4. TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The transport objectives for the Plan area have been developed from four sources:

i.   The objectives in the first North Nottinghamshire LTP
ii.   The objectives in the Regional Transport Strategy
iii. The Government's shared priorities for transport
iv.   The views of stakeholders and the local community on the draft objectives and priorities arising from consultation.

Table 4.1 below sets out the new objectives. Figures 4.1 and 4.2 below indicate how the objectives relate to the overall vision of the Transport Strategy.

Objective	How will we deliver this objective?
Improving accessibility	We intend to improve accessibility to the vital services people need - employment, education, health, shopping and leisure. This will be done partly by working with the relevant agencies to ensure that these facilities are located in accessible locations, and partly by planning the network of bus and other public transport services to best meet the needs within available resources.
Improving safety	We will improve road safety by continuing to implement safety improvements and undertaking awareness campaigns. We will focus in particular on vulnerable road users such as motorcyclists and children.
Improving quality of life	We will seek to improve the quality of life for people in Nottinghamshire, by ensuring that better transport infrastructure plays its part in "Building Better Communities" through: • Neighbourhood renewal • Improving the quality of public space • Delivering safer communities • Improving health and well-being • Reducing noise levels • Improving access to the countryside.
Reduce congestion	Although not anti-car, we intend to reduce levels of congestion by reducing the growth in traffic and the need to travel, and by encouraging greater use of public transport, walking and cycling. We will also undertake improved traffic management and implement targeted engineering measures to make the network more efficient.
Improving air quality	We will take action to reduce air pollution caused by transport, and in particular focus our attention on air pollution hot-spots. In addition we will seek a reduction in the overall emissions from transport of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxides, which contribute to global warming and the problems of climate change
Supporting economic regeneration	We will work to ensure that transport supports economic progress by providing the infrastructure to move people and goods efficiently.
Making best use	We will seek to maintain our roads, bridges and other transport infrastructure to a high standard, and remove the considerable backlog of maintenance work. We will make use of the existing infrastructure through measures such as the effective network management duty, asset management planning, decriminalised parking enforcement and the measures to restrict traffic growth such as smarter choices.

Table 4.1 Transport objectives and how they will be delivered

4.1 OVERALL STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

The vision of 'Building Sustainable Communities' is unchanged from the first LTP. The transport objectives shape the policies and programmes of the LTP which in turn influence the social, economic and environmental regeneration of the communities in the Plan area. In North Nottinghamshire, there was a high priority given to economic regeneration in the first LTP, largely as a response to the decline in coal mining and other traditional industries in the late

1980s and early 1990s and the subsequent environmental degradation. Since then, there has been a large reduction in unemployment nationally but some parts of the Plan area are still heavily reliant on manufacturing jobs and have well above average levels of unemployment.

The second LTP has an important role to play in developing the market towns into sustainable communities by contributing to their economic, social and environmental regeneration. The Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route was the single 'major' local transport scheme in the first LTP. This £30 million new road scheme was completed and opened ahead of schedule in December 2004. It will be a catalyst for further economic development in the Plan area. Other opportunities for new employment development include the office-based sector where the most suitable and sustainable locations are sites within or adjoining the central areas of the market towns and the tourism, recreation and leisure sector in the Sherwood Forest area and, to a lesser extent, along the Trent Valley.

Economic regeneration will remain an important priority in the Plan but will be complemented by transport policies and programmes to stimulate social and environmental regeneration. This is highlighted by two particular examples of County Council activity which will be progressed throughout the Plan period:

i.   Tackling social exclusion through accessibility planning. The ability of people to access places of work, learning, health care, shopping, leisure and other services and facilities has a major impact on their quality of life. Some communities, often in rural areas, and particular groups, such as disabled people, women, older and younger people, and those on low incomes, will have transport needs which are not being adequately met. This will often be as a result of a dependency on public transport. The County Council has demonstrated its commitment to accessibility planning by taking part in the pilot work on rural employment in Bassetlaw during 2004. It has established an effective partnership with a range of local bodies which together has now established some preliminary priorities for improved public transport provision. Details of progress on developing the Accessibility Strategy and Local Accessibility Action Plans are set out in Chapter 5, Accessibility.

ii.   Implementing the County Council's five-year programme of environmental improvement 'Building Better Communities' (BBC). This initiative was launched in Spring 2004 and has already resulted in the implementation of over 230 environmental improvement projects throughout the county, with an emphasis on disadvantaged areas. A programme for a further four years is being developed through local community involvement. BBC is a County Council financial commitment of around £4.5 million per year up to 2008/09. Already it has been able to attract significant additional funding from other local, regional and national bodies to uplift the local environments of many of the towns and villages in the Plan area. Many of the BBC schemes will be complementary to the traffic management measures in LTP1 and those proposed in LTP2. Together, they will make a major contribution to improving conditions for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public transport, including new and improved bus station developments.

Strategy areas within North Nottinghamshire

The Regional Spatial Strategy describes Mansfield and Worksop as Sub-Regional centres; Newark, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Retford as medium-sized market towns and Kirkby-in-Ashfield as a smaller town. For the purposes of this Plan, all these settlements will be referred to as "market towns". The market towns and their associated rural hinterlands are geographically similar to the Census Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) and are therefore considered appropriate as separate "strategy areas" for transport planning purposes. The only exceptions are Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Kirkby-in-Ashfield where their proximity lends themselves to a single strategy area for transport planning purposes.

The four strategy areas are based on the TTWAs derived from the 1991 census. Whilst there is a separate TTWA for the Alfreton/Ashfield area, the Nottinghamshire wards are included in the Mansfield TTWA for LTP purposes. This anaysis was re-evaluated with 2001 census data and was discussed previously in Section 2.1.

The four strategy areas (shown in Figure 2.1) are as follows:

- Mansfield/Ashfield
- Worksop and its hinterland
- Newark and its hinterland
- Retford and its hinterland.

Figure 4.1 below highlights the County Council's vision for sustainable communities. This embraces the need for local environmental, social and economic regeneration, as well as having healthy communities to provide quality of life. These all combined enable 'sustainable communities' to be achieved. Figure 4.2 then overlays the four shared priorities on top of the local sustainable communities to show how all the elements support each other and are entirely complementary.
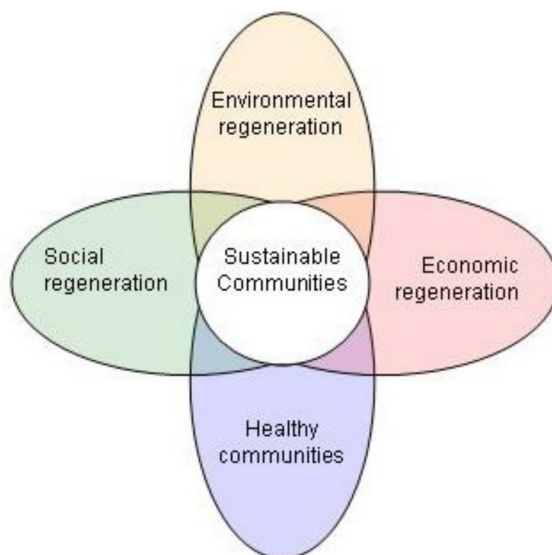

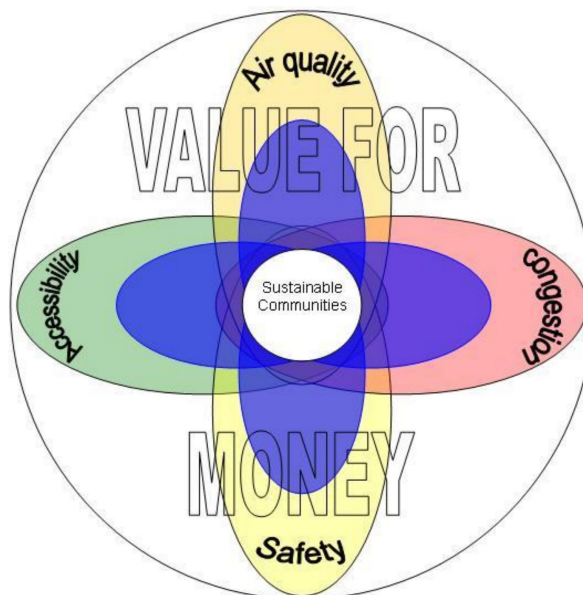Figure 4.1 Sustainable communities diagram

Figure 4.2 Integrated Objectives

The individual elements of the Transport Strategy for the Plan Area is set out below under the headings of each of the transport objectives. There are a number of key strategies that form the core of the Council's Local Transport Plan. Table 4.2 below illustrates how these strategies influence and impact on each of the Shared and Local Priorities. Details of each strategy can be found in the sections highlighted in bold. Others are highlighted but not repeated in each section.

Strategy area	Local Transport Plan Shared and Local Priorities						
	Accessibility	Safety	Quality of life	Congestion	Air Quality	Economic regeneration	Making best use
Decriminalisation of parking		√		√		√	√√
Workplace and school travel plans	√		√	√√	√	√	
Travel demand management				√√	√		√
Rail strategy	√√			√√	√	√	
Bus strategy	√√			√	√	√	
Improving access for disabled people	√√	√	√√				√
Cycling strategy	√√	√	√		√		
Walking strategy	√√	√	√		√		
Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)	√√		√√			√	
Road safety strategy	√	√√	√				√
Accessibiity Planning strategy	√√		√				
Safer Routes to Schools	√	√√	√		√		
Local Accessibility and Transport Studies (LATS) - formerly Mobility Management Action Areas (MMAAs)	√	√	√			√√	√
Awareness raising, marketing and information provision	√	√√	√	√√	√		√
Maintenance of roads and bridges		√	√			√	√√
Strategic Development Control	√	√	√	√√	√	√	√
	√ impact √√ significant impact						

Table 4.2 Transport strategies and their links to the shared and local priorities

Some of the issues detailed above are brought together within this Plan under certain strategies. For example, Smarter Choices incorporates workplace and school travel plans as well as awareness raising, marketing and information provision.

4.2 SUMMARY

Strategies and the range of options for delivering the strategies for each of the seven individual objectives are detailed in the following chapters (5 to 11). These strategies are dealt with in order of overall priority as ranked by not only Nottinghamshire County Council but also taking into account the views of key stakeholders, partners and the general public. The last strategy 'making best use' has not been included in this ranking exercise as the majority of the funding to deliver this objectives comes from the separate maintenance allocations and is also not subject to performance rewards. Making best use was, however, identified as a priority by stakeholders as part of the consultation process. Thus in basic terms the first six strategies

largely reflect the means of delivering integrated transport and the seventh for delivering maintenance. Contained within this section for completeness is a very brief summary of each of these individual strategies.

Accessibility

One of the main strengths of this LTP2 is the much greater focus given to understanding the need to travel. Through the new accessibility planning procedures, the County Council has investigated access to Government's four key destinations - **education and training, employment, food & essential services and health**. The County Council and its partners also decided to consider access to **leisure and cultural destinations** as part of this process.

A wider reference group was established to consider and endorse the accessibility priorities to be addressed during the LTP2 period. A steering group, representative of the five core themes, was then established to drive the development of the strategy. As part of the process a series of consultation workshops have been undertaken to gain the benefit of the constituent partner organisations' experience and understanding of their clients' needs. These established the 'who, what, why, when, where, and how' of the priority issues, which were then prioritised with three or four key issues in each area. Mapping and data analysis, for example using DfT's Accession software, were then undertaken to inform the process further.

In addition to the possible efficiencies identified by partners through the assessment of needs and priorities process, a number of opportunities for pooling and making more effective use of existing resources in order to achieve joint accessibility goals have emerged.

An accessibility partnership has been established that has identified, through workshops, a programmed series of agreed priorities to tackle over the five-year period. This programme will be framed in terms of the themes, local geographical areas, and sections of the population that are to be prioritised for joint working. These triggered 'Local Accessibility Assessments' resulting in specific 'Local Accessibility Action Plans' (LAAPs). LAAPs have been drawn up across a range of services resulting in a detailed strategy to address accessibility problems and opportunities. These will contribute to the Local Accessibility Transport Studies programme for LTP2.

The goal that opportunities and benefits should be available to everyone is a cornerstone of the transport strategy for North Nottinghamshire, as well as one of the shared priorities of national government and local transport authorities. The Accessibility Strategy works towards this goal, building on the work of the accessibility partnership in identifying key priorities. To further inform the proposed strategy the accessibility implications of LTP strategies and policies, such as the Bus Strategy, Rights of Way Improvement Plan and 'Smarter Choices' strategy have been considered.

Safer Roads

Analysis of the current situation regarding safety within the transport network in Nottinghamshire identifies four key areas of concern; motorcycles, children, speed on rural roads, and work related journeys. Opportunities to work towards achieving the 2010 targets for casualty reduction are closely linked with wider objectives in the County Council's transport strategy. Measures to address these specific points and more general issues of road safety are varied and include a mix of education, enforcement and engineering measures as well as encouragement of road users to adopt more sensible/smarter travel behaviour.

The County Council's road safety strategy reflects wider LTP2 objectives by including travel awareness initiatives within its remit. This arrangement has proved extremely successful in delivering road safety education, training and publicity whilst encouraging walking and cycling and developing travel plans at schools to reduce congestion. The road safety strategy is contained within the County Council's Cross-Service Road Safety Improvement Plan (2003-2010) which was drawn up in consultation with an extensive range of internal and external bodies,

and is regularly reviewed to ensure its effectiveness. The strategy is based on detailed casualty analysis and address identified casualty problems, thereby maximising value for money from available resources.

This area of work cascades into three key streams; casualty reduction, accident prevention and changing people's travel behaviour. The strategy identifies a range of measures to address these specific issues including partnership working, investment, education, analysis of accident data and speed management.

Quality of Life

North Nottinghamshire is a diverse area, with a predominately rural aspect to the east and more urbanised area in the west, which still displays the industrial legacy of intensive coal mining. In these areas the industrial past has not only affected the environment of many communities, but has also impacted on their social and economic stability.

Many factors ranging across the spectrum of social, economic and environmental concerns influence the perception of 'quality of life'. Elements that contribute to quality of life can be identified as; social needs, needs of disabled people, education, health, physical environment and crime and fear of crime. The key strategy areas to address these issues include; prioritising the areas of need, integrating with other initiatives to add value and raising awareness and opportunity for the community to value and preserve their environment. Partnership working with stakeholders is vital to delivering the strategy.

The Rights of Way Improvement Plan details the opportunities it offers to improve the quality of life, such as accessibility, health and recreation.

Congestion

Each of the four sub-areas of North Nottinghamshire has been investigated for evidence of congestion. Results suggest that current levels are unlikely to be detrimental to the health or economic well-being of the whole Plan area now or in the near future. Congestion has an impact on several of the LTP's other priorities, such as improving air quality and health, regeneration, quality of life and making best use of the existing network (particularly in relation to the Network Management Duty). It is therefore essential that current levels of traffic are managed effectively and that congestion does not become a problem in the future. As such, the strategy for congestion will focus on continued monitoring of the situation and the provision of both demand-side solutions and supply-side solutions to restrain traffic growth. To address the issue of potential congestion a mix of awareness raising measures will be used along with proactive network management to encourage modal shift, reduce the need to travel and reduce traffic growth. This pro-active approach to congestion management will hopefully prevent increasing traffic volumes to significantly worsen causing significant congestion issues. Resources will continue to be targeted at reducing congestion at known hot-spots, particularly where it is known that this congestion also has a detrimental impact on public transport services. The Council believes therefore, that whilst traffic volume targets have been set, setting specific congestion reduction targets will not provide any appreciable benefit.

Air Quality

The County Council's strategy for assessing, monitoring and managing air quality is detailed within the partnership document 'Nottinghamshire Air Quality Strategy', produced in 2001 by the multi-sector Nottinghamshire Environmental Protection Working Group. It identifies the need to reduce air pollution by encouraging alternative travel modes and promoting sustainable development through the Local Transport Plan and development plan processes. Work is currently underway to update and review the strategy and a full assessment of the air quality and factors which affect it will be published later in 2006.

Air quality in the Plan area is expected to remain within national objectives but will continue to be assessed and monitored as necessary. It is recognised that air quality is closely linked to the congestion theme, and as such the Air Quality Strategy will also include the promotion of cleaner vehicles and 'smarter choices' directed at modal shift and reducing the need to travel.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out on the impacts of LTP2 and local air quality, climate factors and other environmental factors are all considered and appraised in the SEA. The SEA summarises predicted significant impacts and has been subject to significant consultation, following which several changes have been made to it.

Regeneration

An overview of the economic structure and performance of North Nottinghamshire suggests that the county has a moderate sized economy, which recently has shown little evidence of growth. The outfall from Nottinghamshire's declining industrial heritage, particularly past reliance on mining and textiles, continues to hamper economic activity. While business creation rates are on a par with national levels, the proportion of these which are in the knowledge driven sectors is low. The legacy of the decline in the traditional industries is still prevalent, with higher skills and some basic skills in short supply.

There are considerable local variances, however, in general the legacy of our industrial heritage has resulted in an inadequate infrastructure, a lack of quality serviced sites for new growth opportunities, poor communications to serve them and low numbers of 'leading edge' small and medium sized enterprises to move the economy forward. These problems require an integrated strategy approach to identify opportunities to develop modern, efficient communications infrastructure.

Although progress has been made to bring unemployment rates down to match national figures, the quality of these new jobs has been low with a prevalence of low value industries choosing to invest in these areas. On the positive side, in terms of transport much progress has been made in recent years to improve the accessibility of the west of the county.

The LTP2 transport strategy will support regeneration in the following three main areas. Firstly, it will provide access to education, further education, skills training and employment zones. Secondly, it will help create employment sites and economically vibrant and attractive towns and villages. And thirdly, it will provide support for local partnerships to create integrated 'Action Plans'.

Local empowerment will also be supported by giving ownership of local transport strategies to affected communities through LATS.

Making the best use of existing assets

The highway network is a key community asset and is central to the integrated movement strategies contributing to the delivery of wider economic, social and environmental objectives. These principles are incorporated into a network management regime with the following core objectives; Network Safety, Network Serviceability and Network Sustainability.

Central to the County Council's objective to deliver a safer, improved network service for all road users is the strategy to develop and implement a Transport Asset Management Plan which will consider the methods employed to assess the highway network's condition and will detail the policies in place to maintain it, parking control powers available through Decriminalised Parking Enforcement, the opportunity to reduce trip lengths through development control functions and the powers and duties inherent in the Network Management Duty.

These are particularly relevant in how they can add value to the other LTP policies by concentrating on making better use of existing highways rather than relying on increased provision.