

9.0 Problem Mitigation

- 9.1 The types of problems faced by Hucknall are described in detail in Chapter 3.0. A regime for dealing with problems on a local level is set out through the three key objectives in the second local transport plan for Greater Nottingham. These objectives centre on economic regeneration, quality of life and making best use of existing assets. These objectives are discussed in further detail in Chapter 2.0.
- 9.2 The problems in Hucknall relate both to the economic decline dating back to the closure of the coal pits in the 1980's and a lack of suitable transport provision and accessibility. As such a two-pronged approach to resolving the problems will be required that involves a close working partnership between Nottinghamshire County Council and Ashfield District Council. This will ensure that the integrated scheme of transport proposals will dovetail into Ashfield District Council's plans for town centre regeneration and act as a catalyst for economic growth and renewal in the town. The improvement of properties, shop fronts, attraction of new retailers and regeneration of the business community is equally reliant on the provision of suitable transport infrastructure and improved accessibility to assist in attracting investment into the business community in Hucknall and future economic success of the town.
- 9.3 Transport problems in Hucknall have been grouped into three categories requiring mitigation:
- Pedestrian/shopper environment
 - Accessibility, transport choice and integration
 - Congestion and safety

Fundamentally Hucknall needs shoppers to boost its economy. As the town centre is not visually appealing, has a tendency towards lower quality retailers, experiences high volumes of traffic and has very narrow footways, shoppers are starting to migrate to other towns. In order to arrest this it is crucial that pedestrian facilities are enhanced to encourage pedestrians and shoppers to stay in the town.

- 9.4 In order to successfully improve the pedestrian environment traffic will need to be removed from the town centre and a pedestrianisation scheme introduced. The preferred scheme will create a safer, more ambient environment for pedestrians and shoppers with the use of high quality paving, sympathetic landscaping, seating and improved lighting and security features as described in Chapter 7.0.
- 9.5 To successfully encourage local people to travel to the town centre by other means than the private car it will also be necessary to improve accessibility. This will enable residents and visitors to access local services and amenities more easily by improving pedestrian routes and creating cycle routes. By designing enhanced pedestrian walkways, new cycleways and segregated pedestrian/cycle routes, primarily to the north of the town centre, it is anticipated that this will encourage more local people to either walk or cycle into the town.
- 9.6 The construction of a bus interchange point in the centre of the town will also assist in improving transport choice and this will provide a direct link to the heart of the town. It

is hoped that through the design of a comfortable, sheltered environment containing comprehensive timetable information that more people will be encouraged to travel into Hucknall from surrounding areas by bus.

- 9.7 The High Street experiences high volumes of traffic, see para. 3.3.2 and Chapter 4, which is set to worsen with the addition of 3,000 new houses and 7 ha of industrial development by 2011. Pedestrianisation of the section of High Street upon which the majority of shopping is focussed will remove congested traffic from this area. Currently pedestrians often stray into the carriageway in areas where footways are narrow when passing other pedestrians. Pedestrianisation will allow both pedestrians and shoppers to move around freely without fear of conflict with passing vehicles and conversely will alleviate drivers' fear of conflict with pedestrians by diverting drivers to the proposed new inner relief road.
- 9.8 With the improved visual appearance of the High Street and significantly reduced traffic levels in this vicinity it is hoped that shoppers may be encouraged to stay over a longer period and carry out more of their shopping in the town centre rather than travelling to alternative centres instead.
- 9.9 The pedestrianisation proposals are wholly underpinned by the construction of a proposed new relief road which will allow traffic to be displaced from the High Street. Chapter 7.0 provides further details about the preliminary design of the new road.
- 9.10 Overall the preferred scheme aims to bring cohesion to each of the areas of the town centre through an integrated approach to transport which will increase transport choice, make the centre and facilities safer and more easily accessible. Careful selection of quality paving and landscaping features will ensure uniformity of design throughout aiming to provide the town with a common identity refreshing the fragmented appearance that it has now.
- 9.11 Improved transport infrastructure will assist Ashfield District Council to secure the future economic prosperity of the town and will allow them to concentrate on the broader retailing environment to stabilise and grow retail and commercial interests through effective town centre management.