and the A47 to the east of the city. However, large scale, multi-modal and road based studies were completed in the period and major improvements are now programmed for M1 widening and junction improvements from junction 21 south west of Leicester to well beyond the county boundary north of junction 24. The Highways Agency proposes to widen the A453 trunk road to form a dual carriageway from junction 24 to Nottingham and an extensive new junction layout is proposed at M1 junction 19.

2.104 The proposed motorway and trunk road schemes are intended to address the increasing problems of congestion on strategic roads, which threaten to damage the local and regional economy. Without action, this congestion would also cause vehicles to divert onto less safe local roads with direct consequences for road casualties and other traffic impacts on local communities. The scheme for M1 Junction 19 is due for completion during the LTP period but M1 widening will not be completed until around 2014.

2.105 The County road network has 420 km of A class (principal) non-trunk roads, a further 1546 km of non-principal classified roads and 2410 km of minor unclassified roads. The A and B class roads carry the larger volumes of traffic and comprise the main lorry route network in the County.

2.106 During the first LTP period we have carried out a countywide programme of vehicle weight restrictions to concentrate lorry movements onto a designated route network. This has considerably reduced the impact of lorries on communities, and the structural damage to many roads caused by lorries. In forming the lorry network, a number of roads have been re-classified to reflect the revised hierarchy of routes. This has been an important contribution to making better use of the existing road network.

2.107 New roads we have constructed in LTP1 include major scheme bypasses for the A511 around Ashby-de-la-Zouch and the A607 past Rearsby. The A6004 Epinal Way Extension major road scheme, funded by development, has provided the missing link in the road network on the south side of Loughborough. The remaining major new road scheme from the first LTP

is the A47 Earl Shilton Bypass, which has completed all statutory processes. In its advice to government, the East Midlands Regional Assembly has prioritised this scheme for works to commence in 2007, and the Government's view on this prioritisation is awaited.

Transport problems and opportunities overview

2.108 Our future transport strategy must be driven by our wider objectives, but in doing so we need to focus also on the existing and future transport problems which might prevent us meeting those objectives and also to recognise the opportunities available for us to take, all summarised below. They are not unique to Leicestershire but the degree to which the problems are experienced, and the scope for improvement, give the county its own characteristics. Our appraisal of transport problems and opportunities is based on the findings from our public and stakeholder consultation work and on the findings from a technical assessment using, for example, our existing transport models and accessibility mapping. The results presented below give an overview. The subsequent strategy chapters (Chapters 4 – 9) present a more detailed assessment of these.

Problems and opportunities identified from public consultation

LTP Consultation

2.109 As noted in Chapter 1, we have carried out extensive consultation with the public. In 2004 our initial consultation was based on a draft LTP strategy contained in a widely circulated consultation document. This included the six aims for transport as a set of objectives and described in outline many of the actions we would need to undertake in meeting the aims. We raised awareness of the consultation through:

- The County Council newsletter delivered to all households in Leicestershire
- Press releases which resulted in articles in local newspapers
- A discussion on Radio Leicester early on in the 12 week consultation period
- A series of presentations and discussions with stakeholders, including sessions with local highway forums and local strategic partnerships.

2.110 A report of consultation is given as Appendix B but the main findings are summarised here. The majority of respondents gave all the draft strategy objectives either a medium or high priority as shown in Table 2.7:

Table 2.7 Summary of consultation – support for strategies

Objectives	High priority	Medium priority	Low priority	Not a priority	No response
Tackling congestion	74%	18%	3%	2%	3%
Access to facilities	33%	41%	16%	3%	7%
Road casualty reduction	52%	31%	9%	2%	6%
Air quality and traffic impact	60%	24%	6%	3%	7%
Maintain transport assets	40%	43%	6%	1%	10%

2.111 The highest priority was given to tackling congestion, and the lowest to improving access to facilities.

2.112 The consultation also sought views on whether the schemes and actions we proposed to undertake were the best way to achieve the objectives. The results are shown in Table 2.8:

Table 2.8 Summary of consultation – support for schemes and actions

Objectives	Agree or strongly agree	No opinion	Disagree or strongly disagree	No response
Tackling congestion	59%	15%	15%	11%
Access to facilities	43%	36%	9%	13%
Road casualty reduction	53%	22%	12%	13%
Air quality and traffic impact	47%	25%	14%	14%
Maintain transport assets	57%	24%	6%	13%

2.113 The highest degree of certainty was expressed with regard to congestion, and the lowest related to access to facilities, but this was the least developed part of our draft strategy, and the concept of accessibility may not have been well understood.

2.114 We described a number of possible larger transport schemes in outline. Although these schemes were local in nature, at least 40% of respondents considered them to be of medium or high priority, and generally only about 10% considered they should not be given priority within our scheme programme.

2.115 Finally, respondents were invited to make any further comments on the outlined proposals. The most frequently stated views on the general approach were:

- Support for continued improvements to the bus network
- The need to include effective policies for rail in the LTP
- Support for improvements for walking and cycling
- Concern over the use of vertical features in traffic calming
- The need to include motorcycles and mopeds in the strategy
- Concern over the impact of lorries on communities.

2.116 We consulted separately on proposals for Central Leicestershire park and ride, for completion of the Loughborough inner relief road and for a bypass for Melton Mowbray. All these received strong support. The results of consultation overall have given us confidence in our priorities for LTP2 and in taking forward many of the proposals to the programming stage.

2.117 During 2005 we again consulted with the public, this time on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Provisional LTP and the proposed spending programmes. This consultation comprised presentations to the Leicestershire district highways forums, a consultation document (printed and on-line) summarising the Provisional LTP and SEA with a feedback questionnaire for return, an article in Leicestershire Matters, which is distributed to all households in the county, and a mail-out direct to stakeholders, including all the district councils, parish councils and members of Local Strategic Partnerships. Copies were also made available in all libraries and service shops. There was previous consultation on the strategy so it is not surprising that the response this time was limited, with 132 questionnaires and 63 letters and e-mails received, including responses from 20 stakeholder groups and 12 local councils, and detailed comments from 6 district councils.

2.118 The questions were about relatively detailed aspects of the spending programmes and there was a wide range of comments, with many saying the Council should be spending more on particular measures, but no clear majorities in favour of specific changes. There were specific comments on local issues and a number of comments about the Leicester to Burton rail line, improved cycling networks and traffic congestion.

2.119 Consultees were also asked to comment on the Environmental Appraisal of the Plan. A number of suggestions were made by the environmental bodies circulated, including comments about the use of sustainable drainage, urban design in sensitive areas and the need to invest to secure net biodiversity gain from new schemes. These have been incorporated into the final LTP2.

2.120 To supplement these findings, we commissioned MORI to conduct a customer satisfaction survey on our behalf in January and February 2006. Over 1000 residents of Leicestershire were randomly selected and asked questions regarding their satisfaction with various aspects of our highways service and with other parts of the council's services. This is to be the first of an annual series of such surveys, to track improvement through time. Full results for the highways parts of the survey are given in Appendix B and are very encouraging, with 81% of responses fairly or very satisfied with the service overall.

District councils

2.121 We have many continuing consultative contacts with the district councils and have also set up a specific forum which will continue to meet on a regular basis during LTP2. Issues raised by the districts to be addressed in LTP2 included:

- Complementary transport measures to support proposed town centre regeneration projects
- Prioritisation of schemes post LTP2
- Role of rail proposals such as the National Forest Line in future LTPs
- Interface of LTP with emerging LDFs and proposed growth areas
- Development of joint approach to travel planning in Central Leicestershire and Loughborough during LTP2.

Bus operators

2.122 There are a number of channels of consultation used for bus companies. Perhaps the most central are the Quality Bus Partnerships, covering Central Leicestershire, Loughborough and Hinckley. These meet on a quarterly basis and provide regular forums for raising problems and opportunities, as well as identifying priorities for action throughout the commercial bus network. In addition, the police attend on an annual basis, together with neighbouring authorities. There is close working at a number of levels including the supply of passenger journey statistics which are processed by the County Council for reporting progress towards LTP targets. Work with the Quality Bus Partnerships also links into the County Council's accessibility strategy and development control policy.

2.123 The Quality Bus Partnerships produce many outcomes, from major bus corridor improvements and the development of real-time information to detailed local initiatives and input into other schemes. Recent examples of close working included the junction improvement at the Narborough Road / Braunstone Lane junction on the edge of Leicester, where input from the bus companies in the design process resulted in realignment of bus priority lanes in the scheme, giving improved bus journey times without increasing delays for other vehicles. As a further example, work to improve access to the Asda store at Fosse Park in November 2004, funded by the developer through a Section 106 agreement, ensured that access was also improved for buses.

2.124 Quarterly bilateral meetings are held separately with the two major city and county operators and Leicester City Council. Discussion areas are similar to those for the Quality Bus Partnership meetings, but with expansion on and exploration of more commercially sensitive information.

2.125 We hold an annual operator forum, supported by three forum sub groups in the remainder of the year. This discusses areas of concern around operational issues including pupil behaviour, Criminal Records Bureau vetting, contract conditions, exclusion from tendering, safety standards, emergency contract cover, breakdown procedures and duty of care.

2.126 We also have day to day regular contact with bus companies operating bus service contracts on behalf of the authority. This ensures that contract standards are maintained and that we can respond to highway or other problems which may be hindering the effective operation of the contract.

Accessibility planning partners

2.127 As detailed in Chapter 5, we have worked closely with our accessibility forum to develop the year 1 accessibility strategy action plans and will continue to work with the forum to develop years 2 to 5 action plans.

Highways Agency

2.128 We have substantial continuing liaison with the Highways Agency, including liaison meeting three times a year at senior level, Agency attendance as appropriate at meetings of our district highway forums, and many contacts on specific local issues. This range of contacts has been added to recently through our close involvement in the Agency's plans for M1 widening and M1 Junction 19 improvements.

2.129 Highways Agency input has fed into LTP2 at many detailed levels, and they have indicated their overall support for the Plan. Other examples of our continuing liaison include:

- Partnership working on a number of land use projects
- Partnership working on network management (see Chapter 4)
- Work through the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership (see Chapter 6)
- Liaison on asset management (see Chapter 9).

The Rail industry

2.130 We are in regular contact with the rail industry through many local and contacts and, more formally, through our membership of the East Midland Rail Forum. We meet regularly with Central Trains and the DfT to discuss, amongst other issues, the ongoing support of the Ivanhoe rail service between Leicester and Loughborough and the remapping of the East Midlands rail franchise due to be awarded in 2007. We are in regular contact with Midland Mainline over many matters including the Parkway Rail Station at Ratcliffe on Soar, which will benefit the north of Leicestershire, although the station is in Nottinghamshire. The project has entered its construction phase and



liaison is now with Network Rail, who have taken over responsibility for completion. Two-way consultation on proposed changes and developments features strongly in these discussions at both the county and regional levels.

Freight operators

2.131 The Leicester and Leicestershire Freight Quality Partnership was established in 2000 to develop environmentally sensitive, economic and efficient ways of delivering goods in Leicester and Leicestershire. The partnership has representatives from the local authorities, private sector, interest groups, Highways Agency, police and Chamber of Commerce. The partnership has been successful in raising awareness between members and has enabled the councils to understand the practical problems of the operators.

2.132 We have also worked with representatives of the Freight Quality Partnership when developing and designing transport schemes. For example, the design process for major town centre improvements in Hinckley, Ashby-de-la-Zouch and Loughborough included setting up town centre partnerships and business liaison groups to feed into the detailed design and construction process. This process included public meetings and exhibitions for businesses, retailers, and representatives of the freight and road haulage industry as well as the general public.

2.133 The County Council also supports the East Midlands Regional Freight Strategy which has been developed in conjunction with the East Midlands Regional Assembly. The Strategy aims to achieve modal shift by transferring some freight movements to rail and by supporting the use of pipelines for the transfer of liquid and gas products.

2.134 We have been working closely with freight and road haulage industry representatives since the early 1990's when we began work on developing the now complete lorry route network. Over 70 individual schemes have been implemented over a twelve-year period at a cost of £1.5 million. Our lorry route network is the first of its type to be completed in the country, is now followed as best practice by other authorities and has been cited in a green paper on the countryside. 7.5 tonne weight restrictions keep unsuitable roads free of through heavy goods vehicles and this helps the many communities previously adversely affected as well as cyclists and other vulnerable road users who use these roads. The restrictions are well signed and published on a readily available plan, and we have spent substantially in upgrading the roads on the network to be suitable for HGV use. Signing is also provided to direct heavy goods vehicles to areas such as industrial estates and quarries. By these means we ensure that the road haulage industry sees the network as on balance helpful to the effective delivery of their business rather than an imposition. In Central Leicestershire, we are working with the City Council to ensure that freight signing schemes identified in the Freight Quality Partnership are implemented. The majority of these are in the City but need to be aligned with signing schemes in the County. We also plan to improve signing in the county towns.

Problems and opportunities identified from technical assessments

Congestion

2.135 Traffic congestion is the most widely experienced day to day transport problem for most road users. Apart from the personal inconvenience of travel delays, there are direct financial and network consequences:

- The extra cost of more buses and drivers to achieve scheduled bus frequency and reliability
- The extra cost of goods vehicle and driver time for the transport of road freight and deliveries to shops and businesses

- The extra cost of fuel consumed and the step change in vehicle pollution when traffic moves very slowly or is stuck in queues
- The extra traffic in terms of vehicle mileage, and the increase in fuel consumed, when vehicles avoid congestion by taking detours involving extra distance
- The impact of traffic making detours through communities, particularly at times of day when children are walking or cycling to school.

2.136 Whilst drivers and passengers may seem tolerant of congestion, and increasingly prepared to spend long periods in queues, its impacts on economic efficiency and the environment are an increasing concern.

2.137 We have carried out a technical assessment of congestion using the following sources of information:

- Central Leicestershire Transport Model - This is a multi-modal model built to represent 2004 existing transport conditions in Central Leicestershire and to provide a forecasting and decision tool for future transport infrastructure provision and policy assessments in the area. The model covers an area of about 10 miles radius from the centre of Leicester and is a multi-modal model made up of highway (private), public transport and mode choice models. The model base year is 2004 and forecast years are 2011, 2016 and 2021
- Loughborough Transport Model – The original 2002 Loughborough Traffic Model has now been fully updated to a new base year of 2005 following the opening of Epinal Way Extension in 2003. The model covers three time periods of AM peak (0800-0900), average inter-peak hour and PM peak (1700-1800) and is based on Citilab's Cube-TRIPS software. In order to provide analytical support for the Loughborough town centre transport scheme the model provides forecast year analysis for 2010, 2025 and 2036. It is being used for the economic and environmental assessments of the project
- Earl Shilton Transport Model - The Earl Shilton transport model was originally built in 1998 with roadside interview data and updated to a 2001 base year to help with the development and justification of the Earl Shilton Bypass. The model was used successfully to provide traffic evidence for the public inquiry
- Melton Mowbray Transport Model – the Melton Mowbray transport model has a base year of 2004 and forecast years of 2001 and 2021. The model covers the town centre and the approaches to it
- Ashby Model – the Ashby traffic model was produced to help with the development and justification of the Ashby Bypass
- ITIS - The Department for Transport has obtained new vehicle journey time data from the satellite tracking of major fleets of vehicles throughout the country. This gives a large sample of actual vehicle journey times throughout the day, all week and on most roads in the county. For 2003/04 this data covers the city and Central Leicestershire and extends outwards to include most of the urban areas and county towns.

2.138 We have used these technical assessments to show the main points where congestion occurs on a regular basis in Leicestershire, and these are shown in outline in Figure 2.5. Congestion occurs on a regular basis primarily in urban Central Leicestershire, particularly the Junction 21 area, in Loughborough, Melton Mowbray, Market Harborough, Hinckley, Coalville and the M1 junctions (19, 21, 23 and 24). At these junctions our assessments indicate maximum delays typically greater than 4 or 5 minutes per vehicle, with peak delays of up to 0.87 minutes per vehicle km.

2.139 An assessment has been made of how journey speeds vary across the county, using the ITIS data. This has shown that on the main A and B class roads in the more rural areas, the average speed of traffic reduces by 10% from about 42 mph at night to 38 mph in the morning peak period (7am to 10am). In the more urban areas, the average speed of traffic reduces by 35% from about 28 mph to 18 mph in the morning peak period and in a few places falls as low as 10mph. This shows that congested conditions in the peak period make the greatest impact on journey times. Congestion causes delays to all road users but buses are particularly adversely affected, in both journey speed and reliability, unless bus priority measures are put in place.

2.140 It is clear that congestion is a problem in urban Central Leicestershire, Loughborough and, to a lesser degree, in the five other main county towns. Loughborough has a population of approaching 60,000 with a student population of about 11,000. It has no bypass and the A6, which has recently been de-trunked, passes through the town centre. Our analysis of the ITIS data shows that in Loughborough the lost time per vehicle kilometre travelled in the morning peak period compared with free flow night time speeds is similar to that experienced in urban Central Leicestershire. Average queuing times at junctions were measured to assist the development of the Loughborough transport model and average delays of about eight minutes were recorded at the approaches to two of the junctions in the town in the peak periods.

2.141 We have developed the Central Leicestershire transport model and used it, with other data sources, to analyse present and future congestion issues in that area, in partnership with the City Council. Full detail is given in the Central Leicestershire LTP but, in summary:

- Speeds in Central Leicestershire at 15.5 mph in the AM peak period are low compared with other English urban areas
- Based on junction delay and journey time surveys, radial routes in Central Leicestershire have little spare capacity in the AM and PM peak hours
- Congestion problem areas are on the radial corridors leading into the city from the Central Leicestershire area and within the city centre itself. Key problem areas include:
 - M1 Junction 21/Fosse Park area where there are delays to buses and general traffic
 - A607 Melton Road corridor where there are delays to buses and general traffic with low average bus speeds particularly inbound in the AM peak hour
 - A6 corridor where there are delays to buses and general traffic, for example inbound in the AM peak hour at the Red Hill Circle junction
 - B5366 Saffron Lane corridor where there are delays to buses and general traffic and low average bus speeds, for example inbound in the AM peak hour at the Pork Pie junction
 - A47 Humberstone Road corridor where there are delays to buses and general traffic and low average bus speeds, particularly inbound in the AM peak hour
 - A426 Aylestone Road corridor where there are delays to buses and general traffic and low average bus speeds, particularly inbound in the AM peak hour

2.142 A50 Groby Road corridor where there are delays to buses and general traffic, for example inbound in the AM peak hour at the A563 junction.

Figure 2.5
Locations where congestion occurs on a regular basis

Accessibility

2.143 Leicestershire is a relatively affluent county and is ranked the 136th most deprived authority in the country out of a total of 149. However, social exclusion and rural isolation continue to be problems for people who do not have a car available. The number of people affected is reducing, and access to public transport has much improved with the hourly bus network and connecting services reaching nearly all parts of the county. There remain, though, significant numbers of people who have real problems gaining access to essential facilities. This is particularly an issue in areas of multiple deprivation as illustrated in Figure 2.6.

2.144 With the recent availability of the 2004 indices of multiple deprivation, it has become possible using modern mapping methods to show where most people without car access are living. By assessing these locations against the provision of local facilities, we can quantify the degree of travel difficulty that may exist. Amongst the many ways in which access difficulties can affect people's lives:

- People on benefits may not be able to reach job vacancies, particularly given limitations on public transport access for shift work. Employers may experience difficulty in recruiting, retaining or expanding their workforce
- Travel to hospitals and GP surgeries can be difficult and unreliable, resulting in missed appointments and increased health service costs
- Travel problems to and from school or college can reduce the uptake of post-16 education opportunities, and after-class activities, and in some cases contribute to truancy.
- Limited access to shops selling competitively priced fresh foods can result in poorer diets, health problems and greater care needs.

Road safety

2.145 Our work in improving road safety has been based for a long time on up to date information on all personal injury casualties supplied to us by Leicestershire Constabulary, and taking action to reduce such casualties has been a statutory duty of the County Council for over 30 years. During this period we have made much progress in reducing the numbers of killed or seriously injured casualties through the combination of police enforcement, safer vehicles, road safety education and casualty reduction schemes. Even so, nearly 300 people are still killed or seriously injured on Leicestershire roads each year.

2.146 The number of slight casualties, those generally not requiring hospital treatment, has not gone up with traffic growth and has indeed reduced overall to just over 2,700 slight casualties in 2004. This number is, however, still too high. The geographical pattern of these casualties shows concentrations on certain routes and at particular locations, giving scope for local action.

2.147 Although overall casualty trends are very encouraging, and there has been a dramatic reduction in child casualties, we are increasingly concerned over the safety of motorcyclists. Motorcyclists account for 20% of all killed and seriously injured casualties but only about 1% of traffic. This has particular implications for the role that motorcycling could have in tackling congestion. A switch from car driving to motorcycling would help congestion, but must be a debatable strategy until we can reduce motorcyclist casualties.

Figure 2.6
AREAS OF MULTIPLE DEPRIVATION

Air quality

2.148 Air quality problems due to pollution from local traffic are a significant issue in Leicestershire, with nine original statutory Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), and a further local traffic AQMA declared in 2005. There are three original AQMAs alongside the M1 motorway, caused by motorway traffic, and a further AQMA was declared in 2005 near the A46 trunk road. There are also early indications of emerging problems in one or two locations outside the current AQMAs. In all cases the problem is nitrogen dioxide pollution, which is monitored and assessed by the district councils as statutory environmental health authorities. Similar or more severe local traffic air quality problems exist in Central Leicestershire, but inside the City Council boundary.

2.149 In 2004 the district councils reported nitrogen dioxide levels above the limit value in only three of the nine original AQMAs, in Loughborough, Lutterworth and Kegworth. Much of nitrogen dioxide pollution is due to goods vehicles and buses, particularly where they spend time stationary with engines running or need to move slowly uphill. Government analysis shows that, across the country, as older goods vehicles, buses and cars are replaced, nitrogen dioxide levels are expected to fall by nearly 3% each year despite nationally predicted traffic growth across the road network as a whole.

Impact of traffic

2.150 Traffic in Leicestershire grew by about 8% between 2000 and 2004 and the impact of traffic in towns and villages continues to be a problem, despite good progress with the concentration of lorries onto the most suitable routes, accessibility improvements in town centres and construction of bypasses for Ashby, Great Glen and Rearsby.

2.151 Elsewhere, many villages and residential areas are severed by busy roads where the speed and volume of traffic is a deterrent to walking and cycling, as well as affecting the quality of life in general. These problems can be of particular concern in village shopping streets, on routes to school and in otherwise quiet residential areas. Over the last five years we have used small-scale traffic schemes to reduce traffic speeds in such areas, but there is a continuing need for more to be done elsewhere.

2.152 Road traffic impact in towns is also a problem where there is no bypass and the road network is such that significant volumes of through traffic use town centre streets. We have tackled these problems in Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Coalville, Hinckley and Market Harborough using relief roads, bypasses and, in some cases, complementary town centre schemes. Traffic in Earl Shilton on the A47 continues to have a detrimental impact on the community until we can confirm funding for the much needed bypass. The problems of through traffic in the town centres of Loughborough, Lutterworth and Melton Mowbray have also yet to be tackled.

Asset management

2.153 The maintenance of transport assets is a major activity covering an extensive network of footways, cycleways, roads, road bridges, and the 3000 km network of public rights of way. There is also bus infrastructure and the very large number of electrical installations consisting of street lighting and traffic signals. All have to be kept in a safe and satisfactory condition.

2.154 Over the last five years we have increased the rates of asset renewal following years of under-investment but there is progress still to be made in bringing all our assets up to the appropriate standard. We have substantially improved our methods for measuring the condition of our assets and this, described in Chapter 9 and integrated into our transport asset management plan, is allowing us to plan with greater confidence for cost-effective long-term asset renewal.

Future transport problems

Future housing and employment growth

2.155 The East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy is currently being reviewed and will identify housing and employment needs to 2026 across the region. The review process will lead to a new Regional Plan being in place by March 2008. This will be during the life of LTP2 and the implications of it will need to be taken account of in future transport plans.

2.156 So far in the Regional Plan review process there have been two periods of consultation. The first was held during the summer of 2005 when comments were invited on the Draft Project Plan for the review and the Statement of Public Participation. Between October 2005 and January 2006 a key stage of the review process was held, on 'Options for Change'. This included nine different options based on three scenarios of urban concentration or dispersal combined with three different levels of growth. After extensive local and regional discussion it appears that a solution close to 'Option 2B' may be adopted. This provides for urban concentration and regeneration together with trend-based growth approximately 20% above the current policy position. The draft Regional Plan will be published later and a further period of consultation will follow.

2.157 In parallel with this, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has invited expressions of interest for suggestions for additional Sustainable Communities Plan 'Growth Points'. The six authorities in the three cities sub region are currently formulating a joint proposal for submission to the ODPM. This could be in conjunction with the Transport Innovation Fund bid described previously, in order to deliver the necessary infrastructure in the longer term.

2.158 Current requirements are set out in the Structure Plan, which provides for about 42,000 new homes in Leicestershire between 1996 and 2016. 22,500 of these new homes had been completed by 2005 at a rate of 2,500 per year. There therefore remain to be built a further 19,500 by 2016 at a rate of about 1,800 per year. Overall, therefore, the impact of housing growth over the next ten years is expected to be less than that experienced over the past ten years. Despite this, it could still give rise to about 13,000 new journeys per day in each future year, based on historic rates.



2.159 To minimise both the need to travel by car from these new homes and the use of green field land, the Structure Plan requires a sequential approach towards the location of development in local development frameworks. This means that priority will be given to locations within and adjacent to the main urban areas, both in allocating land and in the phasing of development over time.

2.160 It is currently estimated that there is the capacity to provide about a further 5500 new homes in places within the main urban areas and a further 4500 in smaller sites (under 10 homes) around the county. When allowance is made for sites that already have planning permission or are under construction, up to about 2300 new homes may be required on new greenfield sites. However, it is anticipated that the potential for redevelopment of previously developed land will increase over time and as a result the need for greenfield sites will reduce. To comply with the phasing requirements outlined above, it is generally expected that these will

not come forward until after 2011. These sites will be identified in the new local development frameworks and they will generally be extensions to the main urban areas and of sufficient size and scale to enable significant developer contributions towards transport and other infrastructure provision.

2.161 From this it is clear there will continue to be increasing traffic pressures within our main urban areas due to new housing, and that during the LTP period pressure will arise mainly from existing commitments and development of sites within the urban areas.

2.162 The Structure Plan also requires 1119 hectares of employment land to be provided between 1996 and 2016. Just under 500 hectares had been completed or was under way by 2005. Traffic generated by employment land is highly variable and is very dependent on the type and location of the development.

2.163 In addition to the 500 hectares described above, more than 280 further hectares already had planning permission in 2005. About a further 350 hectares therefore remain to be identified in local development frameworks. The Structure Plan requires a significant proportion of this to be provided on new strategic employment sites within or adjoining the main urban areas, with about two-thirds expected to be provided in the LTP2 period. Included in this is a requirement for a Science and Technology Park of up to 50 hectares to be allocated in the Charnwood local development framework close to the university in Loughborough.

2.164 We are working with all the district councils as they prepare their local development frameworks to ensure that they reflect the transport strategy and proposals in LTP2 and that adequate and appropriate transport provision is made to support the new allocations.

2.165 There will also be significant employment and housing growth in Leicester, which will have an impact on transport provision in Leicestershire. Regeneration proposals in the city centre envisage 3000 new jobs by 2011 and a further 3000 by 2016. The Shires shopping centre is due to double in size, creating a further 2000 jobs. In addition, around 4000 jobs are planned around the edge of Leicester and 2750 homes in and around the city centre. Accommodating the associated journeys to the city without increasing congestion levels will be a major challenge and require close integration of land use and transport proposals.

Future year problem assessment

2.166 We do not have a comprehensive model to allow us to quantify future problems countywide but we can use the available models and other information to assess future problems in our main urban areas.

2.167 For Central Leicestershire we have used our traffic models to help carry out a technical assessment of future congestion issues by calculating future demands and assessing the impact of proposals in LTP2. These are described in detail in Chapter 2 of the Central Leicestershire LTP2 and are summarised below:

- By 2011 demand for travel is predicted to increase by 6% in the morning and evening peaks and by 9% between the peaks
- By 2016 demand for travel is predicted to increase by 16%
- By 2021 demand for travel is predicted to increase by 20%.

2.168 As a result of this increase, without the proposals identified in the LTP, vehicle speeds and journey times in 2011 would alter as follows:

- AM peak average vehicle speeds would reduce by 1.3 kph and journey times would increase by 2.5%
- Inter peak average vehicle speeds would reduce by 3.0 kph and journey times would increase by 4.4%
- PM peak average vehicle speeds would reduce by 2.1 kph and journey times would increase by 2.5%.

2.169 These increases in delays and reductions in vehicle speeds would impact on congestion levels for all road users, resulting in a worsening in air quality, safety and accessibility on key radial corridors.

2.170 Our models for Loughborough and Melton Mowbray are indicating generally similar trends, with particular problems in Loughborough caused by the substantial additional land use development which is planned. ITIS data for the other county towns, whilst not providing any forecast for the future, indicates that similar growing problems are likely, albeit to differing degrees.

Conclusion

2.171 We have used this wide range of analysis, including technical assessment, the views of the public and stakeholders, and the wider planning and policy context, as the basis for developing our longer term strategy. The strategy, which has been tested for robustness against all these criteria, is presented in Chapter 3.

