Suffolk County Council

Suffolk Local Transport Plan 2011-2031

Part 1 - Transport Strategy

Foreword

I am pleased to introduce the third local transport plan for Suffolk. At this time of financial constraint Suffolk County Council's priority is to aid sustainable economic recovery and growth.

Transport has a vital role to play in this. Good transport is essential for business and for people to access education and skills training. Maintaining our transport system, improving its reliability and reducing congestion are essential if we are to support the economic development needed for recovery and to place Suffolk in the strongest possible position to capitalise on emerging opportunities for future sustainable economic growth. I look forward to working with the new Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure that transport investment supports our economic and business growth strategies.

Suffolk's local transport plan is in two parts. The first sets out the county council's long-term transport strategy to 2031. The second part is an implementation plan, setting out how the strategy could be delivered over the short, medium and long term, using a variety of funding and delivery mechanisms. This includes a short-term programme of county council investment for the next four years. The implementation plan will be reviewed over time to take account of any changes in priorities and funding levels.

Within this plan period we hope to see the delivery of a number of strategic transport improvements including:

- **dualling of the A11 between Barton Mills and Thetford**
- **the Ipswich major scheme, 'Ipswich- Transport fit for the 21st Century'**
- **the Beccles rail loop allowing increased frequency of trains between Ipswich and Lowestoft**
- **the Beccles southern relief road**
- **the Lowestoft northern spine road to help remove through traffic from the town**
- **Ipswich rail chord to improve freight connections from Felixstowe**
- **Copdock A14/A12 junction improvements.**

We will continue to work with local communities to determine more local priorities for investment which support community ambitions across Suffolk.

Cllr Guy McGregor,
Portfolio holder for Roads, Transport and Planning

Contents

This document is the first part of the Suffolk Local Transport Plan. The second part sets out our plan for implementing the strategy.

Executive Summary

The local transport plan sets out Suffolk County Council's long-term transport strategy for the next 20 years. The key focus of the plan is to support Suffolk's economy as it recovers from the recession and to support future sustainable economic growth.

We want to maintain and, over time, improve Suffolk's transport networks, reduce congestion, and improve access to jobs and markets. We recognise that public funding for interventions, particularly at the start of the plan period, will be constrained.

Suffolk is a largely rural county with some significant urban centres. Much of the county has a high quality built and natural environment which is valued by residents, visitors and businesses. The transport challenges arising from the need to support economic growth are different across the county, reflecting the variety of growth sectors in the Suffolk economy and differences in housing growth pressures. The approach taken in developing this plan has been to consider the issues within each district council area. We have identified the key urban centres for growth where transport interventions can have a significant impact. These places are Beccles, Brandon, Bungay, Bury St Edmunds, Felixstowe, Ipswich area, Haverhill, Lowestoft, Newmarket, Stowmarket and Sudbury.

The key challenge in the urban areas, where congestion is likely to increase, is to use more effective traffic management measures to get more out of the existing system and to reduce peak time traffic by encouraging greater use of sustainable forms of transport. In rural areas the key challenges are to ensure that people are able to access jobs, education and services; that the highway network is maintained in a good condition, and that the negative environmental impacts of transport are minimised.

A high priority is to support the growth of Suffolk's businesses so that they are able to capitalise on future opportunities. Transport will play a key role in this by reducing delay and wasted time and reducing the costs associated with the movement of goods and people.

Our local focus allows the county council to support the business sectors in different parts of Suffolk as well as those that are countywide such as the tourism industry. Some of the key areas for growth and development within Suffolk are:

- **Growth of ICT and ICT based businesses;**
- **Expansion of the Port of Felixstowe;**
- **The 'Energy Coast', including offshore wind and renewable energy focussed around Lowestoft and the development of Sizewell C nuclear power station;**
- **Construction of SnOasis;**
- **Development of University Campus Suffolk as a research centre;**
- **Development and growth of biotech in west Suffolk and around UCS;**
- **Growth of equine related organisations around Newmarket;**
- **Tourism, and local food and drink;**
- **Creative Industries;**

A number of strategic transport improvements are planned for delivery in the short/medium term. These include the council's major transport scheme Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century, the Government's trunk road schemes to complete the dualling of the A11 and improve the A14/A12 junction at Copdock, the Beccles Loop rail improvement, and Ipswich rail chord. These improvements, taken together, will significantly enhance Suffolk's transport networks.

We have identified additional strategic road and rail improvements that are likely to be deliverable in medium to long term. These schemes would be funded from a number of sources. More details are given in Part 2 of this local transport plan.

1 Introduction

This is Suffolk County Council's third local transport plan. In this plan we set out our long-term transport strategy for Suffolk and explain how we will implement it.

The Suffolk context

Transport in a challenging economic climate

The county council is having to deal with significant funding reductions that present challenges on a completely different scale to anything that has been seen before. Our strategic partnership with Carillion will come to an end in the early years of this Plan and we will be looking to establish a new partnership which will continue to drive out costs and ensure that our highway network continues to be maintained to minimise the whole life costs of the assets.

A key policy objective for the county council is promoting and aiding economic resilience and private sector led growth through the current period of downturn, placing Suffolk in a position to emerge strongly as the economy recovers. Suffolk and Norfolk have joined together in the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership, and will be working with other neighbouring Local Enterprise Partnerships to push forward business led economic growth. In this plan we show how transport will play its part in supporting and facilitating future sustainable economic growth by:

- **maintaining (and in the future improving) our transport networks**
- **tackling congestion**
- **improving access to jobs and markets**
- **encouraging a shift to more sustainable travel patterns.**

Business as usual is not an option. Funding reductions will provide significant challenges to the county council in providing transport services. Opportunities are being found to reduce the cost of our operations and openings will arise to work with others to secure mutually beneficial outcomes. Potential partnerships, such as with the health sector, could help to embed a greater transport focus in healthier lifestyle programmes. Stronger local communities may be able to find their own local solutions to issues such as speeding traffic or heavy lorries using village streets. Working with public, private and voluntary sector partners will present opportunities to achieve agreed outcomes and maximise value for money.

In the short term our ambitions for significant improvements to the county's road network will be constrained by available funds. The highways agency will also be working under similar constraints. Transport improvements to support economic recovery and growth are, however, very important and all opportunities to improve local networks will be explored. An underpinning priority is to maintain the current highway network in a satisfactory condition and prevent it from deteriorating and adversely affecting local transport, the economy and road safety. Suffolk's highway network is sensitive to frost penetration and the immediate effects of the recent severe winters on the county's road structure has been responded to by increased reactive maintenance - the longer-term effects on the road structure are yet to be realised. In the early period of the plan we will concentrate on dealing with the most severe deterioration.

Our strategy extends over twenty years and later in this period, and as resources permit, we want to make progress in the delivery of ambitious transport projects on the A12, and in Ipswich, Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Beccles, Bungay, Brandon and Sudbury. Alongside the Local Economic Partnerships and other partners we will also lobby strongly for improvements to the national road network in Suffolk – A11, A12 and A14; and to the rail system - Great Eastern Mainline, East Suffolk line, Ipswich to Cambridge and Peterborough services, and the completion of the Felixstowe to Nuneaton route, particularly for freight.

2 Supporting wider priorities

Suffolk's characteristics

About 714,000 people live in Suffolk. Approximately one third of the population lives in the three main towns of Ipswich, Lowestoft and Bury St. Edmunds, a third in the market towns, and a third within the rural areas. Table 1 shows the estimated populations by district and borough:

District/Borough	Population
Babergh	85,800
Forest Heath	62,200
Ipswich	126,600
Mid Suffolk	94,200
St Edmundsbury	103,500
Suffolk Coastal	124,100
Waveney	117,700
Total	**714,100**

Table 1: Population by District

By 2031 the Suffolk population is expected to grow by a further 27%, one of the fastest rates in the East of England. Suffolk's population is also ageing, with forecasts estimating that approximately 250,000 people over the age of 65 will be living in the county by 2031. That will be nearly one third of the total population. The forecast growth of the population indicates that significant growth in the economy, in jobs and housing will be needed in the future. The East of England Plan provided for 60,000 homes and 57,000 jobs in the period up to 2021.

Growth in employment and housing on this scale will result in significant transport impacts and will require supporting investment in infrastructure and services.

Transforming Suffolk

The Suffolk local transport plan supports 'Transforming Suffolk: Suffolk's Sustainable Community Strategy'.

The headline themes of the community strategy are:

- **creating a prosperous and vibrant economy**
- **improving learning and skills for the future**
- **creating the greenest county**
- **providing safe, healthy and inclusive communities.**

The key ambition is to support the local economy, attract world class businesses, and support and develop the local workforce, in the context of a shift towards a low carbon economy. This will help residents to achieve a high quality of life and create stronger and more self-reliant communities. While improving the local economy we also want to help make Suffolk a healthier, safer place to live and work; improve the level of educational attainment; and reduce the impact of harmful emissions. Working towards these priorities will assist in bringing Suffolk out of the recession and place the county in a strong position to capitalise on future opportunities for sustainable economic development.

Suffolk's Priorities	Challenges	Transport aims
A prosperous and vibrant economy	• Support sustainable economic growth • Use Suffolk's unique selling points to capture emerging markets • Reduce economic inequalities across the county • Transport and infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth	• Improve connectivity and accessibility • Maintain core transport networks. Balance capacity and demand for travel, through increasing the use of sustainable transport and reducing need for travel • Improve access to jobs and commercial markets for residents and businesses based in the county
Creating the greenest county	• Reducing CO2 emissions	• Reduced emissions from transport, including road maintenance
	• Adapting to climate change	• Maintaining resilience of transport networks (e.g. coping with flooding, pot holes, winter damage)
	• Improving air quality	• Reduced air pollutant emissions
Safe, healthy and inclusive communities (Protect vulnerable people and reduce inequalities)	• Improving health impacts	• Facilitating an increase in walking and cycling
	• Improving accessibility	• Improving the physical accessibility of the transport system, improving information about travel options, improving access to services for those without access to cars
	• Supporting regeneration and tackling deprivation	• Supporting wider regeneration

Suffolk's Priorities	Challenges	Transport aims
Safe, healthy and inclusive communities (Protect vulnerable people and reduce inequalities)	• Improving road safety	• Reducing the number of casualties on the transport network
	• Improving air quality	• Reducing impact of poor air quality on local communities
Learning and skills for the future (Transform learning and skills)	• Improving access to education	• Improving accessibility to schools, colleges, universities and other places of learning • Access to broadband for online learning

Table 2- The relationship between the Suffolk priorities and our transport aims

To ensure this Plan meets the objective included in the Suffolk Community Strategy to "Retain, enhance and value Suffolk's natural and historic environment", environmental checks on schemes will be undertaken at an early design stage. The impact of all new infrastructure works and maintenance activities will be considered, prioritising biodiversity and built environment assets for their own sake and opportunities taken to enhance biodiversity as an integral part of these projects.

Any development that would be likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, will be subject to assessment under Part IV of the Habitats Regulations at project application stage. If it cannot be ascertained that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity the project will have to be refused or pass the tests of Regulation 62, in which case any necessary compensatory measures will need to be secured in accordance with Regulation 66.

Transport and the Economy

The British Chamber of Commerce and the Confederation of British Industry have, in recent reports, both highlighted the importance of transport for the economy. About 80% of businesses regard the road network as vital to their business and a similar proportion report that they have been adversely affected by shortcomings in the transport network. In the East of England this figure was 85%. The key concern is around congestion and consequent unreliability of journey times. The cost of congestion nationally has been estimated at £7 to £8 billion per year. A study for the East of England Development Agency in 2008 showed that by 2021 congestion will cost the Ipswich economy about £17 million per year.

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce members highlighted local concerns about the impact that transport has on costs to business, through lost hours and operational difficulties. Transport is also seen as an issue in losing business and failing to attract investment with congestion cited as a key issue.

There are some serious additional challenges posed by public spending constraints. This includes the risk that there will be insufficient funding to adequately maintain the quality of the local and national road network let alone improve it.

In Suffolk our transport plans will support business and growth with a focus on:

- **the challenge of maintaining the highway network in good condition**
- **tackling congestion in the larger towns by more efficient management of traffic, reducing the demand for car travel and promoting more sustainable means of travel**
- **improved connectivity and accessibility in rural areas**
- **seeking improvement to the A11, A12 and A14 trunk roads connecting businesses in Suffolk to each other and to their markets**
- **seeking improvement to the rail network for freight and passengers**
- **relief for our market towns suffering from high levels of through traffic**
- **recognising that securing high speed broadband throughout Suffolk is very important at present in addressing accessibility and connectivity issues throughout Suffolk and supporting business growth.**

Transport is critical to the development of most of the key employment sectors for Suffolk. Maintaining our roads in a good condition, improving accessibility and developing a reliable sustainable transport network in Suffolk will be our focus. This will be essential for businesses in creating access to more jobs for more people, reducing travel costs and encouraging smarter ways to work.

County Economic Strategy

Transport has a key role to play in delivering Suffolk's economic strategy, which identifies what needs to be done to develop key economic strengths. The long-term vision for Suffolk is to become the most innovative and diverse economy in the East of England with particular focus on the following areas:

- **developing key sectors**
- **business and enterprise support**
- **addressing inequalities**
- **improving infrastructure**
- **developing people's skills.**

The emerging Local Economic Assessment identifies key growth sectors in the county energy; food, drink and agriculture; information and communication technology; bio technology; ports and logistics; advanced manufacturing, creative industries, and tourism. These sectors combine existing and emerging areas of economic activity. The New Anglia Local Economic Partnership is looking to focus initially in stimulating growth in the energy sector and in tourism.

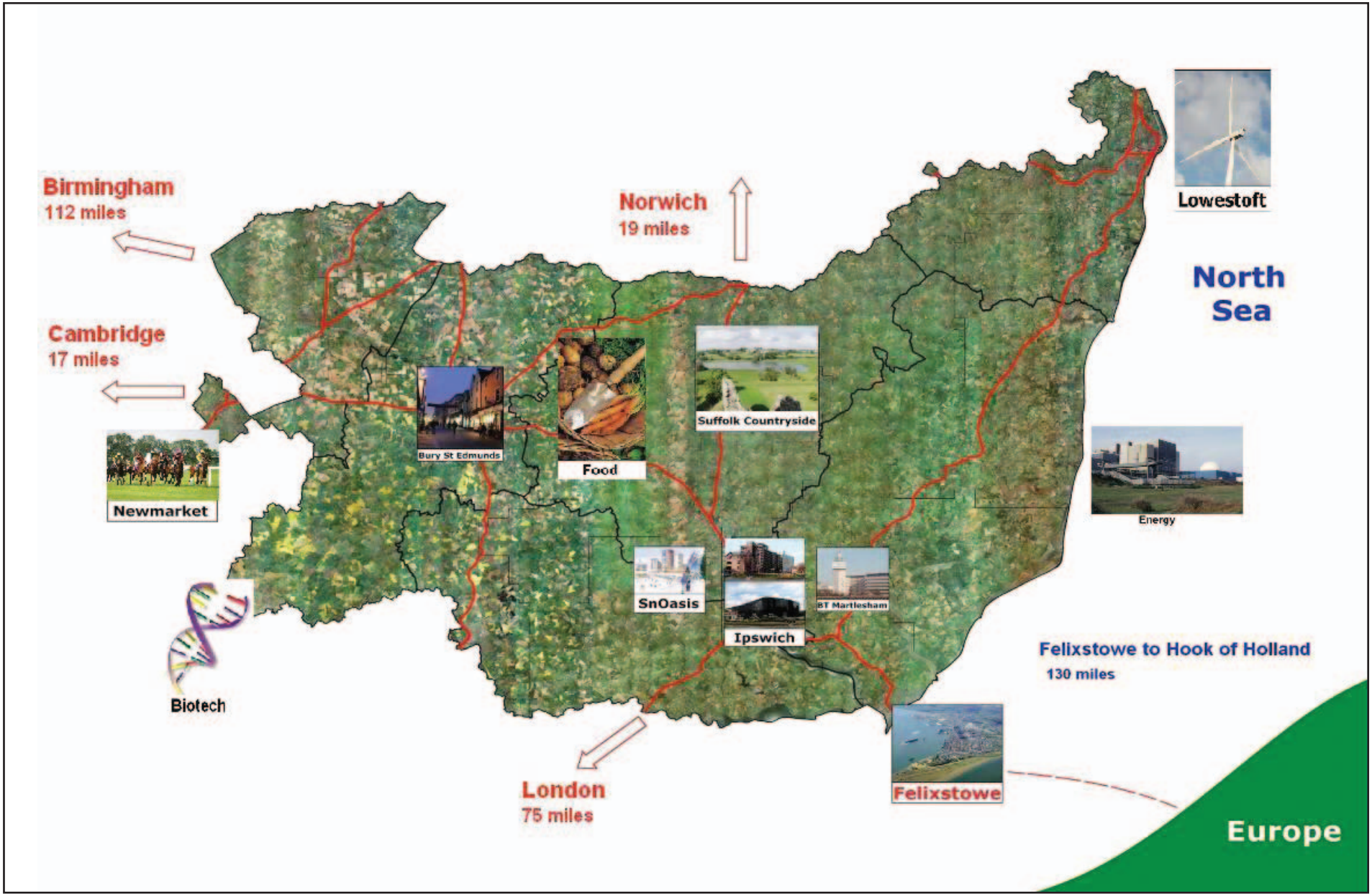

Figure 1- Suffolk's economic selling points

Efforts to support the growth of key sectors will also help reduce economic inequalities across the county. We want to see greater opportunities for entrepreneurs, for employment and skills development, and for the physical regeneration of our towns. There are likely to be changes to current employment patterns as businesses adapt or new organisations are created. This has particular relevance for Lowestoft where there could be a shift of employment type based around development of the energy sector. Other employment opportunities that may develop across the county include information and communications technology research focussed around Martlesham; bio-technology in West Suffolk; growth of the Port of Felixstowe; development of nuclear energy at Sizewell; and growth of the tourism industry.

The movement of people and goods around the county will be crucial to delivering the council's priorities. A balanced sustainable approach to transport will make it possible for us to tackle congestion, improve the quality and reliability of our road and public transport networks, and improve accessibility to jobs, services and opportunities.

Our aim is to achieve this in a way that encourages the use of more efficient and healthier forms of transport, makes the use of the transport system safer and minimises the adverse impacts of transport on climate change and on the built and natural environment.

In December 2010 the creation of the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership was confirmed by Government. Suffolk County Council as a partner is fully committed to working within the new body to develop the local economy.

Creating the Greenest County

Transport is a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Transport emissions account for 24% of total carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions in the UK. In the East of England the figure is 32.7% and 29.2% in Suffolk, but there are significant differences across the county (see table 3).

Area	Road transport as % of total CO2 emissions
Babergh	37.6%
Forest Heath	34.5%
Ipswich	18.1%
Mid Suffolk	38.2%
St. Edmundsbury	23.3%
Suffolk Coastal	35.7%
Waveney	21.7%
Suffolk Total	29.2%
East of England Total	32.7%

Table 3- Road transport CO2 emissions 2007

Transport emissions will grow significantly if no action is taken. In the longer term technological changes such as improved vehicle efficiency and the development of electric vehicles will help reduce emissions associated directly with transport. In the short to medium term the adoption of more sustainable ways of travel for people and goods will be required if there are to be significant cuts in transport emissions, or a reduction in the need to travel through greater use of information communications technology such as teleconferencing. It is in this area that it will be possible for local interventions to make a significant contribution.

Emission reductions in the transport sector will require a shift in the way transport investment is allocated and will require some difficult decisions. Most carbon reduction interventions have impacts on wider objectives, including economic growth, equality of opportunity, quality of life and the natural environment.

Potential emission savings in the transport sector fall short of cross-sector national targets and transport will rely on other sectors achieving more than their share of cuts. The transport sector is also heavily reliant on the development of renewable sources of energy to power electric vehicles.

In Suffolk transport will have significant influence on our ambition to make Suffolk the greenest county in England because of the high level of emissions attributed to transport. The principal ways in which transport can contribute towards the reduction of carbon emissions are by:

- **encouraging the use of more sustainable forms of transport**
- **improving the efficiency of the highway network**
- **more sustainable processes and use of materials to reduce impact of construction and maintenance on biodiversity, geodiversity, historic buildings and archaeological assets**
- **supporting developments in alternative fuel types**
- **investing in intelligent lighting, including part night lighting and dimming**
- **supporting developments in alternative fuel types**
- **promoting technological improvements and changes to business practice such as teleconferencing/teleworking and flexible working.**

Road maintenance is a significant contributor to carbon output in Suffolk and innovation and effective management through the Transport Asset Management Plan will influence our greenest county aspiration.

The county council and our district and borough council partners also have a key role in planning and encouraging a better relationship between the home, leisure, retail and employment. New developments will be required to provide facilities that promote walking, cycling and local public transport to access local employment sites and wider transport networks.

A scoping assessment of the implications for European sites and European Offshore marine sites from any transport scheme, at a project level, is necessary to demonstrate compliance with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010. Any scheme which is likely to result in significant effects on the interest features of a European Site will trigger a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Habitats Regulations Assessment is the assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would adversely affect that site's integrity.

Safer and healthier communities

The cost of physical inactivity, poor air quality and noise associated from transport across towns in England has been forecast as being up to £25.4 billion per annum.

A healthier, more active workforce will reduce levels of absenteeism and increase productivity. Active travel also provides an effective intervention for more deprived and unhealthy members of communities. Greater levels of physical activity can reduce the need for costly clinical intervention.

Ways to improve health through transport include:

- **creating pedestrian and cycle-friendly environments that support active transport, in towns and on the wider rights of way network**
- **promoting road safety through education**
- **educating front-line health workers about transport options and the importance of communicating these to patients**
- **supporting engineering and enforcement to reduce the number of road crashes.**

A number of high noise level locations have been identified in Suffolk where there is significant exposure to traffic noise. The majority are on the trunk road routes but a small number of 'hotspot' locations have been identified for possible treatment on the A12, at busy junctions in Ipswich and on the A143 at Bury St Edmunds.

There are air quality management areas in Ipswich, Woodbridge, Sudbury, Newmarket, Felixstowe and Great Barton. Monitoring is being undertaken throughout the county and has identified further areas in Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds, Brandon and at other sites in Ipswich where there are concerns about air quality related to traffic emissions. The county council will work with district and borough councils to develop action plans targeted at air quality improvement in each air quality management area.

Transport and Skills

The economy and skills are interlinked. Skills are also a driver of the economy. People with higher skills levels achieve more at work; they're more committed, more innovative, more productive, and more confident about taking risks and growing businesses. A key issue for developing skills in Suffolk is getting access to education and learning, whether this is at an institution such as school or college, or work-based learning such as an apprenticeship.

For young people, transport enables them to have greater choice about where to learn and which subjects they would like study. This group of people are much less likely to be able to afford their own transport than the general population and so rely heavily on public transport. Similarly for work-based learning, a difficulty in placing people is often related to transport. The group of people who are not in education, employment or training are also generally the group that find it hardest to travel, making transport critical in accessing learning and employment.

Demand responsive transport services, which form a key part of our public transport plans for rural areas, will go some way to alleviating some of these issues, but may still not be practicable for all, so other community based solutions need to be considered.

3 Transport issues in Suffolk

The strategic role for transport is to support and facilitate sustainable economic growth. Different places in Suffolk have different priorities. In this section we consider the key transport issues in different parts of the county.

Babergh

Babergh is an economically diverse area, with industrial areas at the Ipswich fringe, Sudbury, Acton, Hadleigh and Brantham; traditional retail sectors in the two market towns; a high proportion of small businesses; and tourism and leisure based around the historic villages of Long Melford, Lavenham, Kersey, and the Orwell and Stour estuaries and the scenic 'Constable Country'. There is a significant agricultural base, and historically, Babergh has had a relatively high proportion of manufacturing and other industrial employment.

Babergh District Council has identified the following local economic strengths and it is likely that these sectors will be promoted and encouraged in the district:

- **non industrial employment – including public sector jobs such as teaching, health and welfare**
- **port and logistics**
- **information and Communications Technology**
- **manufacturing – reflecting the historical advantage/local tradition**
- **tourism and related leisure/hospitality service sector**
- **rural/agricultural/diversification – including farm shops and farmers markets.**

It is likely that Babergh's approach will be to create opportunities for jobs in these sectors by protecting existing and allocating new sites in the district in locations that meet the needs of the local economy. This will create sustainable new mixed use developments, and through flexible policies that support employment in the tourism/culture/leisure/hospitality, sectors and new ways of working, particularly home working. Key locations for employment growth are Sudbury/Great Cornard, Western Babergh, Ipswich Fringe East Babergh including Shotley, and Hadleigh/Mid Babergh.

The attractive landscape, estuaries, and coastline, and the historic towns and villages in Babergh form the base of an important cultural and historic leisure and tourism sector. Businesses in this sector are important contributors to the local economy and include leisure activities that attract spending all year round from people within the district and the immediate area, to the more conventional tourism associated with people visiting from outside the region on day trips, taking short breaks, and longer summer holidays.

The exact scale and location of housing growth will be determined through the Babergh Development Framework. It is likely that growth will be focussed at the urban areas and towns in the district namely Sudbury, Hadleigh and the Ipswich Fringe as well as at larger villages in the district. This will add further pressure to the transport networks in these towns, particularly Sudbury, and exacerbate localised incidents of congestion throughout the day. Where development falls outside of the larger settlements commuter trips will add further pressure to transport networks. The spatial focus of housing and employment growth shows the need for better accessibility for residents within the district to reach jobs and services. Access to education is also an important issue within the district, with only areas around Sudbury and Ipswich fringe being seen as having adequate levels of provision.

Sudbury has severe air quality problems in Cross Street as a result of heavy goods vehicle traffic and queuing at obstructions. The Air Quality Action Plan will identify a number of short-term cost-effective measures targeted at addressing the problems. A western bypass has been identified as providing relief and removing vehicles to reduce congestion and improve air quality. A funding bid for the bypass was rejected by the Government in 2003 on environmental grounds. Delivery of a bypass solution in the future will require significant work to overcome these concerns. In the short to medium term the management of town centre traffic will have to be carefully considered and mitigation measures proposed and implemented to address these issues.

Current levels of bus provision within the district are also limited, with even the larger settlements not being big enough to be able to justify their own internal bus services. Routes and timetabling is also generally limited throughout the district, with the key service being an hourly provision between Sudbury and Ipswich. Forecast levels of future development within Sudbury may be such that good town bus services may become commercially viable.

Severance issues also exist within Babergh due to the proximity of heavily trafficked roads to local communities, with the A12, A1071 and A137 particularly impacting on communities by the difficulty with which they can be crossed to reach services. When the A12 is closed this also creates further issues with vehicles using inappropriate roads to negotiate around incidents, putting greater volumes of traffic through local communities.

Key transport issues for Babergh
Sudbury bus station development and surrounding town centre environment
Sudbury bypass
Sudbury town centre traffic management and Cross Street Air Quality Management Area
Great Cornard station
Residents parking, long stay parking, lorry parking
Hadleigh – local service, dial a ride
Hadleigh Benton Street
Lorry parking within the district
A12, A14 and Copdock improvement
Access to education (e.g. Suffolk One)
Linking new strategic development to town centres
Felixstowe to Nuneaton rail improvements to allow freight modal shift
Speed and management of A134

Forest Heath

It is likely that Forest Heath will grow by around 4,500 homes and 7,000 jobs by 2021. Most of the growth is expected to be in the major settlements of Newmarket, Brandon and Mildenhall. These developments will put additional strain onto the transport network, and where they are located on greenfield sites would be expected to be further away from traditional transport hubs and routes and so require greater investment to make them sustainable. Proposed development to the west of Mildenhall for example raises difficult issues about connectivity with the rest of the town.

Forest Heath already has high levels of out-commuting to employment sites in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and other parts of Suffolk.

It is anticipated that new jobs will be created across the district, but will predominantly be within traditional employment locations, such as Mildenhall and Newmarket. Growth is expected to reinforce the key sectors within the district of agriculture, activities linked to the air bases, horse racing, and tourism, with an aspiration for biotech investment in Mildenhall.

The planned Department for Transport scheme to dual the A11 from Fiveways junction to Thetford will bring significant benefits to this area and securing its delivery by Government is a key priority. The proposed scheme does not include a grade separated junction at Fiveways and it is hoped that this further improvement can also be secured to reduce congestion at the existing roundabout and maximise the benefits of the main improvement. There are also safety concerns crossing the A11 between Barton Mills and Tuddenham. We will work with the highways Agency and the Police to look at options for improvement.

The rural nature of Forest Heath raises areas of concern for access to services, with only Newmarket, Mildenhall and Brandon having reasonable levels of accessibility. This reflects the level of provision of public transport to services and the distances that many people have to travel.

An Air Quality Management Area has been declared in Newmarket and an Air Quality Action Plan will target measures at addressing the problems. Air quality issues are also present within Brandon as a result of congestion at a primary junction. An A1065 relief road for Brandon to give relief from through traffic has long been an aspiration. A potential delivery mechanism for a new road, funded from housing development, has been proposed and this may provide a good opportunity to secure this improvement.

As a Brandon relief road may result in a significant impact on the conservation objectives of Breckland Forest or Farmland Special Protection Areas, it is likely that a project level Habitats Regulations Assessment would be required for this scheme as it has potential to result in a likely significant effect. Mitigation would need to be sought and compensation agreed in order to reduce or negate any negative impacts for Natural England to approve such a document. If it cannot be ascertained that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity the project will have to be refused or pass the tests of Regulation 62, in which case any necessary compensatory measures will need to be secured in accordance with Regulation 66.

There are also peak period congestion issues along the A14, particularly at the A142 junction in Newmarket.

Bus provision throughout the district also generally offers a reasonable to poor level of service, with the only exception being in Newmarket where, due to the greater population density and employment, a greater level of service is able to be supported by operators. However, there is still a gap in provision for access by bus to Newmarket rail station and concern about the quality of the bus station in the town. Rail travel is slightly restricted with interchanges needed at Cambridge or Bury St Edmunds for connections to Ely or Peterborough.

Key transport issues for Forest Heath
Newmarket bus station
Ely to Newmarket rail link
A14/A142 junction
A11 improvement and Fiveways junction
Local bus services
Brandon relief road
Mildenhall town centre and links to West Row, Beck Row and Lakenheath
Air Quality Management Area in Newmarket

Ipswich

Ipswich is the county town of Suffolk and so acts as a focal point for a significant proportion of the growth expected in Suffolk. Within Ipswich there is forecast to be an additional 15,000 dwellings, with an additional 5,000 in neighbouring districts on the edge of the town. The development in Ipswich will also support regeneration of areas within the town, with a significant area of regeneration around the Waterfront and further development of the education quarter. There is also the ambition to continue to promote employment-led mixed use development of Ipswich Village. Ipswich Borough Council also has ambitious plans for an expansion of the quality and scope of the town's retail offer, including new shopping centres. These exciting development opportunities will help transform the town but will also present some challenges.

Significant development within Ipswich, particularly employment, is anticipated to be focussed around the central area, and so could increase the transport pressures that currently exist within the town. The location of this development, which should result in shorter journeys for many, provides an opportunity to change the ways that people choose to travel. If travel patterns from development follow those currently seen there will be greater levels of congestion, with a consequent deterioration in air quality, more delays and longer traffic queues. Traffic modelling has shown that with the anticipated level of growth traffic could grow by over 15% by 2021. There will also be additional pressures on the A12/A14 at Copdock, Seven Hills Interchange and the Orwell Bridge.

Significant housing development is also proposed for the northern fringe of Ipswich and this, together with planned growth in Suffolk Coastal on the eastern fringe of the town will add significant pressure to radial routes leading to the town centre, the principal focus for employment. It will be important to ensure that transport is fully integrated with the development plans for these locations. We will work closely with the planning authorities and developers to ensure that robust travel plans are implemented to minimise traffic from the new developments and that necessary transport infrastructure and service improvements are properly funded by developers.

Many peak hour journeys in Ipswich are fairly short and yet are carried out by car. Congestion levels are already seen as a significant problem and we want to tackle this in order to ensure that future economic growth in the town is not jeopardised.

Bus service provision in Ipswich is generally good, and provides commercial services but there are some areas that are not well served. There are no orbital services so that passengers wanting to skirt around the town have to travel into the centre and then out again. There is currently a lack of multi-operator ticketing which exacerbates this problem. The availability and pricing of car parking within the town is also an important factor in the travel choices that people make. More than half of long-stay parking capacity in the town is privately owned and much of it at little or no cost to users.

Education facilities have been transformed over the past few years with the establishment of the new University Campus Suffolk, Suffolk New College and Suffolk One sixth-form college. These new facilities are important for Suffolk's ambitions to raise the levels of skills and educational attainment to be realised. They have also added additional pressures to the transport systems.

There are obesity and air quality issues within Ipswich that tend to be focussed around the more deprived areas of the town. Enabling people to shift to walking and cycling for local trips will go some way towards resolving these health issues. The four Air Quality Management Areas cover a significant part of the town centre and relate to heavy goods vehicle numbers as well as total traffic.

The Air Quality Action Plan developed to address the problems can be found at:
http://www.ipswich.gov.uk/downloads/E-08-31_IBC_Air_Quality_Action_Plan.pdf

The proposed Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century scheme is a £21 million package of traffic management, smarter choices, bus, walking and cycling improvements to address the main transport issues facing Ipswich over the next period. More details are given in Part 2 of this local transport plan. This flagship scheme is at the heart of delivering our transport strategy for Ipswich.

The waterfront and town centre areas remain priorities for development and regeneration. There is a local aspiration for a new road crossing of the Wet Dock in Ipswich, promoted by Ipswich Borough Council in its draft Local Development Framework Core Strategy to improve access to the island site, which may come forward for redevelopment in the future. The county council supports this longer-term aspiration because whilst a new crossing would not provide significant benefit as a route for through traffic, it could improve the accessibility of this area. It will be necessary, alongside the Borough Council, to take a view on the deliverability of this proposal, particularly in relation to the economic viability of future development.

A shorter-term proposal has been developed to remodel the roads around the waterfront following a study by consultants Buchanan. In this proposal the connectivity between the town centre and the waterfront area would be improved by a reduction in the volume of traffic using the Star Lane gyratory with a consequent improvement in air quality. This scheme will be considered for implementation during the life of the plan.

Key transport issues for Ipswich
Road condition
Urban realm improvements
Tackling congestion
Modernisation of bus stations
Reducing separation between town centre and waterfront
Better facilities for walking and cycling
Stronger neighbourhoods
Longer term – crossing for improved access to wet dock island site
Town centre masterplan
A14 improvements
Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century
Extensive Air Quality Management Areas
A14 Orwell Bridge and Seven Hills Interchange Congestion

Mid Suffolk

Mid Suffolk is expected to grow by around 4,700 homes by 2021. This includes a large proportion in Stowmarket with additional development in key service centres and the fringe of Ipswich. Additional development in Stowmarket will place greater strain onto the transport network within the town and the A14, but there is an opportunity through the planning process to develop more sustainable communities and to make greater levels of provision for sustainable transport networks and services. Where new dwellings are established away from the larger towns it is important that local provision of, or access to, services is considered as part of reducing the need to travel to the larger towns.

The district is also planning for an extra 6,000 job opportunities being created, which will mainly be focussed in towns and villages along the key transport corridors of the A14 and A140, though will include some to the south-east at Great Blakenham and Claydon. With the proximity of these locations to primary road networks it

will be important to work with developers to ensure that measures are in place to encourage alternatives to car commuting to avoid increases in the volume of cars using the roads and increasing peak time congestion.

The predominantly rural nature of Mid Suffolk raises accessibility issues for residents in accessing key services, and while development will create opportunities for new services to be created there is also a danger that where there is no local provision it will generate greater levels of car use. Where services remain remote from some settlements it also raises issues about access by public transport. While issues exist across the district there are particular issues across some of the 'High Suffolk' area.

Bus provision throughout the district varies. Rail also provides some linkages with towns along the A14 corridor and joining the Great Eastern Mainline for access to Norwich and London. A new rail station at Great Blakenham is required as part of the proposed Snoasis development and will be essential to reduce the impact of that development and to improve the quality of local rail service provision. Further development within Stowmarket should be able to support commercially viable town bus services as an extension of the longer distance services that currently operate. There is some spare capacity on trains operating through the district, particularly on services between Stowmarket and Ipswich. Services running through to Cambridge and Peterborough can become busy and have some capacity issues, including for bicycles. We will work with the train operator to resolve these issues.

Severance issues also exist within the district, with local communities being separated by large volumes of traffic using roads. Speed through these communities is also of concern to local residents, while the management of heavy goods vehicles is a further concern with a number of distribution centres located in the district. This is a particular concern at Coddenham.

Safety problems on the A140 have been largely resolved by adjustments to the speed limits, however this will be kept under review.

Key transport issues for Mid Suffolk
Town based bus services in Stowmarket
Stowmarket transport interchange
Tackling congestion in Stowmarket
Cycle network
Rural bus provision
Rural footpaths
Local access to key services
Lorry management

St Edmundsbury

St Edmundsbury will continue to be a location for growth which could amount to at least 10,000 new homes in the next 20 years as well as a growth in jobs. The growth will be concentrated mainly in the towns of Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill, with the remaining dwellings being across the rest of the borough. The proposed concentration of housing within Bury St Edmunds will present transport challenges if we are to avoid increased congestion within the town and on roads leading to it, including the A14.

Growth throughout the rest of the borough and in neighbouring districts will also add to traffic in Bury St Edmunds as more residents and visitors travel to the town from across the sub-region to access key services

and retail. The level of growth within Haverhill will also impact upon the road network both within the town and the wider area if measures are not put in place to address increased levels of car use associated from extra car trips from them. Levels of safety and congestion on the A1307 between Haverhill and Cambridge in particular are likely to be of significant concern and we will work with St Edmundsbury and Camridgeshire County Council to find solutions to these problems.

Economic growth within the district is also forecast to see the creation of about 13,000 new jobs, with strong demand in Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill. The location of additional employment opportunities will create additional pressure onto the road network within the district and larger towns if measures are not in place to ease the flow of traffic and to encourage the use of alternatives to single occupancy car commuting. Issues of accessibility to more remote employment locations will also need to be addressed, including links towards Cambridge and Stansted.

The development of the long-term employment growth at Suffolk Business Park on the eastern side of Bury St Edmunds is dependent on the provision of a new link road connecting to the A14 at the Rookery junction. This road is a priority to support development of the local economy and the county council will work closely with the borough council, Highways Agency and developers to try to secure its provision early in the life of this plan.

Improvement of rail services to Cambridge, Peterborough and Ipswich would be very beneficial. There have been some enhancements to the lines recently, however we will work with the operator to seek further improvements as journey times are relatively slow, there is often overcrowding, and a lack of room for bicycles. General improvement of public transport services – both quality and frequency in both towns and the rural area of St Edmundsbury is necessary.

As with the other districts within Suffolk, the rural nature of St Edmundsbury outside of the larger towns raises areas of concern for accessibility for those people without access to cars. Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill act as service centres for the surrounding populations and it is important that development throughout the rest of the borough supports access by public transport to sites. Apart from Bury St Edmunds none of the settlements have direct access to rail services.

There is an air quality issue within Great Barton due to the volume of traffic, heavy goods vehicle numbers and parking in the centre of the village. Queuing and the volume of vehicles can result in delays to journeys and can also create a segregation effect in hampering social interaction within the village on one side of the road to the other. A bypass is a long-term aspiration to help alleviate these issues. There are also congestion and safety concerns at the Bunbury Arms junction, and solutions will need to be considered with any further development at Thurston.

There are peak hour congestion issues at junctions of the A14 around Bury St Edmunds and within the town. Some junctions in Haverhill are also congested at peak times.

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other. The A143 also segregates parts of the village. There are also peak hour congestion issues at junctions of the A14 around Bury St Edmunds and within the town. Some junctions in Haverhill are also congested at peak times.

Key transport issues for St Edmundsbury
A14 Junctions
Moreton Hall link road
Bury St Edmunds – relief roads for A134, A1101 and Westley as part of new developments
Air Quality Management Area at Great Barton (and bypass aspiration)
Rail connections
Haverhill to Bury St Edmunds and Cambridge bus connections
Haverhill North West relief road
Haverhill cycle network
Haverhill road condition
Rural footways

Suffolk Coastal

It is anticipated that there will be about 8,000 additional homes provided within the district by 2028. A significant proportion of this forecast growth will be concentrated to the east of Ipswich and at Felixstowe and the neighbouring Trimley villages, with the remainder dispersed between the market towns and larger villages across the rest of the district. This growth pattern will place additional strain onto the transport network throughout the district, particularly in areas around Ipswich, along the A12 and A1214 and along the A14 corridor where there is already some peak time congestion. The A14 is part of the trans-European road network linking the nationally important Port of Felixstowe to the rest of the country. It is important that the right balance is struck between catering for the needs of local and strategic traffic. Housing growth in these areas does however offer a greater opportunity for providing for and promoting alternatives to the car due to the proximity of the housing to service centres, employment and public transport networks that are already in operation.

Along with housing growth a need for a greater level of employment has also been forecast. Three strategic employment sites have been identified: the Port of Felixstowe with associated port related and logistics uses; Martlesham Heath business campus, with the development of high-tech industries linked to Adastral Park; and an extension to Ransomes Europark, as part of an employment corridor stretching across the Ipswich borough boundary. Other smaller-scale key employment areas are also present within the district that will play a role in creating a greater number of new opportunities. Agriculture and tourism related industries will also play a continuing role in the economic growth of the district, helping to maintain a strong and vibrant rural economy. The variety of locations for new employment will each raise particular transport challenges that will need to be addressed. These include managing large scale movements of lorries associated with the Port and the adjacent Air Quality Management Area and the development of the Felixstowe to Nuneaton rail route, through to congestion related to tourism along the coast.

The Suffolk Coast and Heaths designation as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty reflects its environmental quality. This quality makes the area attractive to visitors and tourism is a key element in the local economy. The traffic that this generates can lead to localised congestion problems and in some places the volume of tourist traffic is a threat to the very environment that people come to see.

Much of Suffolk Coastal is rural and this, combined with geographic limitations through the location of rivers, presents some issues for access to services by public transport. Accessibility in the coast and heaths area is a particular concern. Access to employment has also been identified as an issue throughout the district, in particular for the 16 to 24 age group. Opportunities exist to build on the recent innovative demand responsive public transport arrangements set up to service this area.

Woodbridge suffers from some localised congestion in the centre of the town and has had an air quality management area declared. This is the result of congestion around one junction. The draft Air Quality Action Plan can be found at **http://www.suffolkcoastal.gov.uk/yourdistrict/envprotection/airquality/**

For much of the district the A12 provides a key north/south route and a link for the market towns and villages in the district and to the north in Waveney. The resilience of the road, in the face of issues such as flooding, is therefore a critical issue in that it can result in communities being further isolated. The impact of climate change (increased flooding, sea level rise) is likely to affect the A12 at Lattymere Dam, and the A1095 at Wolsey Bridge. It will also impact on the alignment of the Suffolk coast and affect the areas of outstanding natural beauty and public rights of way.

The East Suffolk railway line between Ipswich and Lowestoft runs through the district providing direct access to two market towns and several other villages. The line currently has limitations as to the level of service that is able to be provided. However, the service does provide connections to the centre of Ipswich and London, so there is an opportunity to encourage greater use of the service with or without any improvements. The current frequency is a train every hour from Ipswich to Saxmundham which is a viable alternative for commuting by private car using the A12. However beyond Saxmundham to Lowestoft the service is currently every two hours. Improvement works at Beccles to provide a passing loop is a key priority for the county council and it is anticipated that this work can be completed by Network Rail by the end of 2012, paving the way for a full hourly service between Ipswich and Lowestoft. Reinstatement of a passenger line to Leiston is a long-term aspiration.

There are also long standing issues of traffic volume through the villages of Marlesford, Little Glemham, Stratford St Andrew, and Farnham on the A12.

Suffolk County Council strongly supports the provision of proper relief for these communities by the provision of a relief road and will work with the nuclear industry to secure its provision alongside any new power station at Sizewell.

Key transport issues for Suffolk Coastal
A12 Four Villages relief road
A12 reliability – flooding
Sea level change and coastal erosion
East Suffolk line improvements – Beccles Loop
Lorry parking
Operation Stack
Felixstowe – local bus services
Lorries and large buses on rural roads
Congestion on Ipswich eastern fringe including A12, A1214 and A14
Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services in coastal area
Air Quality Management Areas in Woodbridge and Felixstowe

Waveney

It is likely that there will be growth of around 3,000 new dwellings and 5,000 new jobs in Waveney. Most of this development is planned for Lowestoft as part of a jobs-led regeneration project for the town. Some growth is also likely within the market towns. Growth in these areas will place additional demand onto the transport networks and, if no measures are put in place, will result in greater levels of congestion and delays to journeys, particularly in Lowestoft. Housing and jobs growth within Lowestoft and the market towns will, however make it possible to build upon existing sustainable transport networks and reduce the impact of potential traffic growth arising from the new developments

Throughout the wider district access to services by public transport can be difficult, particularly in the more remote parts of the district. Conditions are better in the market towns and a commercially viable bus service operates within Lowestoft. The East Suffolk line provides a rail service between Ipswich, Halesworth and Lowestoft at a two-hourly frequency. From the end of 2012 an improved service frequency will make this service more useful for many journeys. Trains connect Lowestoft and Norwich about once an hour.

In Lowestoft, as with most urban centres, there is a high dependency on cars for many short trips. This highlights the opportunity that exists to promote and improve cycling and walking for many trips within the town, particularly the peak hour trips to work that take place at the busiest times.

There are a number of long standing aspirations for highway improvements in Lowestoft that the county council is actively promoting. These include: completion of the northern spine road that will allow the re-routing of the A12 in North Lowestoft, and the improvement of Denmark road; a new access road south of Lake Lothing to unlock development sites in this regeneration area; additional pedestrian/cycle bridges across Lake Lothing; and, in the longer term a third vehicular bridge across Lake Lothing. Improvements to the Commercial Road junction would also unlock development sites on the northern side of the regeneration area.

The A12 between Lowestoft and Ipswich is an important route for both freight and people accessing Lowestoft, and the resilience of this road especially with regards to flooding is critical. For much of the district the A12 provides a key north/south route and a link for the market towns and villages in the district and to the north in Waveney. The impact of climate change (increased flooding, sea level rise) is likely to affect the A12 at Lattymere Dam, the A1095 at Wolsey Bridge and the B1127 at Potters Bridge. It will also impact on the alignment of the Suffolk coast and could significantly affect Lowestoft and Corton.

The East Suffolk railway line between Ipswich and Lowestoft currently has limitations as to the level of service that is able to be provided. However, the service does provide connections to the centre of Ipswich and London, so there is an opportunity to encourage greater use of the service with or without any improvements. The current frequency is a train every two hours, however improvement works at Beccles to provide a passing loop is a key priority for the county council and it is anticipated that this work can be completed by Network Rail by the end of 2012, paving the way for a full hourly service between Ipswich and Lowestoft. This is a viable alternative to commuting by car using the A12.

There is also scope to improve integrated transport links at the East Suffolk Line Stations to improve north/south access. Reinstatement of a passenger line to Leiston is a long-term aspiration.

Key transport issues for Waveney
Lack of bus connections to/from Lowestoft, market towns and rural areas
Access to development sites south of Lake Lothing in Lowestoft
Impact of traffic in north Lowestoft
Impact of lorries in Beccles
Impact of lorries in Bungay town centre
Poor frequency of service on the East Suffolk line
Poor transport connections at rail stations on the East Suffolk line
Traffic congestion at Outlon Broad rail station
Lack of pedestrian/cycle bridges over Lake Lothing
Pinch points for north/south traffic in Lowestoft
Sea level change and coastal erosion

4 Suffolk transport strategy

The broad aim of the Suffolk transport strategy is to support the sustainable economic development that is required to lift Suffolk out of the recession and provide sustainable future growth. Different interventions will be appropriate for different places. However it is possible to identify common themes for urban and rural areas.

Within the urban areas there are three strands to our approach:

1. reducing the demand for car travel

2. more efficient use and better management of the transport network

3. where affordable - infrastructure improvements, particularly for sustainable transport.

This approach recognises that traffic congestion is a common theme in urban areas and that housing and employment growth is likely to intensify the pressure on our road networks, leading to unacceptable delays in many places unless we take action. Reducing demand on the road network will improve journey time reliability for car and bus users, while also benefiting pedestrians, cyclists and residents through lower volumes of vehicles and fewer air, noise and segregation issues. Within the larger urban areas advanced traffic management and control systems will help us achieve greater efficiency, and priority for buses at busy junctions. The technology will also enable us to provide better information to transport users on roadside displays and via the internet and mobile phones.

Our general approach in rural areas is to work with public transport operators and community/voluntary groups to improve levels of accessibility to key service centres. This includes the development of demand responsive bus services, which have been trialled with success in some areas of Suffolk, and refining timetabled services to provide better interchange and journey times. This will also be incorporated with better information to make it easier for people to plan their journeys. A review of options for the future provision of more community based rural transport services has been undertaken. A toolkit for communities has been developed and work is ongoing to build greater capacity in communities to take more responsibility for local transport.

Our public rights of way network can play an important role in rural areas and on the fringes of towns in providing traffic-free and safe routes for walking and cycling journeys. The use of this network will become very important given the likely financial constraints on providing new facilities such as pavements alongside roads in rural areas.

We aim to improve the quality, reliability and connectivity of our rural road networks over the life of this plan, including relief for communities suffering from high volumes of traffic.

We will also work with district and borough planning officers to reduce the immediate need for travel through better spatial planning so that homes and employment are better connected, and strong travel plan requirements for new developments to reduce car use. We also support the ambition of improving broadband accessibility to enable more home working and the ability to access services remotely, which will help reduce the need to travel.

We will encourage and assist local communities to take responsibility for tackling transport issues that directly affect them. Examples could include:

- **speed watch programmes**
- **car sharing**
- **community cars**
- **highway verge grass cutting**
- **local snow clearance, and salt and grit spreading**
- **local lorry watch**
- **monitoring of quiet lanes**
- **public path improvements.**

During the current period of reductions in funding for public services our priority will be to physically maintain the existing transport networks and to make their use as efficient as possible. The county council has aspirations for significant improvements to transport infrastructure in the longer term and we will take forward our plans to deliver these aspirations as and when resources permit, recognising that as we add to our infrastructure we are also adding to our future maintenance liability.

Urban area strategy principles

Part two of the local transport plan contains summaries of the plans that have been developed for our larger communities. These plans reflect local differences between places but there are broad principles common to all.

The pressure on the transport networks in our towns will be significantly increased as a result of future growth in jobs and housing. In most places it would be neither financially possible nor environmentally desirable to increase road capacity to accommodate the forecast levels of increased traffic if travel behaviour in the future remains as it is today.

Our inability to provide significant additional traffic capacity, and wider sustainability objectives mean that we have to have another approach. Our general approach is to try to reduce the demand for travel by car; to get more from our existing transport facilities e.g. by traffic management improvements; and to improve our infrastructure where this is affordable, feasible and environmentally sustainable.

Reduce demand for car travel

This approach will require working with planning authorities to ensure that service and employment provision is linked with the development of housing growth within the towns, and that within new developments alternative modes to the car are promoted as natural choices.

We will also try to influence the choices that people make about how to travel to work, school and other services, particularly in the peak morning and evening periods when most congestion occurs. Travel planning in residential areas, at workplaces and schools has been shown to be a very cost-effective way to reduce car travel.

The impact of new developments on congestion levels on the network must be reduced if future problems are to be avoided. We will also work with existing businesses to establish voluntary travel plans to encourage employees and visitors to reduce car use. The essence of this approach is to encourage people to take personal responsibility for the consequences of the travel choices they make.

Making efficient use of transport networks

More reliable journey times and reduced congestion can be achieved by making more efficient use of the transport network, for example by reducing the amount of stop-start experienced on the road network, and through priority for scheduled public transport services allowing them to keep to time.

Urban traffic management and control is a tool that enables a level of control on the transport network to achieve greater efficiency, for example by managing queues at junctions and giving buses priority. We have recently introduced a system in Lowestoft. Extending this system to the larger towns would enable a greater level of network control to be applied. We can also integrate other information into the control system. This can include, for example, providing real time information for bus passengers, the number of spaces available in specific car parks and using reactive variable message signs to highlight incidents or poor air quality.

Effective maintenance of the network, shaped by the Transport Asset Management Plan, will play a big part in meeting and sustaining the objectives to encourage more walking and cycling. A well maintained route is much more likely to encourage regular use.

We also hope to improve the awareness of people about the choices available on how to travel. This can include information online, via mobile phones or using variable message signs on streets.

Improve infrastructure

Complementary to this will be the development and promotion of sustainable transport networks in urban areas, so that alternatives to the car become natural choices for the short journeys that are typical in most urban areas. We aim to help develop and enable the provision of strong commercial bus operations where a town can support this, along with good stops, shelters and information and with good connections to other forms of transport. We also aim to provide safe continuous routes for cycling and walking, removing gaps and addressing barriers and disincentives to users.

While infrastructure improvements may be limited at the start of this plan period due to the funding restraints that are in place, smaller-scale high benefit schemes may still be possible to overcome barriers and gaps to improve networks for users. As the plan period progresses larger-scale schemes may become more viable, but funding of these schemes will still be dependant on the benefits they offer, their deliverability, and future maintenance costs.

We will also be investigating with partner organisations opportunities that exist for large-scale infrastructure projects in the medium to long term, and considering where improvements can be made to support alternatives to the car. This will require working with developers to secure funding. This will also include working with partners to monitor developments in emerging technologies, such as electric vehicles and charging points, and investigate opportunities for funding infrastructure to support growth.

Rural areas

The transport strategy for the rural areas within Suffolk is based around five themes. Underpinning our work in rural areas is the need to strengthen communities so that they are better placed to address some local problems themselves.

1 Better accessibility to employment, education and services.

Our review of rural transport has explored options for improving accessibility in rural areas within the context of the county council's current financial constraints. We are working with local communities to take forward local solutions including the important relationship between home to school transport and wider rural transport provision. Our plans to extend the coverage of demand responsive transport will be important. A toolkit for other community based transport solutions has been developed and work is ongoing to build greater capacity in communities so that they are able to take greater responsibility for local transport.

2 Encouraging planning policies to reduce the need to travel

There is scope to reduce the need to travel by car even in rural areas if development is well related to existing settlements and to existing sustainable transport networks. We will work with the district and borough councils to ensure that development management policies reflect this aim.

3 Maintaining the transport network and improving its connectivity, resilience and reliability

Maintaining our networks in a condition that adequately supports the recovery of the Suffolk economy is our highest priority. Our transport asset management plan provides the basis for our maintenance programme and is explained later in this document.

Our transport networks are susceptible to disruption from a variety of sources. These can include congestion following accidents and other incidents, natural events such as flooding. We are planning for those events so that the consequences can be better managed.

Issues for the transport networks as a whole, including the rights of way network are considered below.

4 Reducing the impact of transport on communities

Many communities remain concerned about traffic impacts, particularly lorries and speeding. We will work with communities to establish local solutions, owned by the community, to deal with these problems.

5 Support the county council's ambition of improving broadband access throughout Suffolk

Better broadband will be important to support new, 21st century businesses in rural areas. This provision can also help in bringing services closer to people, making remote working possible and reducing the need to travel so often.

Cross boundary working

Transport issues do not stop at administrative boundaries so cross-boundary working is an important part of this strategy. Aspects that we will be working with our neighbouring authorities and relevant bodies such as the Highways Agency include:

Cambridgeshire:

- **Cambridgeshire sub-region**
- **A1307- Haverhill to Cambridge corridor**
- **Ely to Newmarket**
- **A14/A142 Exning junction.**

Essex

- **Haven Gateway sub-region**
- **access to Stansted Airport**
- **Sudbury and Haverhill (including A131 and A1017)**
- **A12**
- **Lorry management issues from A12 including A131/A134.**

Norfolk

- **Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth sub-region**
- **Brandon**
- **A11**
- **connections to Norwich.**

Working with developers

Management of future housing and employment development in Suffolk is critical to the delivery of our transport strategy. As part of our wider approach to encourage more sustainable development patterns the county council will continue to work with district and borough councils to ensure residential and employment developments are better connected and that developers pay a fair contribution towards necessary infrastructure and services.

In working with developers we will expect them to produce robust travel plans to minimise car use with challenging targets for levels of parking and traffic generation and attraction. These plans will be supported by significant contributions to the provision of local facilities for sustainable transport connecting new developments to employment and services. This will include pedestrian and cycle routes, the promotion and enhancement of existing bus services or securing new services, with an aim that each of these new or altered bus services should be commercially viable within five years.

We also expect developers to fund traffic management and bus priority schemes, measures to reduce air quality impacts etc. in addition to any work necessary to mitigate any adverse traffic impacts of their development on the existing highway network. This will include commuted sums for future maintenance.

Transport asset management plan

In the early years of the local transport plan our priority will be to maintain the road network and to minimise the extent of deterioration.

Asset management can be summarised as knowing what your assets are, knowing what condition they are in and planning for their maintenance over their whole service life. Constrained public funding in the early period of this local transport plan makes good asset management even more important.

Suffolk published its first Transport Asset Management Plan in May 2006 covering the period to 2010/11. The plan has now been updated. Its key features are:

- **A new transport asset management plan, to stand alongside this local transport plan, setting out high-level principles and a framework for transport asset management in Suffolk up to 2028.**
- **An annual report to cover new HM Treasury requirements for financial reporting of infrastructure assets, and reporting key performance indicators and trends across the range of the Council's transport assets.**
- **Detailed life-cycle plans for each asset group (roads, bridges, pavements, street lighting, public rights of way and so on) including costed maintenance strategies and options for each group.**
- **Operational plans and technical guidance notes informed by life-cycle plans and supporting the on-the-ground delivery of maintenance services.**

This structure is intended to provide a dynamic and flexible system of asset management planning, and allows for rapid updating in response to changes such as new statutory duties or budget decisions.

Asset management and transport strategy

Theme	How asset management contributes…
A prosperous and vibrant economy	• Planned maintenance reducing journey times by fewer emergency road closures. • Avoiding weight restrictions on bridges which cause longer journeys for delivery vehicles. • A resilient network not affected by weather events like floods causing temporary road closures.
Learning and skills for the future	• A well-maintained network allowing access to schools and colleges throughout the county.
Creating the greenest county	• Reducing the electricity consumption from street lighting, traffic signals and lit signs and bollards. • Reducing waste and using more recycled materials in road construction and maintenance. • Managing the impact of construction and maintenance on biodiversity, geodiversity, historic buildings and archaeological assets.

Theme	How asset management contributes…
Creating the greenest county	• Operate the Roadside Nature Reserves project and improve their management and condition in accordance with Suffolk Community Strategy Local Target 8. • On site recycling reducing lorry movements.
Safe, healthy and inclusive communities	• Maintaining roads and pavements well to reduce the risks to all users. • Maintaining parts of the network used by vulnerable people: older people, children. • Maintaining public transport assets like bus shelters to promote bus use. • Maintaining assets that encourage active travel choices: pavements, cycling routes, the Rights of Way network.

Constraints on asset management

The Council's ability to deliver effective asset management is affected by environmental and financial constraints.

Environmental constraints include both the impacts of a changing climate on transport assets, and measures which the council is taking to reduce its own environmental impact. The latest projections of climate change include, for example, hotter summer weather which will affect the service life of the asphalts used for most road surfacing treatments in the county. Higher rainfall and severe storm events will also put pressure on highway drainage systems.

There is also the issue of rising sea levels affecting networks. We are currently developing a scheme to prevent the risks of flooding on the A12 at Blythburgh. However, other roads are also affected by rising sea levels including the A12 at Lattymere Dam, the A1095 at Wolsey Bridge and the B1127 at Potters Bridge in Suffolk Coastal, and the B1456 at Wherstead Strand just outside Ipswich. This will impact on the alignment of the Suffolk Coast and affect public rights of way. There will be changes in responsibilities due to the Floods and Water Management Act 2010. This will see the county becoming the lead authority for developing flood risk management plans and maintenance of flood management assets.

Attempts to reduce the carbon footprint of the council's own activity include part-night lighting and dimming of street lighting, and could lead to changes in the materials used in highway maintenance, more use of recycled and lower-temperature materials for example.

Financial constraints are inevitable as the UK has to manage its budget deficit downwards over the short to medium term. This will make it critically important to use the available funding as efficiently and effectively as possible, making full use of condition data as well as local knowledge to target sites as priorities for treatment.

Innovation in techniques and materials can also help to make the money go further, as well as careful design of highway improvements to reduce future maintenance costs. Nevertheless deterioration in the condition of the assets may be unavoidable where investment levels decline and this must be publicly acknowledged and managed.

Road Safety

Suffolk has made good progress in reducing road casualties. Our 2010 Road Casualty Report has identified key issues such as casualty reduction among motorcyclists, young drivers and pedestrians; safety of work related driving; and speeding. These areas are the focus of the future road safety strategy.

It is important that we continue our Suffolk Roadsafe Partnership working involving Suffolk County Council, the Police, the Fire Service, East of England Ambulance Service and the Highways Agency to improve road safety and we are keen to build on the excellent work that the partners started in 2007 (www.suffolkroadsafe.net). We all recognise the importance of a joined up strategy incorporating education, engineering and enforcement.

As well as working with professionals, we will need to involve the local community. Suffolk now has over 300 sites covered by Community Speedwatch volunteers. Schools and local communities are also involved in building support for the crossing patrol service.

We will continue to work with schools to educate our most vulnerable road users and to promote health and sustainable transport messages, and in particular ensure that young cyclists benefit from the Government's ongoing support for Bikeability training. We have also received funding in the recent past for road safety education targeting older drivers (GrandDriver) and the business community (We Mean Business) and, consequently, we are in a position to deliver key messages and driving advice to these groups.

Suffolk County Council will continue to monitor casualties and make physical changes to the network where these are needed. We recognise that effective highway maintenance can also contribute to road safety through investment in maintaining existing road markings and signs and intervention in road surfaces that are deteriorating.

Transport networks

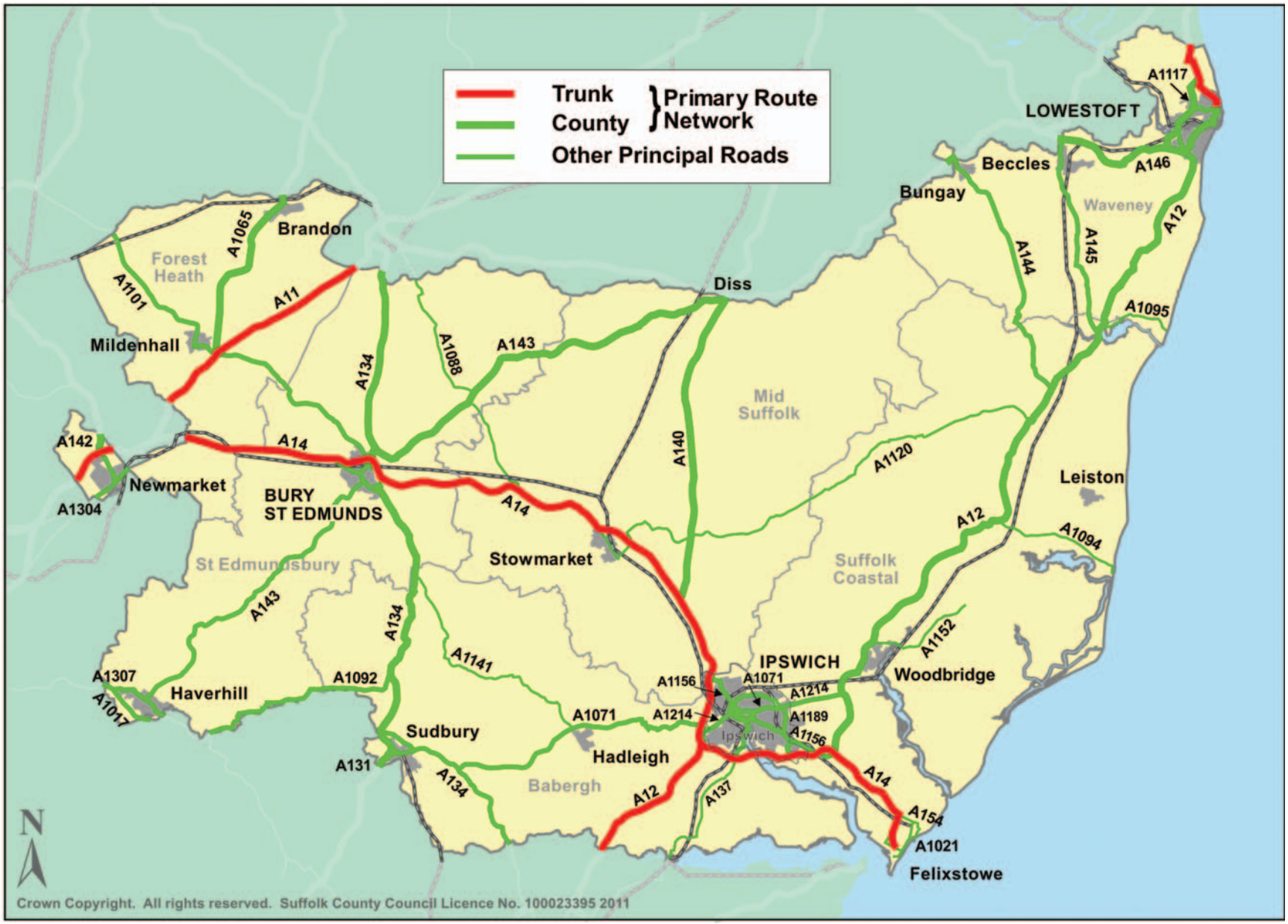

Figure 2- Suffolk's principal transport network

Trunk roads

Trunk roads within Suffolk are the A11, A14 and A12 south of the Copdock Interchange and north from and including the Bascule Bridge in Lowestoft. These roads are managed by the Highways Agency on behalf of the Government.

The county council will work with and lobby the Highways Agency and Central Government to highlight issues and secure improvements. Key improvements that the county council will be working with the Highways Agency to achieve are:

- **dualling of the A11 between Mildenhall and Thetford**
- **improvement of the A14/A12 junction at Copdock**
- **improved management of the A12 and A14 in the short to medium term**
- **longer-term infrastructure improvements to the trunk road network**
- **longer-term provision of a third river crossing for motorised vehicles in Lowestoft.**

We will also work with the Highways Agency, district and borough councils and other partners to identify and provide safe and secure lorry parking.

County Road Network

In the short term our ambitions for significant improvements to the county's road network will be constrained by available funds. However our strategy extends over twenty years and later in this period we want to see the delivery of ambitious transport projects on the A12, and in Ipswich, Lowestoft, Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill, Beccles, Bungay, Brandon and Sudbury. Our aspirations for strategic transport improvements are set out in Part 2 of this local transport plan.

Rail

The rail network is controlled and operated through a combination of Network Rail and train operating companies. Community Rail Partnerships also operate within Suffolk on the following lines:

- **East Suffolk lines, running between Ipswich to Lowestoft and Felixstowe**
- **Wherry lines, running between Lowestoft and Norwich**
- **Essex and South Suffolk line, running between Sudbury and Colchester.**

The county council will continue to work with Network Rail, rail operating companies, Central Government, and the Community Rail Partnerships to try to secure improvements and raise issues. A key element of this is to secure service level agreements following renewal of the franchise covering Suffolk. Key improvements that the county council will be working with partners to achieve within the life of the plan are:

- **greater reliability and resilience, improved journey time, and service enhancements on the Great Eastern mainline**
- **implementation of Beccles loop and hourly service between Lowestoft and Ipswich on the East Suffolk line**
- **improvement of the Felixstowe to Nuneaton route for freight services**
- **greater frequency and higher quality services running between Ipswich, Cambridge and Peterborough**

- **improved interchange with other modes and extra capacity for bicycles**
- **new station at Great Blakenham linked to Snoasis**
- **development of station travel plans**
- **progression with development of the east-west rail link.**

National Cycle Network

The national cycle network is comprised of a series of routes throughout the country to form the network, with the following routes passing through the county:

- **Route 1 – Dover to the Shetland Islands, passing through Hadleigh, Ipswich, Woodbridge, Beccles, and Lowestoft.**
- **Route 13 – London to Fakenham, passing through Sudbury and intersecting with route 51 to the east of Bury St Edmunds.**
- **Route 51 – Oxford to Colchester, passing through Newmarket, Bury St Edmunds, Stowmarket, Ipswich and Felixstowe to connect with the ferry to Harwich.**

In the rural areas we will aim to sign the network to aid users with their journey. Small scale improvements to ensure safe access to the network will also be considered. In the market towns and the larger urban areas the county council will investigate opportunities for providing infrastructure, such as cycle parking, on-road cycle lanes, off-road shared-use paths or separate provision. We will prioritise work on those routes that can combine the needs of the national network with local needs to access employment, schools and services.

Public Rights of Way

Suffolk County Council's Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2016, In Step with Suffolk, is a ten-year plan reviewing the use, demand and management of the access network in Suffolk.

In Suffolk, public rights of way provide 3,400 miles of footpaths, bridleway and byways. In addition, there are 125 miles of permissive paths, 500 miles of cycle tracks, cycle lanes and way marked leisure cycling routes, 12,500 acres of Open Access Land and a further 12,500 acres of Forestry Commission dedicated access land. This network provides off-road access to services, links between settlements, and access into the countryside. The importance of rights of way, quality greenspaces, greenways and corridors, for an effective non-motorised urban transport network threading through urban areas and linking to more rural areas is recognised.

Improvements to the access network focuses on the needs of non-motorised users. Most improvements enhance access for people with limited mobility or those with sensory disabilities, enhancing their quality of life. Encouraging use of the network also promotes healthier lifestyles, the Suffolk countryside, and sustainable travel options. It also supports stronger communities by enabling people to be actively involved in managing their countryside. Use of the network also supports local economies, particularly in rural areas.

Short- to medium-term priorities are:

- **Investment-**
  - **Protect, maintain and improve priority routes, devolving activities to local communities, where practicable.**
  - **Use the local transport plan programme, planning process and external sources to invest in countryside access, improving connectivity, inclusiveness and sustainable access to services.**

- **Develop coastal access in line with Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 and continue to safeguard public access where the coast is changing.**
- **Continue work with the Highways Agency to address the issue of routes severed by trunk roads.**
- **Devolve services to local communities and other providers where cost-effective and in line with service standards.**
- **Consolidate the Definitive Map and add a working copy of it onto Suffolk County Council website.**
- **Develop the Discover Suffolk project in partnership with other providers to promote access, develop healthier communities and promote the rural economy.**

These priorities will be reviewed each year and will form the basis of the county council's annual action plan for public rights of way and open access.

The full Rights of Way Improvement Plan is available at **www.suffolk.gov.uk/Environment/PublicRightsOfWay/RightsOfWayImprovementPlan.**

Public transport

Public transport plays an essential role in helping those who do not have use of a car access a wide range of services throughout and beyond the county. It also has a key role to play in attracting people away from cars, but the county council and operators need to change the perception and reality of travelling by public transport if this aim is to be achieved.

Our intention is to work with transport operators and other stakeholder groups to make public transport more tailored to the needs of passengers. Where public transport operates in a largely commercial environment we will work with operators to improve the overall journey experience. This will include a package of measures such as:

- **improvements in ticketing (such as use of smartcards and mobile phones allowing multi-operator ticketing)**
- **service co-ordination**
- **waiting environment**
- **punctuality and reliability**
- **publicity, service information and journey planning including real time passenger information and access via internet and mobile devices.**

Reductions in public spending mean that our ability to invest directly in these measures is going to be very constrained in the short term. Ongoing revenue support to non-commercial scheduled bus services is increasingly unaffordable and so alternative demand responsive services, and community based alternatives are being developed.

Demand responsive services

In Suffolk's second local transport plan we concluded that conventional bus services may not be the most appropriate way to provide rural public transport. As a response to this we have developed demand responsive transport services. These services replace regular timetabled services and operate in response to bookings by residents. Destinations will either link with more direct rail or bus services or take passengers directly to their desired destination. These services are designed to provide public transport which:

- **are better able to meet the needs of dispersed rural communities**
- **improve access to services for those communities**
- **support the conventional bus network**
- **are cost-effective.**

As the system becomes more widespread and developed, more advanced information technology tools are being introduced that will improve customer service, efficiency, management and monitoring of these services.

Bus and rail integration

A key element of our plans for public transport is to improve convenience and quality of interchange for passengers using bus and rail services. By supporting partnership working between stakeholder groups better interchange facilities can be developed that would improve the waiting environment and information on offer to users, while also aiding their movement between modes. A key element of this will be the development of multi-operator ticketing for use on all public transport services. Smartcard and mobile phone technologies offer a cost effective way forward. We will also work with operators to develop station travel plans, initially at major stations.

Quality

The county council has introduced and will maintain quality assessment criteria for all transport services that it contracts so that a higher quality of service offered by the tendering company will increase the likelihood of contracts being awarded. This assessment will encourage the reduction in the age profile of bus fleets, increased driver training and other factors that will contribute to the reliability and attractiveness of the bus service. Improving the quality of services will work towards making travel by bus a more attractive option of current and potential users, helping to generate extra patronage and so supporting services operating commercially and reducing demand on the network from users transferring from the car.

Integration of passenger transport services within the county council

When developing educational transport services the county council will always attempt to use existing public transport arrangements before contracting new services. This process assists with maximising the use of vehicles and provides better value for money when adopted across multiple services.

Within the strategy of developing demand responsive services it is envisaged that this can help other service areas meet their priorities, including the access of 14-19 year olds attending education and accessibility to services for disabled or isolated residents.

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Bengali

بەم زانیاریەیشتنی ئەب ت گەیەتی هەیارمەر پ ویستیت بەگەیەکوەی خوارەم ژمارەندی بەیوە پەزمان کی تر تکای
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Suffolk County Council

Suffolk Local Transport Plan 2011-2031

Part 2 - Implementation Plan

Contents

This is the second part of the Suffolk Local Transport Plan. It explains how we will implement the long-term transport strategy. This part includes the county council's priorities and anticipated levels of investment in transport for the period 2011/2012 to 2014/2015.

1 Introduction

This part of the Suffolk Local Transport Plan shows how the long-term transport strategy to support economic growth, reduce the environmental impact of transport and improve health outcomes could be implemented over the next 20 years.

The implementation plan will be revised and updated over time in discussion with communities and businesses in Suffolk and other partner organisations, and to respond to changing circumstances.

This implementation plan identifies the strategic transport improvements that will support economic recovery and sustainable growth in Suffolk. The county council will directly promote some of these improvements. For rail, trunk road and developer led improvements we will be supporting the scheme promoters.

In Part 1 of this local transport plan (Section 4) we set out our approach to urban areas, where most of the future housing and economic growth is expected to occur. Plans have been prepared for Beccles, Brandon, Bungay, Bury St Edmunds, Felixstowe, Ipswich area, Haverhill, Lowestoft, Newmarket, Stowmarket and Sudbury. These plans are summarised in Section 3 of this document.

This document also includes proposals for transport improvements in the rural areas of the county that can ensure we maintain all of our networks as best we can in difficult circumstances, help to provide better access to jobs and services and help communities to tackle transport issues that affect quality of life.

We also give an outline of our investment plans for maintenance and improvements for the period 2011 to 2015.

2 Strategic transport improvements

We have identified significant improvements to Suffolk's transport networks that will underpin the county's economic growth and development.

Some of these schemes are being promoted by the county council. Other national road and rail projects are being taken forward by the Government and its Highways Agency, or by the rail industry. Other schemes are being promoted alongside housing or employment developments.

These improvements are shown on figure 1 and listed in table 1. You can find more information in Section 9.

Timescales and delivery mechanisms for these projects will vary and it may not be possible to achieve all of them within this plan period. For some projects, such as the Beccles Loop improvement to the East Suffolk Line, A11 trunk road dualling from Fiveways to Thetford and our Ipswich -Transport fit for the 21st Century scheme, there is a reasonable certainty of delivery. For others, such as the Beccles southern link road or Lowestoft A12 northern spine road, we can identify likely funding sources and routes to delivery. For other schemes, such as those at Bury St Edmunds and Haverhill that are linked to developments, progress will depend on the timing of those developments. Other schemes, such as the longer-term proposed third crossing of Lake Lothing in Lowestoft, reflect much needed improvements for which there is a very strong desire in the local community but with, at present, no clear delivery mechanism. The county council recognises the need to avoid any adverse impact on potential development in the port area and any likely significant effects on European sites. Any new crossing would be in addition to or a replacement for the existing A12 trunk road crossing and so the Government through its Highways Agency would be the scheme promoter although it has no defined scheme at present.

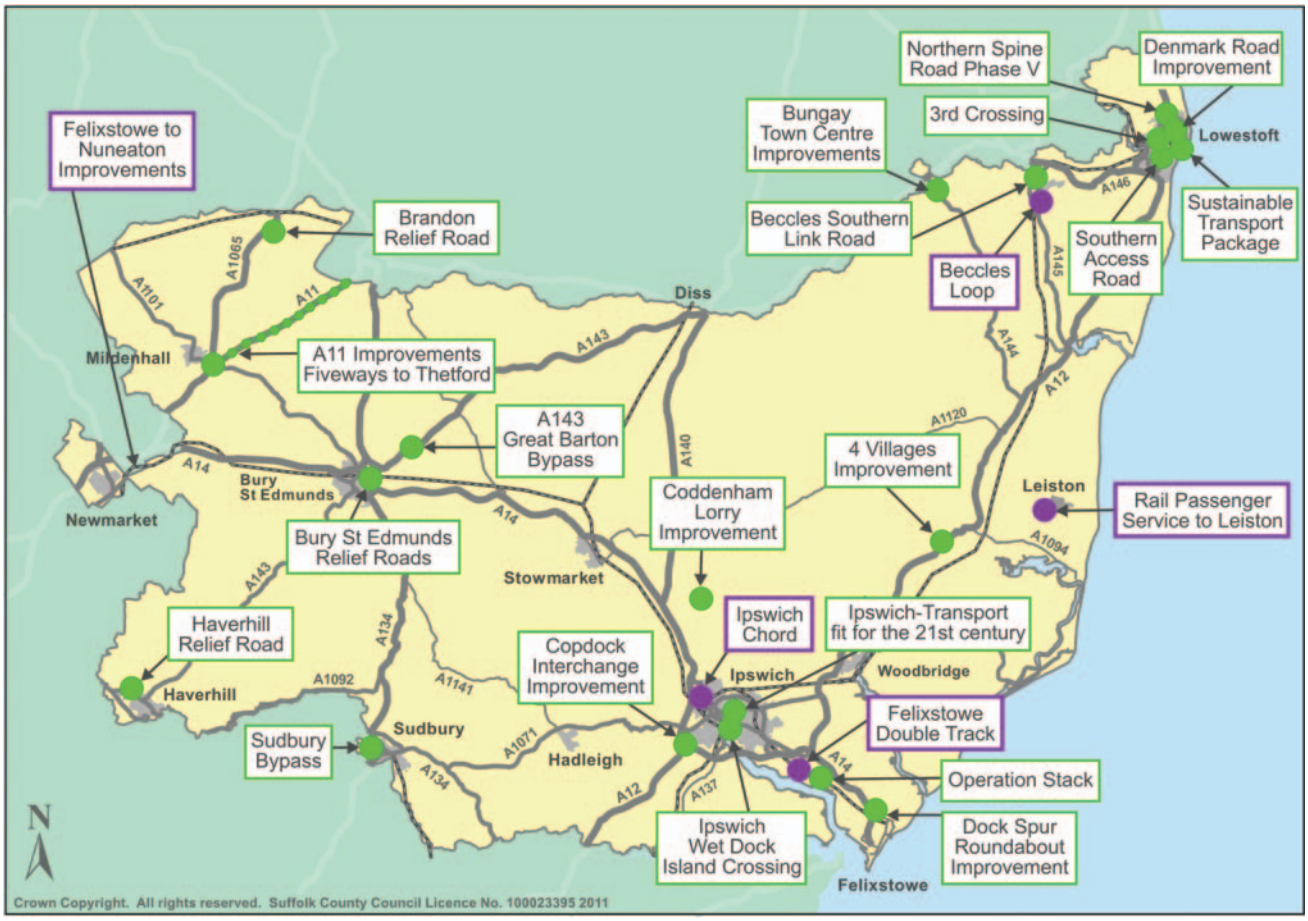

Figure 1- Strategic transport improvements

Scheme	Promoter	Likely funding sources	Timescale
Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century	Suffolk County Council	Department for Transport major scheme funds	Short term
A11 Fiveways to Thetford Dualling	Department for Transport / Highways Agency	Department for Transport	Short term
A14 Copdock Improvement	Highways Agency	Developer	Short term
Beccles Loop	Network Rail	Suffolk County Council, Network Rail	Short term
Ipswich Chord	Network Rail	Department for Transport/ Network Rail	Short term
Lowestoft Northern Spine Road phase V	Suffolk County Council	Suffolk County Council/ developer	Short term
Beccles Southern Link Road	Suffolk County Council	Suffolk County Council	Short term
Lowestoft Sustainable Transport Package	Suffolk County Council	Suffolk County Council / Department for Transport local sustainable transport fund	Short term

Scheme	Promoter	Likely funding sources	Timescale
Lowestoft Commercial Road Improvement	Suffolk County Council / Highways Agency	Suffolk County Council	Short term
Bungay Town Centre Improvements	Suffolk County Council	Suffolk County Council	Short term
Felixstowe Dock Spur Roundabout Improvement	Highways Agency	Developer	Short term
Felixstowe branch line- Trimley to Levington double tracking	Network Rail	Developer	Medium term
Lowestoft Lake Lothing Southern Access Road	Developer	Developer	Medium term
Bury St. Edmunds Eastern Link Road	Developer	Developer	Medium term
Bury St Edmunds development relief roads	Developer	Developer	Medium / long term
Coddenham - road and bridge improvements to relieve the village from lorry traffic.	Suffolk County Council	Suffolk County Council	Medium / long term
Haverhill NW Relief Road	Developer	Developer	Medium / long term
Lowestoft Denmark Road Improvement	Suffolk County Council	Department for Transport major scheme funds	Medium / Long term
A12 Four Villages Improvement	Developer	Developer	Medium / long term
Operation Stack facility	Suffolk County Council	Suffolk County Council / Developer / Department for Transport	Medium / long term
Brandon Relief Road	Developer	Developer	Medium / long term
Felixstowe to Nuneaton Rail Improvements	Network Rail	Network rail / Department for Transport	Short / medium / long term
Leiston passenger rail service reinstatement	Network Rail	Network rail/ Developer	Medium/ long term
Lowestoft 3rd River Crossing	Highways Agency	Department for Transport / Highways Agency	Long term
Ipswich Wet Dock Island Crossing	Developer	Developer	Long term
A14 Copdock Major Improvement	Highways Agency	Department for Transport	Long term
Sudbury Western Bypass	Suffolk County Council	Department for Transport major scheme funds	Long term

Table 1- List of strategic transport improvements

3 Maintenance

We will continue to address the safety and serviceability of the highway network for all users. In addition, environmental sustainability will become an increasing concern as the effects of climate change (severe winters, hot summers) are felt on the network.

In recent years we have been able to maintain the network in a broadly stable and satisfactory condition. The difficult medium-term financial outlook in the public sector and high levels of construction cost inflation means that a gradual year on year deterioration in condition is likely. This will probably lead to growing maintenance backlogs and increased costs of reactive repair. This would have severe consequences for the condition and value of our roads, with marked increases in reactive repair, claims and public dissatisfaction.

Given these constraints our approach is to base our maintenance programme on the local knowledge and professional judgement of asset managers, supported by good asset data. We will prioritise work to maintain as far as possible the long-term value of the highway asset and minimise safety risks to highway users.

More information on maintenance within Suffolk can be found within the Transport Asset Management Plan, which is available online at
http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/TransportAndStreets/Policies/TAMP(TransportAssetManagementPlan).htm.

The main areas of investment are:

Principal roads

Principal (A class) roads are essential for safe movement around the county and to support the Suffolk economy. These roads tend to carry the largest volume of traffic and most lorry traffic. Investment in this area is critical to ensure safe and reliable journeys around the county. About 4% of this road network is in need of repair, but there has been an increase in the length of poor and deteriorating roads and a reduction in the length of road that is in good condition. We plan to increase investment on these roads in 2011/12.

Non principal roads (classified and unclassified)

Some unclassified roads are key traffic routes, especially in urban areas, which results in a greater impact on the road condition. These roads are often key routes for cycling and keeping these well maintained makes cycling easier and safer.

About 9% of non-principal classified roads are in need of repair. As with principal roads, there has been a gradual increase in deterioration and a growing backlog of repairs. The greater part of the programme will be relatively low cost surface dressing rather than resurfacing schemes.

Bridges

Good progress has been made with strengthening key structures in recent years, and projects are now smaller in nature. There are still some key bridges which are a potential future liability, but are being sustained through a planned monitoring and maintenance regime.

The county's bridges on the public rights of way network are also now being managed with an improved inspection regime.

Street lighting and traffic signals

There has been a good level of street lighting column and traffic signal replacement over the past five years. Column replacement will continue at a lower level based on inspection and assessment of columns at highest risk.

The focus of resources will be on delivering an intelligent lighting system for part night lighting and dimming, funded from the Council's own resources. This will deliver energy savings and carbon reduction and meet a demand from sections of the community for reduced levels of lighting at night.

Pavements

Due to budgetary pressures, maintenance will be mainly reduced to repair of serious defects. However, there will be some locations where this becomes completely uneconomic and/or safety cannot be maintained by ad-hoc local repairs. In this case larger investment such as resurfacing will be necessary.

Public Rights of Way

Our highest priority is work to bridges on the rights of way network but other urgent maintenance is also carried out. It is important to avoid route closures on safety grounds if possible, so the level of funding will reflect this.

Flooding

A major maintenance issue is flooding of the A12 at Blythurgh. So far we have secured funding from Government to alleviate the problem and are currently developing the option of installing a sluice to manage tidal flow in the area. This will alleviate flooding of the A12 as well offering benefits to the wider area.

4 Plans for key urban areas

Our expectation is that future housing and economic growth is likely to be focussed on the communities of Beccles, Brandon, Bungay, Bury St Edmunds, Felixstowe, Ipswich area, Haverhill, Lowestoft, Newmarket, Stowmarket and Sudbury. These are the places where we propose to prioritise our investment.

Figure 2- Town strategy locations

For each of these places we have developed improvement plans. These plans reflect our current understanding of the broad scale and locations of likely future growth and the feedback we have received from communities about existing transport pressures in each community. For each town we have identified a comprehensive local network for cycling and a potential bus network that could run on a commercial basis. These networks will support future growth in the town by connecting new and existing housing with employment, education and services so that people are not so dependent on the use of cars for local trips. We will work with the local planning authorities to ensure that new development makes a fair contribution to the cost of those parts of the networks that are needed to integrate development with the fabric of existing communities and to minimise car use.

We have also identified key areas of traffic congestion. In many cases this problem will get worse as a result of traffic growth and the impact of new developments. Working with the local planning authorities we will ensure that developers fund the measures necessary to mitigate the adverse traffic impacts imposed by new developments.

The plans for the towns reflect local differences between places but there are broad principles common to all. These principles are explained in Section 4 of Part 1 of the local transport plan.

The three main principles are:

1. Reducing the need for travel

2. Making efficient use of transport networks

3. Improving infrastructure

Other smaller towns may also suffer similar problems to those towns listed above. In these cases we will work with communities to develop solutions based on the same principles.

Ipswich

Introduction

Ipswich and its surrounding area is likely to see a big increase in jobs and homes over the next 20 years. Expansion of the ports of Felixstowe and to some extent Ipswich also seems likely. These changes will have a significant impact on the road and rail network around the wider Ipswich area. The town already has peak hour congestion and areas with poor air quality.

Our challenge is to help support economic growth without adding to the existing problems, and to help make the town a better place to live and work in.

Currently most people who travel to work in Ipswich go to the central area. Many of these journeys are relatively short distance and made by car, which leads to congested roads in and around the town centre, on the routes leading to it, and on sections of the A14. We expect that if the current patterns of travel carry on, the additional traffic from new developments and general traffic growth will lead to much greater congestion.

If we can change the way that people travel in the Ipswich area, to reduce reliance on the car, we can begin to tackle congestion and air quality problems, improve the quality of travel in the town and also improve the public realm. Our major scheme, 'Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century', will be the key project to deliver the strategy.

Transport strategy for Ipswich

Reducing demand for travel

The focus of this strategy is to help people travel more sustainably into and around the town. Reducing car travel in Ipswich, particularly at peak times, will help us to balance demand with the limited capacity that is available, and make it possible to improve the public realm. There are two strands to this: managing long stay car parking and persuading people to change how they travel.

Car parking- working with Ipswich Borough Council we want to develop policies for long stay car parking that better reflects the impact that peak hour commuting trips have on traffic congestion. At the same time we recognise the demand for well located short stay car parking to support the town's retail sector, which is vital for the local economy.

Persuasion- evidence shows that travel planning is very effective at reducing car use. TravelSmart Ipswich, a project completed in 2010, gave information about sustainable transport to 17,000 households. We will build on this success with a focus on workplace travel planning including a new project: 'Fresh Ways to Work'. We would also expect that all significant new developments including the northern fringe and east Ipswich should have strong travel plans with robust targets to minimise car use and that developers should meet the cost of necessary new transport infrastructure and services required alongside the provision of facilities.

Efficient use of transport networks

We will have to manage the limited road space more effectively. We want to be sure that traffic moves as smoothly as possible. At the same time we want to make travelling without the car more attractive. We aim to do this by managing roads to minimise delays to buses, giving cyclists clear passage through traffic jams and by making it easier for people to walk across roads.

The principal tool that we will use to deliver this package is urban traffic management and control. This provides computer control of traffic signals, bus information and traffic signs across a wide area. The system can operate signals to give priority to buses. The electronic control systems will work in combination with additional bus lanes, cycle lanes and new crossings. The movement of general traffic should also be made easier.

Improving infrastructure

There is a good public transport network connecting housing areas and employment sites. Bus services are largely run commercially and most routes operate with some spare capacity. There is a park and ride service for those travelling from further afield. Working with the commercial bus operators, we will provide additional bus lanes and interchange points, and improve waiting facilities. In the future we hope to be able to provide additional bus lanes on the A1214 and Foxhall Road corridors. To help achieve our aspirations for better public transport we expect to set up a quality partnership with bus operators.

Many peak hour trips in and around Ipswich are relatively short and many could easily be done by bicycle or on foot. More walking and cycling, particularly for trips to work and school will help to reduce congestion and also help improve health and fitness. Barriers presented by busy roads such as Grafton Way, the Star Lane gyratory, Civic Drive and Crown Street can deter people from making trips or result in unpleasant and dispiriting journeys. We will improve walking and cycle routes that connect homes to employment and services. Our priorities for investment will be schemes that reduce barriers to movement and create safe and convenient routes along and across these roads.

A proposal has been developed to remodel the roads around the waterfront following a study by consultants Buchanan. In this proposal the connectivity between the town centre and the waterfront area would be improved by a reduction in the volume of traffic using the Star Lane gyratory with a consequent improvement in air quality. This scheme will be considered for implementation during the life of the plan.

A long-term aspiration for Ipswich is a bridge to improve access to the Wet Dock Island alongside future development. There is no clear delivery mechanism as yet for a new bridge but it is expected that this project would be funded from development. The financial viability of development and the affordability of a bridge will be important considerations if this idea is to become a reality.

Figure 3 shows the key improvements that we think are to the transport network within Ipswich.

Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century

This is the Council's flagship project for Ipswich and it contains many elements of our strategy. This £21 million project will transform the quality of sustainable transport in and around the central area. It will deliver new cycle routes that are continuous and connected together with new crossings of busy roads for cyclists and pedestrians. We will use high quality materials so that the quality of the public realm will be lifted. The scheme also includes a programme of high quality waymarking with associated mapping to make walking routes easier to follow. Improved town centre bus services will connect areas round the town centre providing a convenient alternative to the car.

For trips over three miles there will still be some scope for cycling but bus is likely to be the main alternative to the car. Our aim is to provide more passenger capacity, give buses much more priority and to raise the quality of travelling by bus in Ipswich. We will rebuild the existing bus stations and improve the passenger waiting and information facilities. This will effectively provide two brand new bus stations equipped with excellent passenger waiting facilities. Screens will display real time information throughout the bus stations and at many stops within the central area. At points within the town centre we will achieve this by widening pavements, providing better shelters and installing real time information screens. Future aspirations for new retail development may create an opportunity to co-locate both bus stations on a single site. Timescales and deliverability of these proposals are very uncertain and the need for improvement of the existing bus stations is urgent. We will ensure that our planned investment is cost-effective and that equipment can be re-sited if necessary in the future.

A major element in the proposed scheme is an Urban Traffic Management and Control system which will help to deliver better efficiency of the highway network. The system will also work with our proposed real time bus information system to provide priority for buses at junctions where needed. Another feature of the system will be traffic message signing. This will be able to display messages about traffic congestion, air quality and parking availability.

You can find more information about Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st century on our website at: **http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/TransportAndStreets/Policies/IpswichTransportFitForThe21stCentury.htm.**

Figure 3- Key improvements to the Ipswich transport network

Lowestoft

Introduction

Prior to the recession Lowestoft had been going through a period of regeneration following a sustained period of economic decline. Economic recovery for Lowestoft is expected to focus on the energy sector and development of port related industries. There are ambitious plans for further regeneration of Lowestoft that could lead to significant growth in housing and employment over the next 20 years. This will add to current levels of congestion if current travel trends continue. The focus for growth is around Lake Lothing and the town centre and could lead to long-term changes in the area and its land uses.

A key characteristic of Lowestoft is that approximately 80% of people who work in the town also live there. Thus the majority of journeys to work are relatively short, with one third of journeys being less than about a mile and two thirds less than about three miles. This means that many regular journeys could be taken without the car.

Transport strategy for Lowestoft

Reducing demand for car travel

We will work with Waveney District Council to ensure that new jobs and services are close to housing so that people can more easily travel without the car. We want to ensure that developers actively promote walking, cycling and buses as natural choices for residential and employment locations. Travel plans, with robust targets for parking and car use, enforced through the planning process, will form the basis of this approach.

We will also work with current employers, education and service providers and households to develop voluntary travel plans to reduce traffic. This work will build upon our successful TravelSmart Lowestoft project which reported significant increases in walking, cycling and the use of buses by residents.

We will work with Waveney District Council to develop a balanced plan for on and off street parking with the aim of discouraging peak hour traffic movements associated with cheap long stay parking in congested areas of the town.

We will also continue to work with bus operators and community organisations to develop better links between Lowestoft and its hinterland to provide better access to key services.

Efficient use of transport networks

There is a basic traffic management and control system within Lowestoft and we intend to improve this over time so that people walking, using bicycles or the bus are given greater priority. This will increase the attractiveness of those forms of travel. This system will also be developed to provide more information using the internet, mobile phones or using variable message signs to alert users to incidents.

Improving infrastructure

We expect to be able to make significant investment in transport in Lowestoft during the period of this local transport plan. In the short term we have identified a number of key improvements using a variety of funding sources. We have submitted a bid to the Local Sustainable Transport Fund for a package of measures to support sustainable transport in the town. This project will include the provision of a new cycle bridge, improved bus interchange at the railway station, extensive travel planning and bus route improvements. A bid was recently turned down for the Regional Growth Fund to remodel the A12/Commercial Road junction to support port development, however we will look for other opportunities to secure these improvements. In the short- to medium-term we want to significantly improve the local cycle network

Waveney District Council has extensive proposals for the regeneration of Lowestoft that are supported by the county council. This is being taken forward through an area action plan for Lake Lothing and masterplan for sites south of Lake Lothing. Developers will make significant contributions towards the provision of infrastructure to mitigate the traffic impacts of their developments and that will enable easier and more sustainable movement throughout the town.

The county council is contributing £1 million towards a £4 million project by Network Rail to carry out line improvements and signalling work that will make possible an hourly service on the rail line between Ipswich and Lowestoft. This will improve access to jobs and services and provide better connections to London.

Throughout the plan period we will also be investigating opportunities that may arise to take forward larger scale infrastructure projects. This will include completion of the Northern Spine Road and better access to development land south of Lake Lothing. The county council will also continue to support the Highways Agency in developing and securing funding in the longer term for a third river crossing of Lake Lothing for motorised traffic. We recognise that the Highways Agency does not have any current proposal to provide a bridge. We also recognise the need to support the future viability of the Port of Lowestoft and to avoid blighting future development opportunities in the port area.

Figure 4- Key improvements to the Lowestoft transport network

Bury St Edmunds

Introduction

Bury St Edmunds plays an important role in the regional economy, with major employment centres at the West Suffolk Hospital, the British Sugar site, and the Greene King brewery. The town serves as a centre for commercial, retail, and urban employment activity for much of west Suffolk. There are a number of sites identified for significant future housing and employment growth on the outskirts of the town, and this strategy has been developed having regard to the St Edmundsbury District Council's core strategy infrastructure requirements.

Major residential and commercial areas lie on each side of the A14 and this leads to traffic problems. Delays are a particular problem during the morning peak at the junctions, and there is an issue of balancing priorities between local and longer distance traffic.

The town has adapted to the increased use of the car, with ample parking to its employment and commercial activities. The town is expected to grow and extend beyond existing boundaries. Alongside this expansion the car will increase its dominance resulting in greater congestion unless alternative sustainable modes of travel are made more attractive to potential users.

Transport strategy for Bury St Edmunds

Reducing demand for travel

We will work closely with St Edmundsbury Borough Council to ensure that future developments for housing and employment include adequate facilities so people can travel more easily on foot, by bicycle or by bus. Travel plans for workplaces and education sites have considerable potential in Bury St Edmunds, and offer, over time, negotiated ways forward to achieve some shift from the dominance of car driver trips in the peak periods. It will be expected for all new developments to implement a travel plan with robust targets to minimise car use.

We plan to work with St Edmundsbury Borough Council and the train operating company to develop a station travel plan to improve access to the railway station.

We will work with St Edmundsbury Borough Council to establish appropriate policies for on and off street parking provision and charges to reduce long stay parking, while recognising the importance of short and medium stay parking for the town's retail economy.

Efficient use of transport networks

Some bus services within the town are operated on a commercial basis. For those that are still supported by the county council there is a move towards commercial operation.

The county council will seek to maintain key transport links within the town, in particular those between the town centre and West Suffolk Hospital, West Suffolk College, key employment areas and all existing and/or proposed housing developments. It is anticipated that the county council will act in a facilitating role directing any developer contributions through contractual arrangements towards the expansion and underpinning of the commercial network. Future services could include town centre routes that complement the existing network.

Real time passenger information makes travelling by bus more attractive, and potentially improves punctuality and reliability, especially when linked to urban traffic management and control. These systems will be considered for implementation when funding permits.

Improving infrastructure

Walking and cycling routes and town centre facilities are fairly well developed but they have important gaps in provision. Further walking and cycling facilities are required to enhance and complete the existing network, particularly to connect the railway station with the town centre.

We will also work with the borough council to ensure that infrastructure; in particular at the bus station in St Andrews Street, is improved and expanded where necessary. Increased capacity and accommodation for larger buses may need to be considered in the medium term.

There are also some road improvement schemes associated with future development and identified in the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy Development Plan Document. These improvements will alleviate congestion at particular locations and provide access to new developments. Specific efforts are also needed to improve traffic circulation, access and public transport integration in the central area.

We will work with the Highways Agency, St Edmundsbury Borough Council and other partners to find solutions to lorry parking issues, particularly associated with Tayfen Road, Western Way and Moreton Hall.

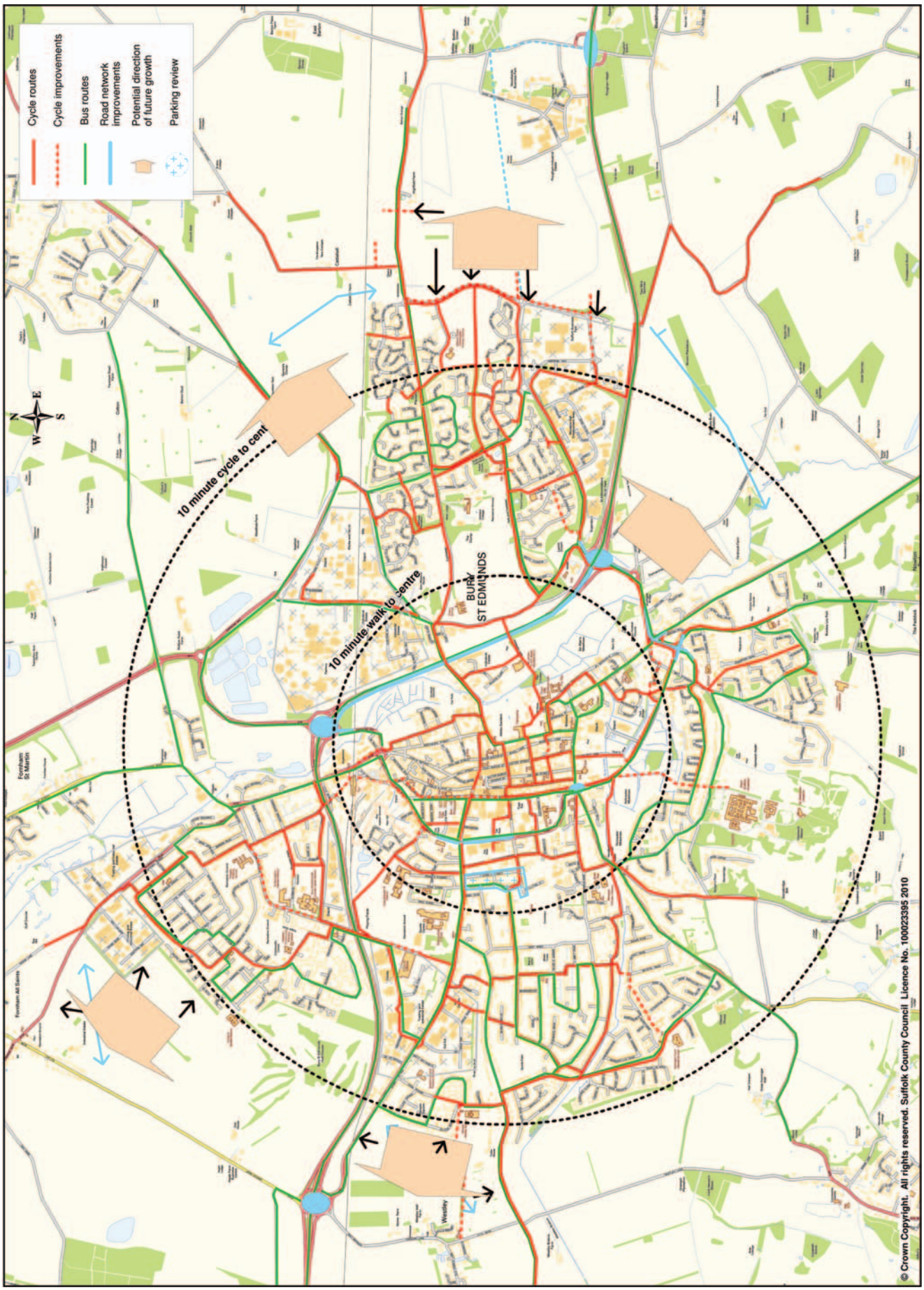

Figure 5- Key improvements to the Bury St Edmunds transport network

Felixstowe

In Felixstowe the key challenge for transport is to join up the main areas of economic activity - the town centre, seafront, port and Old Felixstowe. The short distances that many people generally travel in Felixstowe makes cycling and walking attractive options for many journeys and increasing their use will aid the vitality of the town centre and its attractiveness to visitors. We recognise that the car will remain a choice for many off peak journeys for shopping or tourism and management of traffic and parking is important.

We will work closely with Suffolk Coastal District Council and Felixstowe Town Council to reduce traffic levels from new development. An area action plan is being developed for the Felixstowe peninsula. The transport strategy will be revised alongside this. Each significant new development will be expected to implement a robust travel plan to minimise car use. The proposed merger of Orwell and Deben High Schools will mean many children will have further to travel but they will be concentrated on a single site for which we expect to see a strong travel plan.

It is anticipated that real time bus information will be introduced in Felixstowe during the plan period, with the potential for this to be linked to our urban traffic management and control system.

There are few significant congestion hotspots but there are problems at the A14 Dock Spur roundabout at peak periods on Candlet Road. Local problems arise when there is an incident on the A14. The Highways Agency has recently installed new information signing which may alleviate some of these problems. The old A45 through Levington is used for Operation Stack when the Port of Felixstowe is closed. The route is then not available as an alternative if there is an incident on the A14 because it is occupied by queuing lorries. This is just one area that will need consideration in the long term future of operation stack.

Future development may mean that there is scope for a town bus service with interchange at the Triangle. Other interventions to improve linkages include items such as signing and cycle maps for the town.

There is significant scope to improve infrastructure in Felixstowe, particularly to fill in missing links on walking and cycling routes. There are significant barriers, such as unlit routes, cars parking in cycle lanes and steep cambers.

There is a need for extra capacity on the railway branch line for passenger services as well as for freight. The railway station could be made more welcoming with general improvements to the public realm. Better facilities for public transport at Felixstowe Ferry are also required, including a shelter and accessible kerbing.

We will explore opportunities for improvements to the Felixstowe / Harwich / Shotley ferry service.

Figure 6- Key improvements to the Felixstowe transport network

Haverhill

The aim of the plan for Haverhill is to support the sustainable development of the town. Haverhill is likely to receive significant housing and employment growth. Given existing concerns about traffic levels, the challenges presented with substantial growth in Haverhill are reducing reliance on the car for the short journeys within the town and to larger urban centres such as Bury St Edmunds and Cambridge. We will work with St Edmundsbury Borough Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, and Cambridgeshire County Council in which we will work together to find solutions to traffic issues on the A1307.

Travel to work patterns for Haverhill highlight that over half of the population travel less than 2km to work i.e. within walking distance. There is also a significant proportion of residents travelling to Cambridge and Stansted Airport, which requires close working with our neighbouring authorities to implement solutions.

We will work with St Edmundsbury Borough Council to ensure that demand for car travel can be reduced by co-locating housing, key services and employment. We want to see better networks for walking and cycling so that these are more attractive and realistic choices. We expect that all new developments will implement robust travel plans to minimise car use, including improvement to sustainable travel infrastructure and services. We will also work with established employers at sites such as Haverhill Business Park; Haverhill Industrial Estate; and Boundary Road Industrial Estate to try to reduce car journeys.

We will provide better information to people about travel including accessing information online, by mobile phones, or from variable message signs. There is a potential for urban traffic management and control in Haverhill to link traffic lights and provide priority for buses alongside real time bus information.

Haverhill has a good network of walking and cycling routes but many are incomplete. Most areas of the town are within one kilometre of the centre and main employment locations.

Publicly funded infrastructure improvements will be limited at the start of this plan due to funding constraints, but we still hope to be able to fund important improvements to the walking and cycling networks. Developer funding of improvements to support the sustainability of new developments will also be essential. As the plan progresses larger-scale publicly funded schemes may be possible, but will still be judged on the benefits they offer and their deliverability.

A north west relief road is a much needed improvement. This is a requirement alongside housing development in this part of the town and will help relieve the Cangle junction of through traffic heading north towards Bury St Edmunds.

Figure 7- Key improvements to the Haverhill transport network

Stowmarket

The transport plan for Stowmarket will support Mid Suffolk District Council's Local Development Framework for sustainable growth. The most significant challenge presented by future growth is coping with the increased demand for travel between new housing in the west and employment to the east.

At the moment many people use the car for relatively short journeys. As the town grows this is likely to lead to more congestion in the town and on the A14. The Highways Agency is concerned with use of the A14 by local traffic wishing to bypass the town centre, to the detriment of through traffic.

We will work with Mid Suffolk District Council to ensure that demand for car travel can be reduced by co-locating housing, key services and employment. We want to see better networks for walking and cycling so that these are more attractive and realistic choices. We expect that all new developments will implement robust travel plans to minimise car use, including contributing to better sustainable travel infrastructure and services. We will also work with established employers and schools to try to reduce car journeys in the town.

Over time we will improve the scope and quality of the sustainable transport networks so that people are offered a wider range of travel options. We will focus on connections between housing, employment, education and other services, addressing gaps and barriers to use. We have identified a town wide network of cycle routes and a potential commercially viable future bus service. Improvements will be funded partly by the county council but we would expect developers to make substantial contributions to these networks as part of their travel plans to minimise car use and create sustainable developments.

Urban traffic management and control technology will be used in Stowmarket to improve our ability to manage the road network, to provide priority for buses at busy junctions and to provide information to bus passengers and road users on the street and also by internet and mobile phones.

Publicly funded infrastructure improvements will be limited at the start of this plan due to funding constraints, but we still hope to be able to fund important improvements to the walking and cycling networks. Developer funding of improvements to support the sustainability of new developments and reduce traffic impacts will also be essential.

A significant project that we want to take forward is improving bus facilities at the railway station.

Figure 8- Key improvements to the Stowmarket transport network

Newmarket

Newmarket is a unique place because of its history and heritage based around the horse racing industry. Horse racing remains very important for the Newmarket economy and we recognise the need to protect it and assist its growth in our transport policies.

Alongside our plan to support sustainable economic growth in Newmarket we will be working to find ways to reduce conflicts between traffic and horses being ridden alongside and across roads. In this, we will work closely with Newmarket Town Council, the Jockey Club and Cambridgeshire County Council. We will also look for new opportunities to improve the safety of horses and their riders.

The plan for Newmarket will support sustainable growth in the town by improving and making more efficient use of the transport network, and by encouraging more local journeys to be made without the car. There are currently some concerns about congestion and there are also air quality problems at the Clocktower junction. We will work with the Highways Agency to tackle congestion at the A14 / A142 junction.

We will work with Forest Heath District Council to ensure that demand for car travel can be reduced by co-locating housing, key services and employment. We will provide better networks for walking and cycling so that these are more attractive and realistic choices. We expect that all new developments will implement robust travel plans to minimise car use, including contributing to better sustainable travel infrastructure and services. We will also work with established employers and schools to try to reduce car journeys in the town.

Over time we will improve the quality of the sustainable transport networks in Newmarket so that people have a wider range of travel choices. We will focus on connections between housing, employment, education and other services, addressing gaps and barriers to use. We have identified a town wide network of cycle routes and a potential commercially viable future bus service, including a better bus station and better connections to the railway station. We will also lobby for a better quality of rail service operating between Ipswich, Newmarket and Cambridge. Transport improvements will be funded partly by the county council but we would expect developers to make substantial contributions as part of their travel plans to minimise car use and create sustainable developments.

A further long-term aspiration is a new railway chord to the north east of the town, to enable a direct link by rail to Ely, and the services running further afield from there.

Urban traffic management and control technology will be used in Newmarket to improve our ability to manage the road network, to provide priority for buses at busy junctions and to provide information to bus passengers and road users on the street and also by internet and mobile phones.

Publicly funded infrastructure improvements will be limited at the start of this plan due to funding constraints, but we still hope to be able to fund important improvements to the walking and cycling networks. Developer funding of improvements to support the sustainability of new developments and reduce traffic impacts will also be essential.

The safety of horses and their riders is an underlying theme for transport in Newmarket given the importance of the horse racing industry to the local economy.

Figure 9- Key improvements to the Newmarket transport network

Sudbury

Sudbury is an attractive historic town acting as both a retail and service centre. The A131 primary route passes through the town and there are congestion and air quality issues. Almost half of residents in Sudbury and Great Cornard travel less than 2km to work, reflecting Sudbury's position as a significant employment location for the area.

The main focus of the plan is to reduce the need for travel by car. This will involve working closely with Babergh District Council and Sudbury Town Council to plan for future developments. It will be expected that all new major developments will implement travel plans with robust targets to minimise car use as a condition for approval.

Over time we will improve the quality of the sustainable transport networks so that people have a wider range of travel options. We will focus on connections between housing, employment, education and other services, addressing gaps and barriers to use. We have identified a town wide network of cycle routes and a potential commercially viable future bus service. Improvements will be funded partly by the county council but we would expect developers to make substantial contributions to these networks as part of their travel plans to minimise car use and create sustainable developments.

Key areas to be addressed include: improved pedestrian access to and around the Market Place, including formalisation of the most used crossing point on King Street, which is the hub of the town; and dropped kerbs within residential estates to aid mobility. We will also provide safe and secure cycle parking within the town. Future redevelopment will make it possible to build a new bus station with better passenger waiting facilities and information display screens.

A review of parking will consider the balance of parking need for visitors, workers and residents with the aim of reducing the amount of cheap long stay parking. Lorry parking is currently located behind Waitrose and accessed via the Belle Vue junction. Traffic associated with the lorry park, combined with deliveries to the area, leads to a high volume of commercial vehicles in this retail and car park area. There is a proposal to relocate the lorry park to the industrial estate to the north of the town. This would reduce the movements and also locate vehicles to the industrial estate, the primary destination for the majority of vehicles.

The proposed Sudbury Western bypass is considered necessary to relieve the town from through traffic. The county council will continue to promote the bypass as a longer term project but there is no clear way to deliver the project as yet and there are considerable environmental issues to overcome. Other measures, including a reduction in local traffic, will be required to address the problems in the meantime. We will work with Babergh District Council to consider the infrastructure needed to support future growth, including a potential bypass.

Figure 10- Key improvements to the Sudbury transport network

Beccles

The plan for Beccles has been devised to support sustainable growth in and around the town and to reduce the impact of heavy goods vehicles. Beccles has been forecast to see some growth due to the availability of brownfield sites, which could particularly increase the number of employment opportunities available at the Ellough Industrial Estate.

Rail service frequency is also anticipated to be increased with the development of the Beccles loop and re-signalling work to the East Suffolk railway line.

Travel to work patterns highlight that a significant proportion of residents also work in the town. This means that walking and cycling can be made attractive for local journeys.

The main issue for Beccles is that traffic on the A145, including significant numbers of heavy lorries, passes through the centre of the town. Ellough Industrial Estate is a thriving centre of employment that generates lorry traffic. Our main transport proposal for Beccles is the provision of a link road to the south of the built up area, connecting the A145 to Ellough. This new road should provide much needed relief to the town centre. Subject to the availability of funding we would hope to be able to build this road early in the plan period.

We have identified improvements to the local walking and cycling networks that over time will make it easier for people to travel by these means rather than the private car.

The county council will also continue to support Network Rail in delivering the Beccles rail loop, and will make a significant financial contribution towards the cost. This improvement, along with associated signalling improvements, will make it possible for trains to run every hour between Ipswich, Beccles and Lowestoft. Options are being considered for improvements to the station itself alongside this work.

Figure 11- Key improvements to the Beccles transport network

Brandon

The plan for Brandon has been devised to support sustainable growth in the town by improving and making more efficient use of the transport network while also reducing the current levels of congestion.

We aim to support the growth in Brandon by reducing reliance on the car and reducing the impact of through traffic. Brandon lies on the A1065 primary route linking Mildenhall with Swaffham and there is a significant volume of heavy lorry traffic passing through the town. The proposed Highways Agency scheme to dual the A11 between Mildenhall and Thetford may reduce the attractiveness of the A1065 to through traffic. Suffolk County Council strongly supports the delivery of the A11 dualling and has committed to make a contribution to the cost of an underpass for walkers, cyclists and equestrians as part of the scheme.

There remains a strong local aspiration for a bypass or relief road. There is a potential for housing and employment development to come forward on land at the edge of Brandon in the future and there may be an opportunity to secure improvements as a part of the privately funded development. The potential impacts of any scheme on biodiversity will be assessed by ecologists during the early design stage. A project level Habitats Regulations Assessment will need to screen for any likely significant effects on European sites and measures will need to be implemented to avoid, reduce and compensate for any impacts and enhance biodiversity habitats and species. This would include timing of works and habitat enhancements as part of the scheme design. If it cannot be ascertained that there would be no adverse effects on site integrity the project will have to be refused or pass the tests of Regulation 62, in which case any necessary compensatory measures will need to be secured in accordance with Regulation 66.

We have also identified improvements to the local walking, cycling and bus networks that over time will make it easier for people to travel by these means rather than the private car.

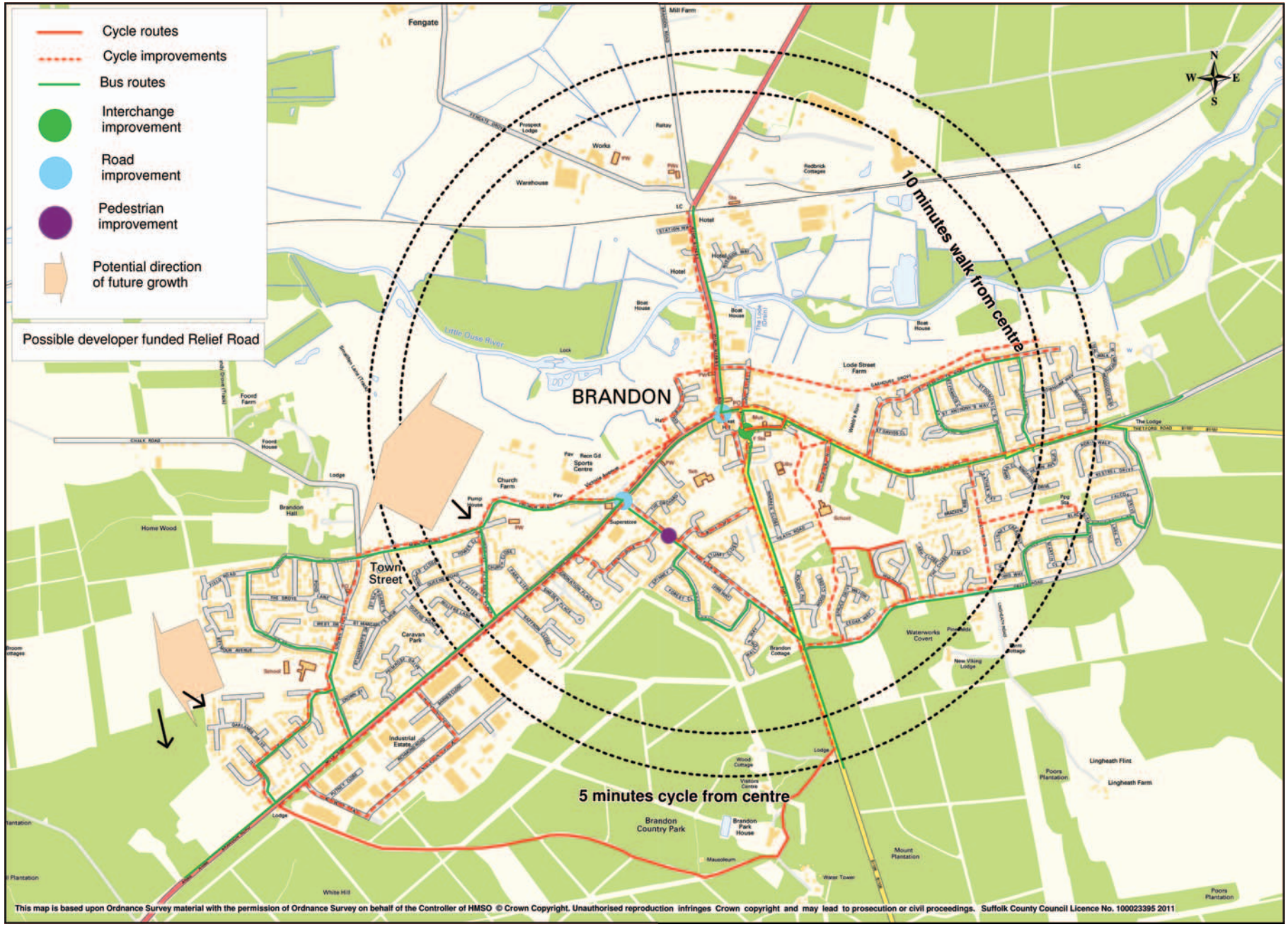

Figure 12- Key improvements to the Brandon transport network

Bungay

The main focus of the plan for Bungay is on minimising the impact of heavy goods vehicles, particularly through the historic centre of the town and working to reduce reliance on the car for journeys within the town.

Bungay retains much of its narrow medieval street pattern but the A144 brings many large lorries through the town. There is a long standing local desire for an A144 bypass or relief road because of the impact that heavy traffic has on the town centre. Delivery of a relief road would be a very long-term scheme, beyond the horizon of this local transport plan.

The historic nature of the centre of Bungay restricts options within the town itself, and where schemes are developed it is important that they are sympathetic to the surrounding environment. Schemes that improve the environment for pedestrians will typically be more sympathetic to the urban realm, while they will also aid pedestrian movement, particularly those with mobility difficulties, and help to reduce car use in the centre if users are more confident in the quality of environment and their safety.

We are working with Bungay Town Council to develop an improvement scheme for the town centre that can mitigate some of the impacts from heavy traffic.

Figure 13- Key improvements to the Bungay transport network

5 Bus network

The Council monitors the commercially provided bus network to identify gaps where social need to travel is not being met.

Sponsored or subsidised services have been provided to fill these gaps but increasing budgetary pressures have resulted in more services being reduced or withdrawn.

Commercial bus service operators are also becoming increasingly concerned about the risk of reducing levels of income from Concessionary Travel Scheme reimbursement, Bus Service Operators Grant and schools related business. The commercial bus service network may therefore be reduced in size or frequency and we will not be in a position to replace these withdrawn services. We will work closely with operators to plan for changes and to mitigate the effect. The pressure on funds has led to a change in approach. Priority is being given to bus services in urban areas and on strategic routes.

Demand responsive transport

To mitigate the loss of rural services we have been introducing demand responsive transport services. Standard timetabled services have been replaced with smaller vehicles taking people on request to another bus or a rail service, or direct to a destination. We hope that commercial bus service operators will see these flexible services as feeders to their own bus services and that the development of shared facilities will present opportunities for attracting more passengers.

The map shows the coverage of these services (April 2011). Further information can also be found online at **www.suffolkonboard.com/suffolk_links_demand_responsive_transport**

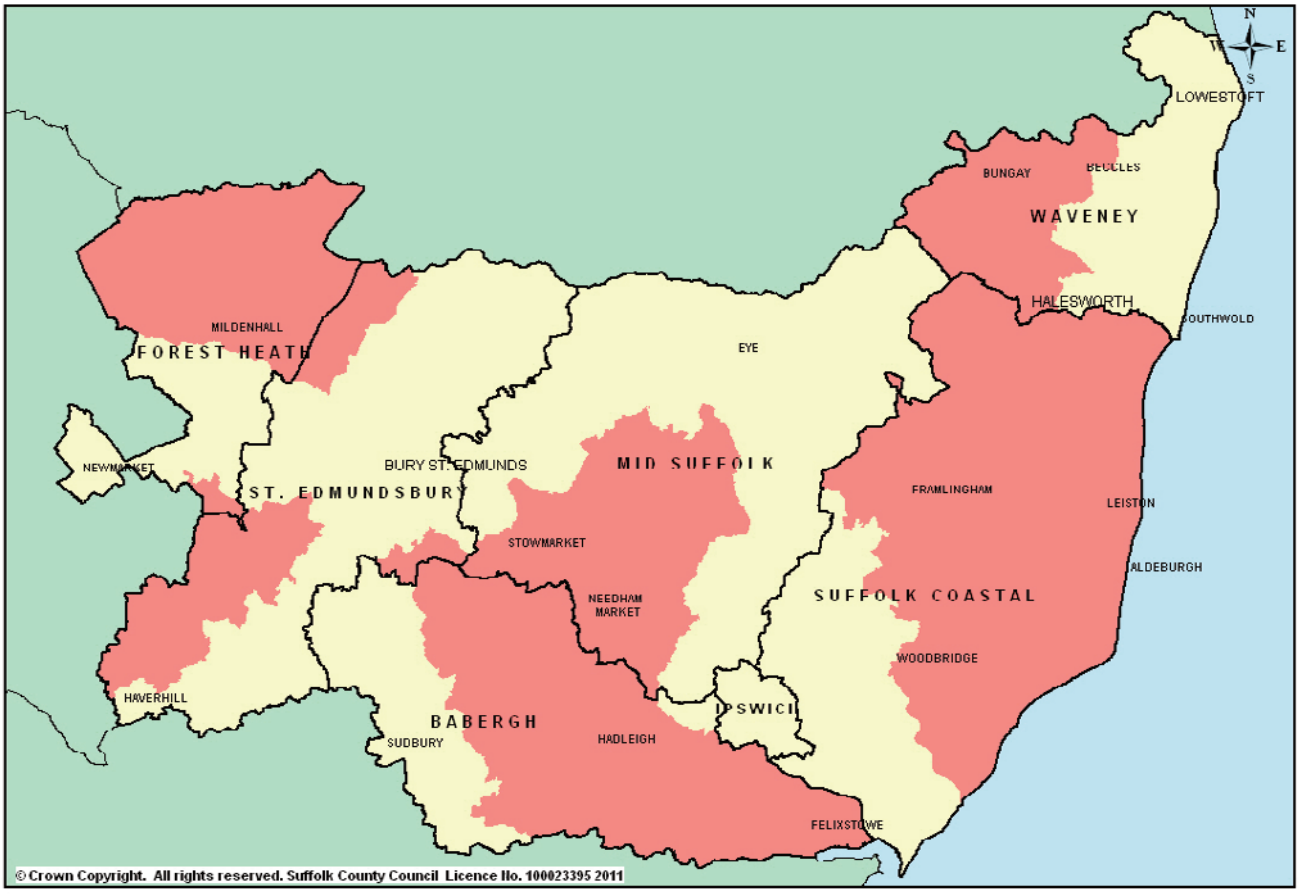

Figure 14- Demand responsive rollout to April 2011 (shown in red)

Passenger transport ticketing including smart media ticketing

The availability of simple, transferable tickets is important in the delivery of an integrated passenger transport network. Although many operators in Suffolk offer multi-journey ticket options, few are valid for use on services run by different operators, so passengers have the inconvenience cost of purchasing separate tickets.

Smart media, including smart cards and mobile phones, provide an opportunity for the implementation of multi-operator schemes and also offer a modern, convenient method of payment for passengers. The county council has introduced 'Fresh Ways to Travel', a mobile phone ticketing service in partnership with bus operators and organisations in the Ipswich area, part-financed by the European Union. The service allows organisations to provide discounts, rewards and incentives as part of Smarter Choices campaigns including green travel plans.

The 'Fresh Ways to Travel' service being trialled in the Ipswich area will be rolled out to the remainder of the county as resources permit. We can also use this technology to provide public transport information on the internet and mobile phones.

We will make sure that our system works with other schemes in the UK. This will help us work with neighbouring counties for a regional smart media system.

Rail network

Within the period of this local transport plan the county council has several aspirations for rail projects.

The most significant project that we are working to deliver, in partnership with Network Rail, is the delivery of a passing loop at Beccles. This will enable an hourly service to be provided between Lowestoft and Ipswich. Completion of this scheme is planned for late 2012. The current franchise holder, National Express East Anglia, had made firm plans for the introduction of an hourly passenger service from December 2012. However, given the franchise timetable as set out below, it will be crucial that this remains an irrevocable commitment in forthcoming short- and long-term new franchises.

We are also anticipating completion of the Ipswich chord to support the continued growth of the Port of Felixstowe. This is part of improvements to the Felixstowe to Nuneaton line and will enable freight trains to gain access to the Midlands and North more easily. In continued support of growth of the Port of Felixstowe we also anticipate the complete dualling of the branch line between Ipswich and Felixstowe with doubling of the track between Trimley and Levington.

An opportunity also exists early within this plan period to work with the Department for Transport in developing requirements for the Greater Anglia rail franchise. The franchise is currently operated by National Express East Anglia and covers all rail services running throughout Suffolk, but will be re-awarded following an open competition between any operators who have expressed an interest in running services in the region. The initial winning bid is anticipated to run for approximately 18 months from the end of 2011 to cover the period of the Olympics. The Department for Transport expects to let a franchise for 15 years or more starting in 2013. We will be lobbying strongly to secure service improvements in Suffolk.

We will lobby strongly for at least an hourly service running on all lines within Suffolk. With an hourly service anticipated on the East Suffolk line following the completion of the Beccles loop, we will work to secure an hourly service between Ipswich and Peterborough and improvements to the Ipswich Cambridge service.

7 Local transport plan funding

Core funding

The table below highlights the Council's anticipated level of capital funding for integrated transport and maintenance in Suffolk over the next 4 years. Figures for 2013 / 2014 and 2014 /2015 reflect the indicative nature of Government allocations for those years.

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Integrated Transport	**3.864**	**4.122**	**4.122 (indicative)**	**5.796 (indicative)**
Maintenance	**21.292**	**20.718**	**20.116 (indicative)**	**16.074 (indicative)**

The distribution of integrated transport will include:

Town strategy development and delivery: This will fund the key interventions for the town strategies. It supports strategy development, travel planning and delivery in the urban areas to support low carbon economic recovery and growth. An aim is to develop schemes that are less expensive and more cost-effective than those delivered in previous years. The relevant towns are Beccles, Bungay, Bury St Edmunds, Brandon, Felixstowe, Ipswich, Haverhill, Lowestoft, Newmarket, Stowmarket and Sudbury

Safety engineering: This would fund a small casualty reduction programme. This would focus on areas where the road layout has been a material factor in collisions.

Quality of life: This allocation would fund a programme of quality of life schemes, or form a contribution to a wider non service specific pool of locality funding.

Additional scheme funding

Our bid for major scheme funding for the 'Ipswich – Transport Fit for the 21st Century' project has received initial approval with an expected Government contribution of £18.304 million to a total scheme cost of £21.545 million. We expect to be able to begin construction of the scheme in 2012.

The Local Sustainable Transport fund has been set up to fund packages that support economic growth and reduce carbon dioxide emissions as well as improving air quality, enhancing safety and reducing congestion. We are planning a bid for a £6 million package of improvements in Lowestoft to support the town's regeneration.

Other local opportunities may arise in the future through Tax Increment Financing (allowing the council to borrow money against income from potential future development).

The Regional Growth Fund is also available, to which public/private bodies such as the Local Enterprise Partnership can bid for funding for projects that support economic growth and additional employment, especially in areas where there is a reliance on public sector employment. A future bid is being considered for a new access road south of Lake Lothing to open up land for housing and employment development.

In many places there are likely to be new developments. Developers will have an important role to play in financing transport schemes to mitigate the impact of development on the transport network and to minimise the residual level of cars using the network. The approach the county council will adopt is to develop sustainable transport networks to support alternatives to the car. These networks will link development areas to key centres such as transport interchanges, employment / residential sites and service centres. Developers will be expected to contribute to the improvement of those networks.

8 The Council's investment programme

The table below indicates the county council's priorities for investment in integrated transport over the next four years.

Town	Indicative type of scheme	Indicative level of expected capital investment 2011 to 2015 (£000)
Beccles	Beccles Loop rail scheme, Beccles southern relief road*, cycle route improvements	5,000*
Brandon	Improvements to the local pedestrian and cycle network and to bus facilities	250
Bungay	Townscape enhancement	450
Bury St Edmunds	Intelligent traffic management, pedestrian crossings, cycle route improvements, rights of way improvements	1,200
Felixstowe	Traffic management, cycle route improvements	450
Haverhill	Cycle route improvements, pavement widening, crossings, rights of way improvements	450
Ipswich	Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century. Cycle and bus network improvements beyond centre	21,800
Lowestoft	A12/ Commercial Road Improvement, sustainable transport package (subject to successful bids), completion of northern spine road*, cycle and pedestrian improvements	10,000*
Newmarket	Traffic management, crossings, cycle route improvements	450
Stowmarket	Intelligent traffic management, bus, cycle and pedestrian improvements	450
Sudbury	Shared space, pedestrianisation, crossings, cycle route improvements	450
Countywide	Locally determined quality of life	2,600
Safety engineering	Casualty reduction	2,350

* It is likely that either the Beccles southern relief road or completion of the Lowestoft northern spine road can be delivered by 2015. The estimated cost of each scheme is £4 million.

The capital maintenance programme for 2011 / 2012 is shown below. The programme is updated annually on the basis of the condition of the Council's transport assets.

	£'000
A roads	**4,500**
Bridges	**1,650**
Street lighting & signals	**500**
Pavements & Drainage	**1,000**
Other roads	**10,442**
Rights of way	**150**
Renewals programme	**1,100**
Structural maintenance	**3,050**
Total	**22,392**

Highways maintenance capital programme 2011 / 2012

If you need help to understand this information in another language please call **08456 066 067.**

Se precisar de ajuda para ler estas informações em outra língua, por favor telefone para o número abaixo.

Portuguese

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tych informacji w swoim języku zadzwoń na podany poniżej numer.

Polish

এই লেখাটি যদি অন্য ভাষাতে বুঝতে চান তাহলে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন

Bengali

بەم زانیاریەی شتنی ئە ب ت گەیەتی هەیارمەر پ ویستیت بەگەیئە بکەوەی خوارەم ژمارەندی بەیوە پەزمان کی تر تکایە

Kurdish

如果你需要其他語言來幫助你了解這些資訊，請撥以下電話。

Chinese

اگر شما نیاز دارید که این اطلاعات را به زبان دیگری دریافت کنید لطفاً به شماره زیر تلفن کنید.

Farsi

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