

## 6 Economic strategy

### 6.1 Introduction

**6.1.1** Reliable and efficient transport links are important in supporting economic activity. In urban areas, congestion can create problems for business. In more rural areas and market towns, a lack of transport facilities can make it difficult for people to access employment. Transport related measures can help make places more attractive for tourists and visitors, boosting the local economy.

**6.1.2** This Economic Strategy summarises our vision and objectives for supporting the Shropshire economy through transport interventions. It provides a summary of the relevant policy context and background analysis of transport problems that affect economic performance, and the aspirations of key stakeholders including the Shropshire business community.

**6.1.3** It then sets out an overall strategic approach, and the key transport activities we will undertake to support sustainable economic growth, highlighting how we will work in partnership to develop and deliver our actions. It also summarises the performance management indicators we will monitor to measure our performance in supporting the Shropshire economy.

### 6.2 Vision and objectives

*Our vision is of ....an economically vibrant society where ...people have good and reliable access to jobs...*

**6.2.1** Economic development is a key aspiration for Shropshire and its people. A key priority is to bring more and better paid jobs to the County. It is also particularly important to attract and retain younger people to live and work

in Shropshire. In order to achieve sustainable and cohesive communities it is also desirable to achieve balance in population and employment, and for Shropshire residents to be able to meet their employment aspirations more locally.

**6.2.2** Reliable and efficient transport links are important in supporting economic activity. It is also important to ensure that extra travel generated through economic development does not have negative social and environmental impacts.

**6.2.3** Shropshire towns are hubs of economic activity and it is important to ensure that this activity is not hampered by unacceptable increases in traffic and congestion.

**6.2.4** Rural areas of the County, and in particular the Rural Regeneration Zone suffers from relatively poor transport links. In these areas it will be important to look at sustainable ways of improving accessibility to support economic vitality and access to jobs.

**6.2.5** In response to these issues we have identified our economic aim and objectives as:

#### **Aim:**

To support sustainable economic activity and rural regeneration

#### **Objectives:**

- Reduce and prevent congestion
- Support rural regeneration

### 6.3 Policy context

**6.3.1** Economic development is a key national, regional and local aim. Policy documents at all levels identify the links between economic growth and access and transport issues, and set out



transport related objectives. The policy context and identified drivers for the LTP are summarised in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Policy Context for LTP Economic Strategy

Policy	Relevant objectives	Policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
<b>National</b>		
Tomorrow's Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Need to maintain the quality of heritage, culture and countryside on which tourism is based</li> <li>Tourism can underpin local commercial activity and services and help to regenerate urban and rural areas.</li> </ul>	Ensure the potential of tourism in Shropshire is maximised without negative environmental impact from transport and traffic
Our Cities are Back <sup>(1)</sup>	Development of City Regions to enhance the economic competitiveness of England's "Core Cities", including Birmingham	Ensure maintain good links to Birmingham as the regional hub
<b>Regional</b>		
West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy <sup>(2)</sup>	<p>Regeneration of rural areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better local services</li> <li>Better transport links both within rural areas and between urban and rural areas.</li> </ul> <p>Rural Regeneration Zone (RRZ) to be the primary focus for rural regeneration (see Figure 6.1). In the RRZ</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the range and quality of services available to residents via central or mobile service centres</li> <li>Improve accessibility to jobs and services</li> <li>Improve traffic management and public transport within the A49 transport corridor</li> </ul> <p>Development outside of the Major Urban areas to be focused in sub regional hubs including Shrewsbury; and three high-technology corridors including Wolverhampton to Telford:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developments within corridors to be at key nodes well served by public transport</li> <li>Corridors to provide a focus for transport improvements particularly where this can help enhance links and accessibility within, to and from Regeneration Zones.</li> </ul> <p>Identifies a number of regional tourism assets within Shropshire</p> <p>Where it is appropriate to encourage tourism, development need improvements to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public transport</li> <li>Regional footpaths or cycle routes</li> <li>Alterations to the rights of way system</li> <li>Inland waterways</li> </ul> <p>Promoting links between urban areas and the countryside</p>	<p>Seek to improve provision of local services in rural areas,</p> <p>Improve transport links between rural areas and market towns, including improved public transport on A49 corridor</p> <p>Lobby Highways Agency for improved traffic management on A49 (T)</p> <p>Ensure good transport links to Shrewsbury, Telford and Wolverhampton particularly from nearby RRZ areas.</p> <p>Improve public transport links into Shropshire and between urban areas and the countryside</p> <p>Facilitate development of walking and cycling opportunities for tourists</p>

1 "Our Cities are Back - Competitive Cities Make Prosperous Regions and Sustainable Communities", ODPM, December 2004  
 2 Final Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands RPG11 (June 2004)

Policy	Relevant objectives	Policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
The West Midlands Regional Economic Strategy <sup>(3)</sup>	<p>Transport challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The need to address the inadequacies of our transport infrastructure through partners developing innovative ways to create a sustainable, world-class transport system.</li> </ul> <p>For remote areas it identifies economic development priorities as to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Broaden the economic base</li> <li>Reduce over-reliance on traditional employment</li> <li>Provide a wider range of local job opportunities</li> <li>Create jobs suitable for local people rather than workers from other parts of the Region or further afield</li> </ul>	Focus on creating self-sustaining local economies; rather than rely on improved transport links to move workers in or commuters out of Shropshire
West Midlands Visitor Economy Strategy, Advantage West Midlands, 2004	<p>For the region's rural areas:</p> <p><i>"The challenge is to facilitate access whilst ensuring sustainability, both environmental and economic"</i></p> <p><b>Shrewsbury -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified as one of four premier cultural and heritage 'cities' within the region</li> <li>To act as a gateway to the countryside and surrounding towns and attractions in order to spread the benefits to neighbouring rural regeneration zone areas.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ironbridge/Severn Valley and Ludlow/The Marches -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim to improve transport access.</li> </ul> <p><b>Countryside and Market Towns -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aim is the further development of sustainable tourism.</li> </ul>	<p>Improve transport links from outside the County into Shrewsbury,</p> <p>Ensure transport arrangements in Shrewsbury enable it to maximise its role as a premier cultural and heritage 'city'</p> <p>Improve links from Shrewsbury to other towns and countryside areas</p> <p>Facilitate development of walking and cycling opportunities</p>
<b>Local</b>		
Shropshire Rural Pathfinder Project	<p>Aims to identify how rural access can be made more effective, efficient and more customer focused by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving the delivery of local services</li> <li>Improving transport in rural areas</li> </ul>	LTP to build on work of the Pathfinder project
One of eight DEFRA Rural Pathfinder pilot areas.		
Shropshire Futures: Economic Development Strategy <sup>(4)</sup>	<p>The five key elements of the vision for Shropshire economy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening the business base in terms of start-ups and competitiveness</li> <li>Providing better opportunities for everyone, especially Shropshire's young people</li> </ul>	<p>Transport developments to support business competitiveness without damage to the County's high quality environment.</p>

3 Delivering Advantage – The West Midlands Economic Strategy and Action Plan 2004-2010, Advantage West Midlands

4 "Shropshire Futures", An Economic Development Strategy for Shropshire, December 2003



Policy	Relevant objectives	Policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Harnessing the County's high quality environment in a sustainable and creative manner</li> <li>● Increasing a higher value activity and knowledge economy</li> <li>● Improving the skills base</li> </ul> <p>Connectivity strand aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve links between villages and market towns, and between market towns and Shrewsbury</li> <li>● Utilise the potential of the A49 and A5/M54 spines as economic growth corridors</li> <li>● Harness the potential of railway infrastructure to better support the Shropshire economy, with a key immediate priority action of improving rail connections to London</li> </ul>	<p>Prevent transport being a barrier to young people being able to access employment and training opportunities.</p> <p>Improve transport links</p> <p>Improve links to development around A49 and A5/M54</p> <p>Lobby for improved rail connections, particularly to London</p>
<p>Shropshire's Tourism Strategy<sup>(5)</sup></p>	<p>Aims to establish Shropshire as a high quality rural tourism destination that uses the area's distinctive landscape, environment and heritage assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Boost the numbers of staying visitors</li> <li>● Promote Shropshire as a high quality short break leisure destination, offering opportunities for stimulating touring and discovery, active and healthy recreation and stress-free relaxation.</li> <li>● Boost business tourism, particularly in the east of the County.</li> </ul>	<p>Help encourage tourist activity without increased car traffic, particularly in high quality environmental areas.</p> <p>Lobby for improved rail links to aid business travel</p>
<p>Shropshire Community Strategy 2006-2010</p>	<p><b>Priorities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Build strong and diverse economy with jobs for a skilled and competitive workforce</li> <li>● Increasing growth and sustainability of enterprise and businesses</li> <li>● Improving workforce skills to enhance employment prospects in growth sectors</li> </ul> <p><b>Aims:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Promote Shropshire as a prime location for business particularly in high technology, service and knowledge intensive growth sectors</li> <li>● Increase access to broadband for business and the community</li> <li>● Develop a realistic programme of transport improvements.</li> <li>● Promote environmental excellence</li> <li>● Improve Shropshire's competitive edge by creating, improving and sustaining its unique character, places and infrastructure</li> <li>● Raise the skills of Shropshire's workforce and communities through work based learning, further, higher education and lifelong learning</li> </ul>	<p>Ensure LTP contributes to economic development aims of Community Strategy</p>

5 Tourist Strategy for Shropshire, SCC, 2003

Policy	Relevant objectives	Policy drivers for Shropshire LTP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nurture Shropshire's environment so it continues to attract businesses and visitors</li> <li>Support people who are unemployed into sustained employment</li> </ul>	
Shropshire Corporate Plan 2006-2010	<p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing growth and sustainability of enterprise and businesses</li> <li>Improving workforce skills to enhance employment prospects in growth sectors</li> </ul> <p>Priorities for improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage vocational training for adults</li> <li>Developing the economic vitality of the county by building on our strengths and developing new high technology and knowledge intensive sectors</li> </ul>	Ensure economic development plans are supported by transport infrastructure and services to enable business to grow and people to access employment opportunities

## 6.4 Analysis

6.4.1 The analysis which underpins our LTP economic strategy looks at data on development pressures, economic development aims and evidence of the current and potential future impacts of congestion.

### Development in Shropshire

6.4.2 The West Midlands regional policy<sup>(6)</sup> of focusing development on major urban areas means that a relatively small proportion of the regional housing development will be in Shropshire. However, about 15,000 new homes are expected by 2021, with around a third of these located in Shrewsbury, which has been identified as a sub-regional centre for growth. (Section 3.6 provides further details of housing proposals for Shropshire).

6.4.3 Some of this housing growth is required to cater for the increased number of households, because of reduced household size. However, it also reflects an expected increase in

population. We must ensure that this increase in population is balanced with an increase in quality job opportunities, in order to prevent a growth in out-commuting from Shropshire. We must ensure that location and design of new housing provides good access to these job opportunities but we must also seek to reduce overall demand to travel, particularly by car, if we are to avoid increased levels of traffic and congestion.

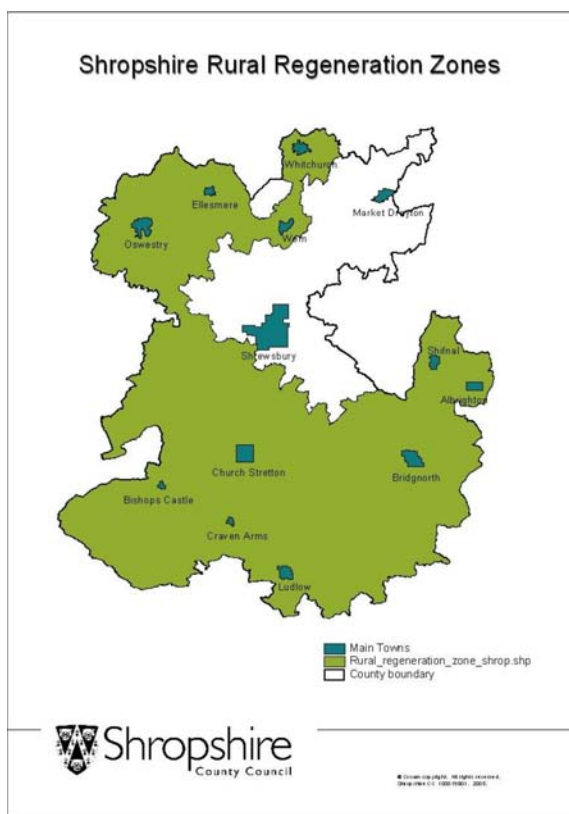
### Economic development

6.4.4 Shropshire's economy is relatively strong and grew faster than the West Midlands average during the 1990s. In 2003, Shropshire's GVA (Gross Value Added) was estimated to be £2.9bn (at 1995 prices), some 123,000 people were employed in the County, and unemployment levels were half of those for the West Midlands as a whole.<sup>(7)</sup>

6 West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy  
7 Shropshire Economic Strategy, Dec. 2003



Figure 6.1 Rural Regeneration Zone



agriculture and food production; a high concentration of employment in sectors which are declining nationally, together with a low incidence of employment in national growth sectors.

6.4.6 The overarching aims of Shropshire's Economic Development Strategy are to address these concerns through:

- Attracting and retaining young people
- Increasing jobs in higher paid sectors
- Increasing the level and range of skills and employment

6.4.7 Success in increasing the skill level and prosperity of Shropshire people is likely to lead to increased demand for personal travel as well as additional demand for movements of goods. This will be a key transport challenge and will require a clear transport vision and strategy for how to provide for and manage demand for the movement of people and goods.

### Local aspirations

6.4.8 Specific transport improvement aspirations of stakeholders of Shropshire's economic sector<sup>(8)</sup> are:

- Better transport to and from the County, including the availability of quality rail services from London and international airports, which affects the attractiveness of the County as a location for businesses and destination for tourism
- Improvements to trunk roads through Shropshire, particularly the A49 and A5
- Maintaining access within rural areas, with particular concerns over access for larger HGVs to farms

6.4.5 However there are a number of concerns both at an individual level and for Shropshire's medium to long term economic vitality.

- **Ageing Population** - Could affect the County's medium to long term economic prospects.
- **Low wages** - Average weekly earnings are the 52<sup>nd</sup> lowest out of the 120 authority areas in Great Britain, with Shropshire women being the 14<sup>th</sup> lowest earners in the country. Low wages, combined with high house prices, can make Shropshire less attractive to young people.
- **Limited range of jobs and skills** - The economy is heavily dependent on the public sector and industries based on tourism,

8 As highlighted in 'Shropshire Futures, An economic development strategy for Shropshire, Dec 2003', and expression in LTP consultation

- Access improvements to serve new and growing employment sites in Shrewsbury and market towns
- Measures to support and facilitate rural tourism

### Key growth sectors

6.4.9 The key growth sectors of the Shropshire economy have been identified as:<sup>9)</sup>

- **Tourism** - based on the historic market towns and enjoyment of the attractive rural areas
- **Health and social care** - responding to demographic changes
- **Environmental industries** - such as waste management and environmental consulting, particularly based around Shrewsbury
- **Agricultural diversification**
- **Food industries** - examples of recent investment are Muller's in Market Drayton and the new food processing centre of excellence at Battlefield Business Park, North Shrewsbury
- **Medical technology** - based around the Orthopaedic Hospital in Oswestry
- **Creative industries.**

6.4.10 Of these identified growth sectors it is tourism which is likely to pose the most significant challenges to Shropshire's transport system:

#### Tourism

6.4.11 Currently there are 14 million tourist trips to Shropshire per year<sup>10)</sup>. The growth of the tourism sector is especially important from a transport perspective because:

- A key part of the Shropshire tourism product relies upon the quality of the highway

environment e.g. safe, quiet lanes for walking, cycling and horse riding; attractive town streetscapes, lay-bys to stop and admire the view

- The transport network can be used to help encourage visitors to visit specific destinations and thereby influence visitor spend e.g. destination signage of tourist attractions, car parking provision, public transport/ attraction joint ticketing
- If the number of tourist trips increases without changes to transport provision or visitor management then traffic levels are likely to rise
- In some parts of the county increased traffic levels could diminish the key Shropshire tourist assets such as high quality landscapes, attractive historic town and village centres and tranquility, and may have safety and congestion implications

6.4.12 It is clearly a key challenge for our transport plan to accommodate and support tourism and growth while seeking to minimise traffic and its impacts, particularly in sensitive rural areas and within historic towns.

#### Locations for employment growth

6.4.13 The greatest employment growth is expected to occur in Shrewsbury, reflecting its designation as a sub-regional growth area. Outside Shrewsbury, medium and large employment developments are expected to be based in market towns, although some increases in rural employment are expected from the growth of tourism, farm based diversification and increased levels of home working. The new employment land allocations for each district up to 2007<sup>11)</sup> are shown below

9 Shropshire Futures, An economic development strategy for Shropshire, Dec 2003  
 10 2001 data, Shropshire Tourism Strategy Review  
 11 Shropshire Joint Structure Plan, 2002



Table 6.2 Shropshire joint structure plan employment land allocations

District	Minimum employment land allocations (Ha)
Bridgnorth	10
North Shropshire	20
Oswestry	15
Shrewsbury and Atcham	35
South Shropshire	15

6.4.14 Major developments during the plan period are likely to include:

### Shrewsbury

6.4.15 Key current destinations in Shrewsbury are the town centre, large employers such as the Shirehall, Royal Shrewsbury Hospital and Shrewsbury College well as the large business and industrial sites at Oxon, Emstrey and Harlescott/ Battlefield, and retail centres at Harlescott/ Sundorne and Meole Brace.

6.4.16 Key developments likely to impact on demand for transport include:

- **Employment:** Major edge of town employment sites are being developed to the north of the town, (Battlefield) and the south-east (Emstrey).
- **Town centre retail:** A retail capacity study in 2003 identified the potential for about 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> of additional non-food retail floor space within the town centre by 2011. Current proposals include the expansion of the town centre's main indoor shopping malls (the Pride Hill and Darwin centres) and the redevelopment of the adjacent Riverside centre.
- **Edge of town retail:** A large new supermarket is being developed at Harlescott and there is continued pressure for further development on existing retail parks outside the town centre.

- **Theatre:** There is a proposal for the development of a new theatre at Frankwell (town centre) which would have a large catchment area
- **Football ground:** The town's football ground is being re-located to an out-of town site.
- **Sports village:** A large new public sports village is being developed at Sundorne
- **Education:** There is a proposal for Shrewsbury sixth form college to co-located on the edge of town site of Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology.

6.4.17 These new developments are likely to increase demand for travel, and in particular for travel to edge of town sites and for travel at evenings and weekends. Current public transport provision does not compete with the private car for such journeys.

### Market towns

6.4.18 Some key development issues for market towns include:

- **Oswestry :** A new 20 hectare MediPark employment site to the north east of the town, edge of town retail development at the Smithfield Livestock Market and regeneration of the derelict railway lands site on the edge of the town centre.
- **Bridgnorth :** A new supermarket facility off Whitburn Street, which would also provide for a new road link for the town centre.
- **Ludlow :** A new "Eco Park" at the edge of town is currently under development.
- **Ellesmere :** Development of the Wharf site could include employment and residential opportunities.

**6.4.19** Provision of sustainable transport linkages, particularly to new sites on the edge of market towns will be important in increasing accessibility and reducing traffic impacts of such developments

### Rural areas

**6.4.20** Many expected developments are likely to be as a result of farm diversification, often with a focus on tourism. 30% of farmers in Shropshire have already diversified in some way in recent years. The cumulative transport implications of many small developments which attract additional traffic or HGV movements need to be considered.

### Economic case for transport improvements

**6.4.21** Good access is important to business in Shropshire. A survey of businesses in 2005<sup>(12)</sup> asked about the key factors businesses considered important when deciding where to locate a new facility or relocate. The most significant single factor was good access (58 out of the 142 responses).

### Rail access

**6.4.22** A particular concern of the Shropshire business community is the lack of a direct Rail link between Shropshire and London. The same business survey identified that 27% of business were dissatisfied with rail links in Shropshire, with specific reference made to the absence of a Telford to London rail link.

**6.4.23** A separate business survey<sup>(13)</sup> identified that 17% of businesses travel by rail on a weekly basis and 27% on a monthly basis. It also identified that 72% of businesses regularly have

visitors come to the area. Overall 90% of businesses said they would benefit from a direct rail link between London and Shropshire.

**6.4.24** A Shropshire Strategic Rail Working Group has been established with support from the Shropshire Chamber of Commerce and other business agencies and partnerships in the county, and the local authorities of Telford & Wrekin, Shropshire and Shrewsbury & Atcham. This group has established that the economic benefits of a direct rail service between Shropshire and London would include<sup>(14)</sup>:

- An additional 37% revenue to train operating companies
- Increased turnover of more than 14 million for existing Shropshire businesses
- Scope to redress past lost investment worth in excess of £100 million
- Securing new investments (including public sector re-locations) in excess of £1 billion
- Almost 12,000 new jobs, created by entrepreneurial in-migrants
- The equivalent of £2.6m in savings in road de-congestion



12 Commissioned by Telford Development Agency, March 2005

13 Shropshire Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise, Rail Use Survey 2002

14 Shropshire to London Direct Rail Link: The Economic Impact, prepared for DfT, Feb 2006)



**Key challenge: To support sustainable economic growth, and increased opportunities for all Shropshire people, whilst managing the increased demand for movement of people and goods which will result from increased prosperity. In response to this challenge, our transport strategy must:**

- **Ensure that everyone can access new and existing employment opportunities**
- **Provide a clear strategy for the effective and efficient movement of goods in the county**
- **Address the transport needs of new and existing businesses without an unacceptable increase in traffic and its associated problems**
- **Support growth in tourism and spreading the benefits to more remote areas whilst minimising the traffic impact and encouraging more tourists to travel by sustainable modes.**
- **Seek improved rail connections, particularly with London**

## Congestion

**6.4.25** Historically, congestion has not been a major issue in Shropshire. However the growth of traffic in recent years means that it is

becoming an increasing problem, principally in the urban areas, leading to journey delays and unreliability. Congestion leads to greater levels of vehicle pollution, and can adversely affect public transport services, reducing reliability and increasing costs.

**6.4.26** Congestion can lead to a lack of reliability in journey times and has been proven to have significant economic costs.

**6.4.27** While Shropshire's traffic flows are generally low by national standards congestion does not necessarily require a high volume of traffic to occur. Historic road networks not designed to take today's traffic levels can become congested with relatively low traffic levels. Significant congestion can also occur due to temporary factors such as road traffic accidents, road works and poorly parked vehicles.

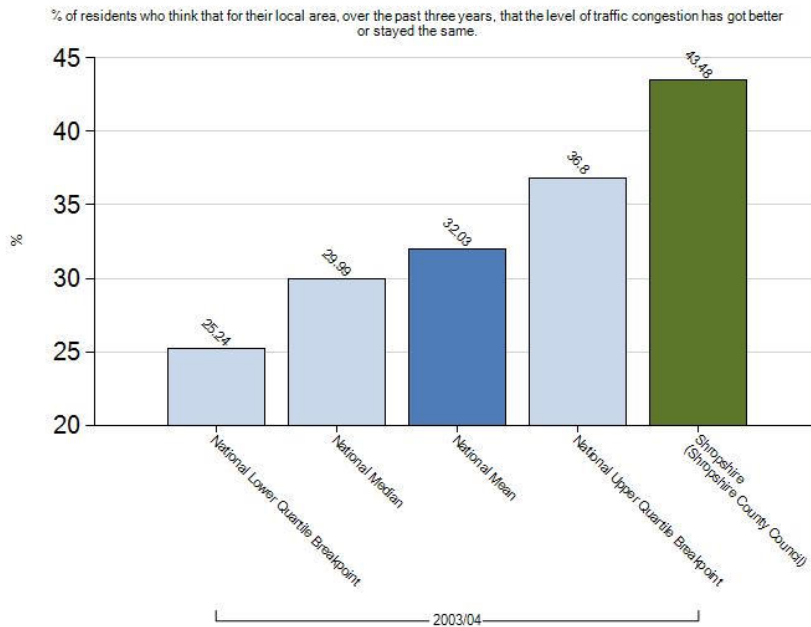
### Public perceptions of congestion

**6.4.28** The LTP consultation identified that most Shropshire residents do not perceive congestion to be a major problem across Shropshire. In fact, a representative Countywide survey<sup>(19)</sup> identified that 80% of respondents found conditions for getting about by car to be excellent or good, and only 3% considered conditions to be poor.

**6.4.29** In addition, the Best Value survey showed that almost half of residents thought that congestion had got better or stayed the same, one of the highest rates in the Country (see Figure 6.2).

15 People's panel, August 2004

Figure 6.2 Percentage of residents who think that for their local area, over the past three years, that the level of traffic congestion has got better or stayed the same



6.4.30 However, strong concerns were raised over specific hotspots where congestion does occur:

- Shrewsbury town centre** - Congestion was identified as a significant problem on routes into and through Shrewsbury town. This was seen as causing delays to journey times and affecting the economy by putting off people visiting the town. The congested traffic was seen as damaging the quality of the town centre environment. Consultees viewed the causes of congestion as being the levels of traffic trying to use limited street space, the road space taken up by the circulation of buses and the lack of optimal arrangements at signalised junctions.
- A5 Shrewsbury bypass** - Congestion was also identified as a problem at junctions on the Shrewsbury bypass; where conflicts were seen between local and through traffic. Delays were experienced in the peak commuting hours, and at weekends and holiday periods due to the levels of through traffic travelling to and from Wales. Capacity and priority at junctions were seen as being the cause of delays.
- Other market town centres** - Congestion in high streets and town centres was identified by some people as a concern. The problem was generally seen as being during commuting hours, on Saturdays and during special events. In some towns the levels of through traffic and particularly the number of heavy goods vehicles unsuited to narrow historic streets were seen as being a key cause of congestion. In other



towns poor parking discipline, particularly from delivery vehicles was seen as contributing to congestion problems.

**6.4.31** Although some people pragmatically identified that local congestion was not of the same scale as that experienced in large cities and major conurbations many believed that traffic levels were likely to increase in coming years. Concerns were frequently expressed about the increases in traffic and additional parking problems that they expected to see as a result of specific new local developments.

### Congestion data

**6.4.32** Outside Shrewsbury significant congestion is not generally observed on a regular basis in Shropshire. This observation is supported by analysis. On most inter-urban roads traffic levels are at less than 50% of the design capacity. An exception is the A5 to the north of

Oswestry which has been identified as being at 90% of its design capacity, indicating that congestion can be expected. Information is not available to undertake detailed analysis of congestion at major junctions or within Shropshire's market towns.

**6.4.33** Detailed analysis of congestion is possible for Shrewsbury using the detailed traffic model recently developed. Table 6.3 and Table 6.4 identify levels of congestion at the key hotspots in the morning peak hour. These tables show the average queue length, average vehicle delays and ratio of traffic volume to junction capacity. Ratios greater than 1 indicate that junctions are over capacity and congestion can be expected. It should be noted that these figures are average values between 8am and 9am. Variations in traffic levels within this morning peak hour means that the data does not reflect the worst congestion situation.

Table 6.3 Congestion in Shrewsbury town centre (8am-9am)

Location	Average Vehicle Queue Length (car units)	Average vehicle delay (secs)	Volume / Capacity ratio
Chester St to Cross St	13.5	245	1.2
Castle Gates to Smithfield Road	7.3	27	0.7
Old Potts Way to Coleham Head	34.3	218	1.2
Coleham Head	6.8	32	1.0
The Mount to Frankwell Island	4.2	50	0.6

**6.4.34** The data in Table 6.3 supports observations that peak hour congestion occurs at the three main entry points to Shrewsbury Town Centre.

- The most serious problem is at the Chester Street Gyratory where traffic from the north enters the town centre. The gyratory arm with the most significant delays is Chester St /Cross Street, where the average inbound delay through the morning peak hour is over 4 minutes.

- Significant congestion is also experienced at the Coleham Head Gyratory, near to English Bridge, where traffic from the South and East enters the town centre. Traffic on Old Potts Way experiences average morning peak delays of over 3.5 minutes.
- The town centre entry from the west towards Welsh Bridge is also of concern, with the junction of The Mount onto Frankwell Island experiencing the most significant delays.

Table 6.4 Congestion outside Shrewsbury town centre (8am-9am)

Location	Mean Vehicle Queue (pcu)	Average vehicle delay (secs)	Volume / Capacity ratio
Monkmoor Road / Abbey Foregate	7.9	90	1.0
Hazeldine Way-Meole Brace Roundabout	12.1	51	1.0
Oteley Road-Meole Brace Roundabout	18	64	0.9
Hereford Rd South -Meole Brace Roundabout	22.4	122	1.1
A49/A5 Shrewsbury Bypass	5.3	27	1.0
A5112 Whitchurch Rd / Battlefield Rd / Harlescott La / Featherbed La Crossroads	5.2	58	1.0

**6.4.35** Outside Shrewsbury town centre, the Monkmoor Road / Abbey Foregate junction is seen to be at capacity, as is the Meole Brace roundabout where average delays are of up to 2 minutes. The roundabout junction of the A49 Eastern Bypass and A5 Trunk Road from the East is also shown to be at capacity, as is the Whitchurch Road / Harlescott Lane crossroads in the north of Shrewsbury, where significant new retail development is due to take place early in the LTP period.

### Bus reliability

**6.4.36** In the larger urban areas congestion can cause delays to buses. Some bus priority measures are in place in Shrewsbury, including a bus lane at Castle Gates. However, a study in 2001<sup>(6)</sup> identified that congestion in Shrewsbury adversely affects passenger journey times and reliability as well as increasing operating costs. Passenger delays were then estimated to cost over £146,000 per annum.

**6.4.37** Congestion was identified as affecting bus operation within the town centre throughout the day, as well as on the approaches to the town centre and at Heathgates roundabout in the north of the town during peak hours. Although difficult due to the mediaeval street patterns, it is clear that the provision of additional priority for

bus services would greatly enhance their attractiveness for journeys into Shrewsbury town centre.

### Future congestion levels

**6.4.38** It is clear that the entry points to Shrewsbury town centre and a number of other key junctions within the town are already at capacity in the morning peak period, and some significant delays are experienced. The cause of this congestion is high demand for traffic to use limited highway capacity. In many of the locations where congestion is being experienced, particularly at the entries to the town centre, environmental and spatial constraints severely limit the options for increasing road capacity.

**6.4.39** Over the next decade significant growth is planned for Shrewsbury, with additional housing, employment, retail and cultural attractions planned. This will inevitably lead to increased demand for road space, and unless some action is taken, more severe congestion at key junctions across the town can be expected.

**6.4.40** Continued traffic growth in other large Shropshire towns would also be likely to lead to the emergence of congestion issues in coming years.

16 Bus Priority in Shrewsbury. A Final Report to Arriva Midland North, Feb 2001, TAS



**Key Challenge: In the area of congestion our key challenges are:**

- to address existing congestion in Shrewsbury; and
- to prevent congestion occurring in other towns.

**In response to this challenge, our transport strategy needs to:**

- implement integrated transport plans in Shrewsbury and the market towns that minimise car use and maximise travel by alternative modes.

6.4.41 Table 6.5 summarises key policy drivers, local challenges and local stakeholder aspirations which will influence the way we go about achieving our economic strategy aims.

Table 6.5 Links between economic context, challenges, and aspirations and LTP aims and objectives

National transport priorities and quality of life issues	Key policy drivers	Key challenges	Local stakeholder aspirations	Shropshire local transport aims
<b>Tackling congestion</b>	Build a strong and diverse economy with jobs for a skilled and competitive workforce ( <i>Shropshire Community Strategy</i> ) Support development of Shrewsbury as a premier cultural and heritage 'city' and sub-regional growth centre ( <i>Regional Spatial and Tourism Strategies</i> ) Make best use of existing regional transport networks ( <i>Regional Transport Priority</i> ) Ensure that the West Midlands is a reliable hub to service regional, national and international connections ( <i>Regional Transport Priority</i> )	To meet the needs of an increasing population and minimise adverse impacts in areas of growth Address existing congestion in Shrewsbury and prevent congestion occurring in other towns	Better enforcement of on-street parking restrictions in towns, and additional parking facilities in some town centres and residential areas	<b>Reduce and prevent congestion</b>

National transport priorities and quality of life issues	Key policy drivers	Key challenges	Local stakeholder aspirations	Shropshire local transport aims
<b>Sustainable and prosperous communities</b>	Support the regeneration of the RRZ (Regional Spatial Strategy) Develop the role of market towns and improve connections between towns and hinterlands ( <i>Regional Sustainable Communities and Spatial Strategies</i> ) Improved rail links to London and international airports ( <i>Shropshire Economic Development Strategy</i> ) Improve access to BIA and NEC ( <i>Regional Transport Priority</i> ) Utilise A49 & M54/A5 as growth corridors ( <i>Shropshire Economic Development Strategy</i> ) Utilise benefits from development of Telford as a sub-regional growth centre and Telford - Wolverhampton high technology corridor ( <i>Regional Spatial Plan</i> )	Support sustainable economic growth whilst managing the increased demand for movement of people and goods	Direct and reliable rail services to West Midlands and London	<b>Support rural regeneration</b>

## 6.5 Approach and priorities

### Strategy Options

**6.5.1** One way to support economic development and regeneration and tackling congestion would be to focus on large scale enhancements to Shropshire's road network, providing straighter, wider and faster roads, higher capacity junctions and more car parking. However, not only would this be unaffordable; in the longer term it would simply attract more traffic, damage our environmental economic assets and lead to congestion building up again. This option would generally work against our environmental objectives.

**6.5.2** An alternative way to tackle congestion and support regeneration would be to take severe measures to restrict car travel and encourage use of alternative modes. This would require 'carrots', such as dramatic improvements to public transport and 'sticks' such as car parking restrictions and charges, or road user charging. Applying this option across the whole of the county would similarly require massive

investment in rural areas to improve non-car options, for which adequate funding is not presently available. Without good quality alternatives to car use modes 'stick' measures would reduce economic vitality.

### Approach

**6.5.3** It is clear that neither of the extreme approaches outlined above is affordable or desirable. It is therefore proposed to take a pragmatic approach, in line with the strategic approach set out in section 2.5. This will include a blend of measures to:

- **Support the economy and tackle congestion in ways which reduce the need to travel and enhance sustainable travel options:**
  - Increasing travel choices
  - Encouraging 'Smarter Choices'
  - Enhancing the public realm
  - Supporting sustainable tourism



- **Manage traffic and enhance the sustainability of car use:**

- Improving the effectiveness of the existing highway network
- Managing parking
- Addressing the needs of freight
- Targeted road improvements
- Reducing congestion

6.5.4 These measures are outlined in the next section.

## 6.6 Measures

### Increasing travel choices

6.6.1 We will continue to implement targeted improvements to public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure to enhance the attractiveness of these travel modes, to improve access for workers and customers, and to tackle congestion. We will also lobby other relevant organisations to improve transport services. Key measures will include:

#### London rail services

6.6.2 The lack of a direct rail service between Shrewsbury and London, and to the Birmingham International Airport makes it more difficult to attract businesses and tourists to Shropshire. We will continue to work with neighbouring local authorities and business groups to put the case for direct services to support the local economy.

#### More Park and Ride

6.6.3 Park and Ride services in Shrewsbury contribute towards the economic viability of the town, making it easier for people to access the centre for shopping, tourism and employment.

6.6.4 We will continue to support park and ride services, working in close partnership with Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council and

in future the developers of the town's main indoor shopping centre, to provide a service which is attractive, reliable and cost effective.

6.6.5 The LTP consultation identified very favourable attitudes towards park and ride services in Shrewsbury and requests were made for services to run in the evenings. We have therefore extended the hours of operation, experimentally, to make it more attractive to people who work in the centre.

6.6.6 We plan to introduce Park and Ride in Ludlow, and investigate the potential for Park and Ride services in other towns, including Bridgnorth.

#### Better bus services

6.6.7 We will seek to improve the quality of bus services in towns through further development of Quality Bus Routes and provision of bus priority measures.

#### Improved cycle routes

6.6.8 We will particularly focus on improving routes to town centres, places of work and education.

#### Better facilities for pedestrians

6.6.9 We will work to develop quality walking routes, improved road crossings and provide better security particularly on routes to places of work and schools.

#### Shrewsbury Parkway Station

6.6.10 The busiest rail station in Shropshire is at Shrewsbury. Limited car parking and congestion in the town centre limit the scope for more journeys to be made from this station. We have therefore made initial investigations into the feasibility of a new "Parkway" station for Shrewsbury near to the junction of the A5 and the A49 Shrewsbury Bypass at Preston Boats. This would also act as an additional bus and rail

based park and ride site for Shrewsbury town centre. It is anticipated that the full capital cost of providing the rail station and park and ride service would be in excess of £5M.

**6.6.11** The demand forecast study concluded that:

- The suggested site was a suitable location and would meet rail industry requirements for the construction of a station
- The demand for the station on its own would justify development, although there would be considerable abstraction from existing stations
- The demand for a park and ride site would help to justify the development.

**6.6.12** As part of our Transport Innovation Fund Study further assessment will be made of the costs and benefits of a new Shrewsbury Parkway rail station combined with a predominantly bus based park and ride site. If the cost benefit analysis is favourable, it is possible that this scheme may be submitted as a LTP Major Scheme bid towards the end of the LTP period.

**6.6.13** If the concept of a joint Parkway Station and Park and Ride site is not pursued then we will maintain a longer term ambition for a fourth bus based park and ride site, either at the Preston Boats or Emstrey site.

## Encouraging 'smarter choices'

**6.6.14** 'Smarter choices' is a term used to describe techniques for influencing peoples travel behaviour towards more sustainable options, such as walking, cycling, travelling by public transport and car sharing. Research has shown that where good alternatives exist the application of 'smarter choices' techniques can have a significant effect on reducing traffic, and therefore contributing to congestion relief. In Shropshire our focus will be on:

## Workplace travel plans

**6.6.15** Over the last 5 years a number of companies in Shropshire have developed a workplace travel plan. These companies include some of the largest employers in the County, such as the public authorities, hospitals and colleges. However, although we have been successful in encouraging a number of employers to develop travel plans, and the introduction of some travel plan measures, such as cycle parking improvement, introduction of car share schemes and parking charges at the hospital, there is little evidence of significant modal shift as a result of these plans.

**6.6.16** Currently around 65% of employees in Shropshire drive to work (2001 census data). Whilst in a rural county the need to use the car will remain for many employees, there is still scope to increase car sharing, better tailor the bus services and increase the use of Park and Ride. Approximately 46% of employees in Shropshire travel less than 5 miles to work and therefore there is also scope to encourage more walking and cycling for local journeys.

**6.6.17** The next stage of our Travel Plan strategy therefore is to try and consolidate our work with the largest organisations in Shropshire, and those with the most pressing travel issues. We employ a dedicated workplace travel plan officer, and will provide focused assistance for these organisations in further developing, reviewing and monitoring their travel plans and implementing effective measures.

**6.6.18** We will also continue to require travel plans for significant new developments, and ensure that funding is provided for the facilities and services required to make these travel plans effective.

**6.6.19** Our workplace key travel plan actions will be to:



- Focus on the largest employers and those with congested sites
- Continue to require workplace travel plans as part of all large or strategically significant developments as well as working with district council officers to improve enforcement of agreements
- Continue to provide assistance with travel surveys, advise on developing travel plans and provide useful information for travel plan co-ordinators and publicity materials for their staff
- Continue to offer travel plan grants to companies to fund measures which support their travel plans, such as cycle parking, improved lighting or pool cars. The level of grant will be increased to a maximum of £5,000 to cover up to 50% of total costs.
- Develop a web based car sharing scheme for all employers in Shrewsbury and work with companies to arrange priority parking for active members of this scheme. This scheme will also be available for those without access to a car in order to help address rural accessibility problems. If successful this approach could be rolled out to other major employment areas, such as Oswestry and Market Drayton.
- Offer business travel planning breakfasts to help companies share information and work together.
- Undertake discussions with commercial public transport operators to negotiate improvements to services serving workplaces and special deals for companies with active travel plans.
- Improve our monitoring of travel plans through the introduction of an annual web-based travel survey
- Continue to lead the way with additional measures introduced as part of the Shirehall travel plan including introduction of pool cars and investigating restrictions on car parking.

### Promoting home working

**6.6.20** Levels of working from home are already relatively high in Shropshire. As our economy diversifies we will continue to support initiatives which facilitate and encourage working from home. Research has shown that people who work from home on average travel fewer miles.

**6.6.21** Home working will be supported by accessibility initiatives such as the establishment of local broad places which can offer venues for support for home workers and small businesses. We will also promote the introduction of home and tele-working by larger organisations through workplace travel plans

### Car sharing and car clubs

**6.6.22** In a rural county like Shropshire car sharing is a key solution in seeking to reduce traffic impacts. As well as promoting car sharing through school and workplace travel plans, we will also look at developing area wide car sharing schemes so that a wider base of people can find an appropriate person with whom to share a journey.

**6.6.23** Car clubs, where a number of people share the use of a car or pool of cars is another form of car sharing which can help to reduce unnecessary car use. We will provide support and advice for companies or communities wanting to develop local car club schemes.

### Travel awareness initiatives and campaigns

**6.6.24** These activities aim to raise understanding of the impacts of individual travel decisions and awareness of travel options. The aim of these measures is to heighten awareness and underpin other more targeted initiatives in order to bring about behavioural change. Measures will include:

- Targeted mass media awareness campaigns, including posters, leaflets etc.
- Linking to the large scale "hearts and minds" campaign being planned by the West Midlands Metropolitan authorities.
- Supporting national targeted campaigns such as Bike to Work Week and Walk to School Week
- Investigate potential for using new technologies to assist in raising awareness of travel options and impacts e.g. variable message road side signs

### Personalised travel planning

**6.6.25** In recent years three small scale personalised travel planning pilot schemes have been conducted in Shropshire, using different methodologies. The first targeted the suburban village of Bayston Hill, the second smaller scale scheme provided information to residents in the Coton Hill/ Harlescott area of Shrewsbury and the third scheme was aimed at employees at Shirehall and residents of the Belle Vue area of Shrewsbury.

**6.6.26** Research in other areas has shown that personalised travel planning has the greatest impact in areas where there are good local shops and facilities and good provision for journeys by foot, cycle and public transport, as well as where traffic is recognised as a problem. The areas that were chosen for the pilot schemes generally fit into these criteria, as would other areas of Shrewsbury, and some of the larger market towns.

**6.6.27** Take-up rates varied between the Shropshire pilot schemes but were generally not as positive as have been reported in other areas. We now plan to look again at the factors which have contributed to success in other areas, and incorporate best practice into future schemes in Shropshire.

### Intelligent traffic systems (ITS)

**6.6.28** We will look at the potential for new technology to enhance sustainable modes or to provide information to help people make appropriate travel choices.

### Enhancing the public realm

**6.6.29** By improving the public realm, particularly in town centres, we can make them more attractive for shoppers and tourists, helping support the local economy. Successful work has been undertaken in the larger market towns in recent years to enhance the street environment. We will undertake further street enhancement work to support economic development:

#### Town centre enhancements

**6.6.30** In Shrewsbury our programme will include support for a major partnership project to enhance the pedestrian environment in Pride Hill (subject to private sector contributions), deliver wider footways and improved crossing points for pedestrians in Castle Street, St. Mary's Street and Wyle Cop, and work to regenerate the West End of the town.

**6.6.31** We will also provide further support for town centre enhancements in Shropshire's market towns, building on previous work through the Market Town Initiative. Early in the plan period we will deliver an high street environmental enhancement scheme in Cleobury Mortimer in partnership with Advantage West Midlands, improving pedestrian facilities and enhancing conditions for visitors and shoppers. We will identify further public realm works within other market towns, and prioritise these based upon their benefits to enhancing safety, improving air quality and relieving congestion, as well as improving the local environment and supporting local economies.



### **Pedestrian priority in town centres**

6.6.32 Where appropriate we will reallocate road space to create pedestrian priority in town centres

### **Supporting sustainable tourism**

6.6.33 We will undertake measures that support the increase in tourism in Shropshire and the economic benefits from visitors. We will implement pro-active measures to manage traffic in sensitive areas to ensure that it does not diminish the tourist asset. We will also seek to improve and promote sustainable tourism travel options for visitors to Shropshire, as well as enhancing conditions for active travel on Shropshire's highways and byways.

### **Supporting and managing visitor access**

6.6.34 We will aim to standardise the use of brown tourism signs across the county and enable improvements to the signing of visitor attractions in line with our brown sign policy.

6.6.35 We will consider the introduction of tourism Discovery Routes to help transfer the benefits of tourism to more remote areas, whilst encouraging traffic to use the most suitable routes, and promoting availability of alternative travel options.

6.6.36 We will also support the introduction of information point and view point lay-bys, with enhanced road side information for visitors in appropriate locations.

6.6.37 We will improve park and ride services and information, enhance traffic signage and parking information in towns and other sensitive locations to reduce impacts of visitor traffic.

### **Providing and promoting sustainable travel options for visitors**

6.6.38 We will work with partners to improve services and enhance promotion of alternatives to the car for visitors. A new Accessibility Planning tourism and leisure theme group (see Appendix Appendix A) will work closely with the new Destination Management Partnership to develop and implement detailed action plans.

### **Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

6.6.39 We will work closely with colleagues involved in developing the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (Shropshire Countryside Access Strategy) by March 2007 (see appendix Appendix E). During the Local Transport Plan period we will work to implement highway improvements that complement and assist the measures in this Strategy.

6.6.40 Types of improvements are likely to include better signing of rights of way from highways, targeted safety improvements where rights of way cross or run alongside roads, support for quiet lane schemes, and improvements to rights of ways where these meet our transport priorities.

### **Supporting leisure walking, cycling and horse riding**

6.6.41 We will support and encourage these popular active leisure uses of Shropshire highways that can bring significant economic benefits. Actions will include:

- completion and promotion of National Cycle Network routes
- support for sections of the Ride UK national bridleway network, where it uses public roads
- production of leisure guides to promote circular cycle rides and walks from market towns

- rights of way improvements as outlined above
- use of appropriate maintenance techniques, including the maintenance of road side verges to allow equestrian use
- addressing issues around maintenance of un-surfaced unclassified roads used by equestrians
- investigating of the extension of an effective quiet lane programme
- improving information on access to the countryside for recreation



### Improving the effectiveness of the existing highway network

**6.6.42** We will seek to improve the effectiveness of the existing highways network and reduce unnecessary delays. Crucial to this will be the implementation of our Network Management Plan.

#### Maximising value through the network management duty

**6.6.43** The Traffic Management Act 2004 is being brought into force by a series of Orders over two years. The Act imposes new duties on the County Council to manage its highways network to minimise traffic congestion, having regard to other considerations such as safety of road users. It also provides new powers to improve the co-ordination and management of

road works, particularly by utilities. It imposes new statutory duties upon the County Council. In particular, it imposes on the Council a Network Management Duty to:

- Secure the expeditious management of traffic on the County Council's road network, and
- Facilitate the expeditious movement of traffic on other road networks for which another authority is responsible (e.g. Highways Agency trunk roads or adjoining county roads).

### Network issues in Shropshire

**6.6.44** Traffic conditions in most of Shropshire are clearly not as congested as in some other parts of England. Therefore the consequences of road works, parking policies and other factors affecting traffic do not always cause the same level of difficulties as elsewhere. However, our analysis has demonstrated that traffic levels are increasing, and that congestion is already a significant problem in some areas, particularly during peak periods, special events and temporary road works and as a result of road accidents.

**6.6.45** In 2001 Shropshire County Council created two 'Co-ordination Managers' posts in the North and South Divisional Surveyors offices. This put into practical effect many of the basic principles of managing the network in relation to road works, and there are many examples of well co-ordinated schemes which have taken place throughout the County. However, the County Council still has concerns over some aspects of road operations, including the quality of reinstatement of works, by utilities. The new powers under the Network Management duty should help us to improve the quality of works and further enhance our management of highway disruption.



## Network Management Plan

6.6.46 We have appointed a dedicated Network Manager with specific responsibility for ensuring that we avoid, reduce and minimise congestion and disruption on local roads. This role encompasses day to day issues, such as co-ordinating road and utility works and

minimising their impacts, planning for large events and responding to highway blockages caused by accidents; as well as developing longer term plans to tackle congestion and to make sure networks are being used efficiently. There is a specific remit within this role to challenge issues and decisions which will have an impact on the network.

Table 6.6 Network management action plan

Criteria	Aims	Progress/ Actions
1- Setting objectives and local indicators and monitoring.	1.1: To develop the objectives and aims of Shropshire County Council's Network Management Plan which focuses on maximising the benefit to the network users and minimises congestion and disruption.	The high level aims and objectives of the Network Management Plan are those of the Local Transport Plan. More detailed local objectives are to be identified: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Further investigate local causes of congestion and disruption, as part of Transport Innovation Fund Study (see Criterion 6)</li> <li>2) Develop local network objectives for specific areas of the network.</li> </ol>
	1.2: To develop a framework of local Indicators which measure the congestion and disruption within Shropshire.	High level network Indicators are included as LTP indicators (see section 6.9). More detailed local indicators to be established as local issues identified: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Draw up local indicator definition, measurement methodology.</li> <li>2) Link to objectives and set benchmark.</li> <li>3) Measure and monitor progression</li> </ol>
2 - Identifying the needs of all users.	2.1: To develop a hierarchy of network and users which can be used for all aspects of Network Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Undertake a comprehensive countywide network review to build on existing work undertaken on network prioritisation.</li> <li>2) Link this review to prioritisation of users and draw up a "Road Hierarchy" as outlined in the Provisional Guidance for Local Authorities, October 2005, prepared by TRL.</li> <li>3) Use this hierarchy in all aspects of Network Management.</li> </ol>
3 - Working with all stakeholders including Adjacent Authorities.	3.1: To build on the existing working arrangements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Improvement to the joint planning for planned events, road works, streetworks, events, wide loads, skips, scaffolding and weather conditions.</li> <li>2) Improvement to the joint planning for unplanned events, through risk assessment workshops with operational staff to develop specific incident response planning and contingency planning.</li> <li>3) Ensure that all developed plans are linked to the Network Register.</li> <li>4) Ensure that the areas of improvement identified by the West Midlands (Shire and Unitaries) Traffic Managers Group are successfully completed.</li> <li>5) Develop further links with the District Councils in particular in the areas of contingency and event planning, Decriminalised Parking, the use of CCTV information for the development of Disruption logs and the timing of environmental service operations.</li> </ol>

Criteria	Aims	Progress/ Actions
4 - Integration with wider work ensuring a whole authority approach and setting up an appropriate management structure	4.1: To develop a corporate approach to the Network Management Duty.	<p>Championed by the Network Manager a whole authority approach has been taken to establishing the framework Network Management Plan, and this has been integral to the LTP development process. In preparing and implementing the final NMP we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Review, within corporate teams, knowledge and influence of LTP2 and Network Management Plan.</li> <li>2) Feedback from review into final Network Management plan to ensure policies are embedded in operational processes.</li> </ol>
5 - Minimising disruption on different networks, developing a hierarchy of network & policies.	5.1: To develop a hierarchy of network and users which can be used for developing and delivering policies.	The actions needed to meet this aim in our Network Management Plan are the same as Aim 2.1 Actions (1), (2) and (3).
6 - Understanding and addressing causes of congestion in line with National Policy and identifying trends.	6.1: To further investigate local causes of congestion and identify detailed actions to address root causes	<p>A broad assessment of the causes congestion and a range of measures to address these have been identified in the LTP. In developing our final NMP we will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) We will use the Shrewsbury Transport Innovation Fund study to further investigate local causes of congestion and disruption and to assess the options for addressing congestion.</li> <li>2) Use measures of congestion and disruption from eclectic sources, including lost bus routes per day in each urban area, average bus routes times from Real Time information, number of disruption incidents in Disruption log and risk assessment workshops with operational staff to develop specific Network objectives and local actions.</li> <li>3) Develop specific Network objectives for specific areas of the network. This will initially be to remove any incursions from these areas in weekdays and consider specific actions and inclusion in the hierarchy of network as special cases.</li> <li>4) Include the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement.</li> <li>5) Include an action plan to develop an Urban Traffic Control system for Shrewsbury, linked possibly to a Traffic Control Centre.</li> <li>6) Undertake improvements through bus quality partnership agreements to achieve improved reliability and reduced bus journey times, including through the introduction of bus priority measures, and management of works on strategic bus routes.</li> <li>7) Minimise congestion and disruption through co-ordination of unplanned events. (Criterion 7)</li> </ol>
7 - Coordinating and planning works and known events and developing contingency plans for unknown events.	7.1: To develop a co-ordination process for all events which incur on the Shropshire Network	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure noticing, programming and management of all events on the network in a uniform manner, moving to a GIS based programming process which will be accessible through the Web.</li> <li>2) Bring together information on the number of occurrences of events from eclectic sources such as the passenger transport operators, Disruption logs and CCTV teams.</li> <li>3) Risk assessments, through local workshops for events, planned and unplanned, to highlight the events needing formal plans and development of these.</li> <li>4) Development of uniform formal event and contingency plans.</li> </ol>



Criteria	Aims	Progress/ Actions
8 - Ensuring parity between Statutory Undertaker's and Shropshire County Council's works.	8.1: To ensure a parity of road space, time and management for all events which incur on the Shropshire Network in a manner which reduces congestion and disruption for the network users.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Develop the key attributes &amp; principles which will determine parity &amp; a uniform approach.</li> <li>2) Ensure noticing, programming, restrictions, directions and management of all events on the network in a uniform manner. This will need to commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006 and be done using in a stepped and proportional approach.</li> <li>3) Develop a Network Register of all streetworks on the network. This should include skips and scaffolding.</li> <li>4) Ensure all licensing is managed in a uniform manner.</li> <li>5) Ensure that the outcomes of supervision are the same for all works</li> <li>6) Ensure a consistent approach to the provision of advance information to network users</li> </ol>
9 - Regular reviews of the network.	9.1: To develop a regular review of the network which will feedback into strategy and policy setting and the management and co-ordination of all incursions.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Undertaking a comprehensive network review during 2006 to build on existing work undertaken on network prioritisation.</li> <li>2) Link this review to prioritisation of users and draw up a "Road Hierarchy" as outlined in the Provisional Guidance for Local Authorities, October 2005, prepared by TRL.</li> <li>3) Use this hierarchy in all aspects of development and delivery of policies.</li> <li>4) Develop a regular risk assessment process linked in part to debrief of disruption events on the network to allow updates to the new hierarchy.</li> <li>5) Review, within corporate team, knowledge and influence of LTP2 and Network Management Plan.</li> <li>7) Feedback from review into updated Network Management plan to ensure policies are embedded in operational processes.</li> </ol>
10 - Providing travel information to road users and the community.	10.1: To provide regular and contemporary information to the network users and the community	<p>Network information is currently available via the County Council website. We will also seek to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ensure that our communication includes the information provided to the public through the individual authority's web site by providing hyperlinks (as set out in action areas for the West Midlands Traffic Managers Group)</li> <li>2) Seek improvements to the way information is provided e.g. additional provision of maps; establish systems to ensure regular updating of information</li> <li>2) Ensure a consistent approach to the provision of advance information to network users.</li> <li>3) Develop a criteria for events requiring information to be made available to the community and network users, this should include duration and user.</li> <li>4) Develop a process to provide all this information in all the formats listed above</li> <li>5) Consider the provision of information through the EMPReSS system</li> </ol>

**6.6.47** A framework Network Management Plan has been developed. A summary of the specific aims and actions is provided in Table 6.6. The full Network Management Plan will be completed in 2007, following the completion of the Shrewsbury Transport Innovation Fund Study.

**6.6.48** Key aspects of our work to improve the effectiveness of the existing highway will be:

#### **Better management and co-ordination of works on the highway**

**6.6.49** Reducing levels of disruption from planned and unplanned road works will be key outcome from our action plan.

#### **Intelligent traffic systems (ITS)**

**6.6.50** Central to our work to enhance network efficiency will be the use of technology. We will consider ways in which we can make greater use of new technology to help us to gain additional efficiency from the existing road network. Examples include the use of more advanced Adaptive Traffic Signal Controls to optimise signal timings, and the use of Variable Message Signs to provide drivers with advance information about parking availability or congestion to help them plan their routes more effectively and prevent unnecessary circulation of traffic. We will also consider making increased use by satellite navigation systems and other development in intelligent traffic guidance systems. We will investigate the application of such measures, particularly in Shrewsbury, to tackle congestion hotspots.

#### **Road layout and directional signing**

**6.6.51** We will also consider other ways in which simple changes to road layout or additional waiting restrictions could improve traffic flows. Relatively simple measures such as enhanced

directional signing or improved road markings can improve traffic flows, and reduce unnecessary traffic.

**6.6.52** We will undertake comprehensive signage reviews in our major towns, as well as in rural areas where there are identified problems with vehicles, including HGVs using inappropriate routes. Improved signage systems will aim to provide clear information and ensure traffic is being routed in the most appropriate way. We will also aim to consolidate signs and reduce signage 'clutter' when under taking these reviews.

#### **Managing parking**

**6.6.53** The availability and management of parking is of major concern to Shropshire people. Towns need car parking to support economic activity, but it needs to be properly managed to avoid generating unwanted traffic. Inconsiderate and illegal car parking can cause congestion and damage to footways.

**6.6.54** We will work with district and town councils to apply appropriate and consistent car parking strategies, taking account of both on and off-street parking.





## Decriminalisation of parking enforcement (DPE)

**6.6.55** At present on-street parking restrictions in Shropshire can only be enforced by the police or by traffic wardens employed by the police. We propose to introduce a scheme of decriminalised parking enforcement in Shropshire which will transfer this responsibility to the County Council (as the local highways authority). This will enable more effective enforcement of parking restrictions and help to reduce the indiscriminate parking that can cause local congestion in many of our town centres. As a preparation for the proposed change a full review of existing parking restrictions in the County is being undertaken.

**6.6.56** The Council is currently working with District and Borough Councils to finalise a scheme proposal which will be submitted for approval to the Secretary of State in spring 2006, with a view to the new arrangements coming into place later in the year.

### Local parking strategies

**6.6.57** We will work with district and town councils to develop and implement, appropriate and consistent car parking strategies for Shropshire towns. These will take account of both on and off-street parking. We will seek a balance between providing the right amount of parking to support local economies and managing supply to ensure that prime parking is used to the best economic effect, whilst discouraging unnecessary car use.

**6.6.58** We will look at ways to increase parking supply in certain areas where this is appropriate and is supported by a coherent local strategy. Where justified we will pursue additional off-street parking in partnership with district councils. We will consider cost effective ways of enhancing safe on-street parking areas where there is a justification on safety or environmental grounds to cater for excess demand. We will also support additional disabled parking provision

where there is insufficient supply, and appropriate provision for taxi waiting facilities. Parking strategies will include reviews of motorcyclist and cyclist parking facilities.

### Residential parking

**6.6.59** We will consider implementing residents' parking schemes in areas suffering from commuter or shoppers parking. These would give residents exemption by permit from limited waiting restrictions, rather than exclusive parking rights, and will depend on the ability to provide enforcement of such schemes in a cost-effective way.

**6.6.60** We will also consider cost effective ways of enhancing residential parking provision where parking problems are shown to cause a significant safety or congestion problem.

### Parking for people with disabilities

**6.6.61** We will continue to provide well sited and adequate on-street parking for disabled people. The introduction of DPE will enable much better enforcement of disabled parking facilities.

### Parking in rural areas

**6.6.62** We support the limited introduction of concealed off-highway parking of an appropriate scale in sensitive rural locations to reduce safety issues and visual intrusion from parked vehicles.

**6.6.63** This may include improvements to accommodate parking required to support walking, cycling and horse riding using the rights of way network and minor roads.

### Addressing the needs of freight

**6.6.64** As set out in our environmental strategy, we will aim to reduce the use of inappropriate routes by HGV's. Complementing this, our economic strategy aims to enhance the designated lorry network.

## HGV network

**6.6.65** During 2006 we will complete our work with the Freight Quality Partnership to designate a Strategic Lorry Network for Shropshire. In defining this network we will try to minimise potential impacts of HGVs on local communities.

**6.6.66** We will then publish a Freight Map identifying advisory freight routes and the locations of HGV hazards and restrictions and other useful facilities.

**6.6.67** We will use the designated strategic lorry network to identify those routes where minor enhancement works are needed to make them more suitable for HGVs, as well as routes and areas where restrictions on HGV movements are needed to meet environmental and safety objectives.

## HGV route and parking enhancements

**6.6.68** Our actions will include investigations into a long term solution to the problem of the low bridge on the A488 at Hanwood which prevents access for larger goods vehicles. Large vehicles currently use a narrow country lane between Nox and Lea Cross as an alternative route. We will seek an affordable long term solution to this problem which will reduce the current environmental and safety problems whilst providing access to support existing industry at Minsterley.

**6.6.69** We will also seek to encourage availability of suitable parking and overnight stop facilities for HGV drivers in Shropshire, linking in with the regional freight strategy.

## Bridge strengthening

**6.6.70** We aim to complete our extensive "Bridgeguard" programme in the middle of the LTP period. This programme of bridge strengthening will allow 40 tonne vehicles to have essential access to businesses in Shropshire,

including farms. A comprehensive assessment programme has determined that a further 28 bridges will need strengthening whilst a small number of bridges on minor routes may require weight limits.

## Rail freight facilities

**6.6.71** We would like to see more freight being carried by rail, and will support the provision of suitable facilities to meet commercial demand. Although it has reluctantly been concluded that it would not be cost-effective to develop a rail freight facility for Shrewsbury, the Council supports the development of an inter-modal rail freight terminal at Donnington, Telford as this would also serve business in Shropshire. Should demand for further rail freight sites arise in Shropshire we will support the provision of suitable facilities.

## Targeted road improvements

**6.6.72** We recognise that there is insufficient allocated funding available through the LTP for significant highway improvements. Our approach is to seek to undertake measures to manage demand and make the most of existing capacity before seeking major improvements. Within our known LTP funding we will:

### Seek opportunities to modernise roads through highway maintenance

**6.6.73** When undertaking major structural maintenance of substandard roads we will ensure that opportunities are taken to enhance the structure of the road to meet modern requirements.

### Improvements using non LTP funding

**6.6.74** The following measures and schemes will be pursued, however the outcomes will depend upon funding from outside of known LTP funding sources:



## Developer improvements

**6.6.75** Where highway capacity or other transport improvements are required to provide access to new development we will expect these to be funded by the developer. We will work with developers to identify the improvements needed.

## Trunk road improvements

**6.6.76** The County Council would welcome improvements to the trunk road network in Shropshire, as set out in section 2.12.

## Local network enhancements

Any significant enhancements to Shropshire's road network would cost over £5 million and will require 'major scheme' funding. They would therefore need to be prioritised through West Midlands regional

prioritisation

process. Due to our focus on maximising value from our existing network we have only put forward a small number of potential network improvement schemes for consideration for major scheme funding during the LTP period:

### **Shrewsbury North West Relief Road (NWRR)**

**6.6.77** This potential major scheme is discussed under the Shrewsbury actions at the end of this section.

### **Sandford Bypass (A41)**

**6.6.78** A short bypass would remove a dangerous sharp bend from this main road. There are frequent accidents at this site which regularly cause significant structural damage to a bridge, and long term traffic delays when bridge reconstruction work takes place. Indications are that due to accident savings such a scheme would demonstrate a high level of value for money. We have put forward this scheme for consideration for regional prioritisation. It was

not successful in being prioritised in 2005. Further investigation of this scheme will be undertaken and it will be put forward again for the next round of regional prioritisation in Autumn 2006.

### **Shawbury Bypass (A53)**

**6.6.79** Whilst still supporting the construction of a bypass for Shawbury, we do not at present expect to put this scheme forward for consideration for major scheme funding during the LTP period.

### **Much Wenlock**

**6.6.80** In response to local community concerns we will, during the LTP period, undertake an investigation into ways to address traffic concerns in Much Wenlock. This will include an assessment of whether there has been a significant change in traffic or other conditions which would alter the outcome of the cost benefit analysis previously undertaken regarding the proposal for a relief road or bypass for the town.

## 6.7 Shrewsbury study

**6.7.1** Congestion is more of a problem in Shrewsbury than in other parts of Shropshire. We will seek through our LTP to continue to implement the range of relatively low cost measures to tackle this issue, as outlined in the previous section. However, the impact of these measures is only likely to be able to stabilise traffic around current levels. In order to seek more significant reductions in traffic and congestion other more dramatic measures are likely to be required.

**6.7.2** Hence, during 2006 we will undertake an in-depth 'Transport Innovation Fund' study to look at the options for a significant reduction in traffic and congestion in Shrewsbury, that will support its economic development. The study will include assessment of options for road

charging as well as proposals for construction of a North West Relief Road. Consultation will be an important aspect of this study.

## Congestion in Shrewsbury

**6.7.3** Whilst integrated transport measures undertaken in Shrewsbury in recent years have helped reduce traffic in key shopping streets within the centre, there are increasing problems of congestion and delay on roads approaching the “river loop” and on Smithfield Road which carries both local and through traffic. This causes problems of accidents, noise and poor air quality, as well as the economic cost of delay.

**6.7.4** Building on previous work looking at options to relieve Shrewsbury town centre from traffic, a major exhibition and public consultation was undertaken in June 2005 in connection with the NWRR. A total of 1165 questionnaires were returned. A clear majority (77%) agreed that there are traffic problems in Shrewsbury which need to be addressed. A majority (58%) considered that the existing situation of minor improvements and ongoing maintenance was not an adequate solution.

### Options for tackling congestion

**6.7.5** People’s views on how the problems should be addressed were quite finely balanced, and are set out in more detail below. A small majority of those who responded supported in principle the construction of a NWRR, however nearly as many people supported the pursuit of alternative methods to solve traffic problems

Table 6.7 Support for options to tackle Shrewsbury traffic congestion

Question	Agree or strongly agree	Disagree or strongly disagree
A NWRR should be promoted to address problems caused by traffic in the town centre	53%	41%
Methods other than building a new road should be promoted to solve traffic problems	48%	38%

**6.7.6** When asked about detailed options 37% of respondents first choice was for no new road to be built.

**6.7.7** People were also asked: “What should be included in a future strategy if methods other than building a new road are to be pursued?”. The results are set out below:

Table 6.8 Support for alternatives to a NWRR

Alternative methods	Yes	No
Walking – new routes and improvements to existing facilities	60%	20%
Cycling – new and improved cycle routes and secure parking	66%	15%
Buses – increase frequency and operating hours. Dedicate more road space to bus lanes	52%	29%
Park & Ride – increased frequency and extended operating hours, increased capacity at existing sites. New sites.	61%	25%
Road charging – introduce peak time congestion charged for using town centre roads and invest the income in improved passenger transport services.	32%	52%

**6.7.8** Walking, cycling and improvements to buses and Park & Ride were the most popular elements for inclusion in an alternative strategy. Road charging (as an alternative to a new road) was supported by 32% of respondents (38% of those who answered the question), and rejected by 52%. This consultation was undertaken prior to the approval by government of the Transport Innovation Fund (pump priming) bid, which for



the first time, raised the possibility of combining all of the above elements into an integrated strategy.

### Shrewsbury North West Relief Road

6.7.9 Investigations into a possible Shrewsbury North West Relief Road date back to the mid 1980s. Previous work has been reviewed and updated since 2003. This has included:

- Initial public consultation: 2003
- Technical review of route options
- Traffic assessment of route options
- Estimate of cost of route options
- Economic assessment of route options
- Environmental assessment of route option
- Assessment of impacts of non-road options
- Public consultation: May 2005

6.7.10 In summary, the work to date has identified that:

- The cost of a road would be between £17.9m - £49.6m (2004 prices)
- The economic benefits of a new road would outweigh the construction cost. Even assuming low levels of future traffic growth, the benefit - cost ratios for all route options would be high (7.86 to 4.71).
- In general terms all the route options have similar effects on traffic within the town centre. The main benefit would occur on Smithfield Road in the town centre, where peak hour traffic levels would reduce by around 40%
- Of all the non-road options considered, only road user charging was considered capable of resulting in a level of traffic reduction comparable with the provision of a NWRR.
- All road options would be likely to have a beneficial environmental impact on noise, local air quality, climate change and road transport; routes other than red route 2 and

blue route (see Figure 6.3) would have a positive impact on townscape.

- All road options would be likely to have detrimental environmental impacts on landscape and visual impacts, heritage, biodiversity, water and accessibility.

6.7.11 Further details are provided in Table 6.9. A map of the proposed routes is shown in 6.7.11.

Figure 6.3 North West Relief Road route options

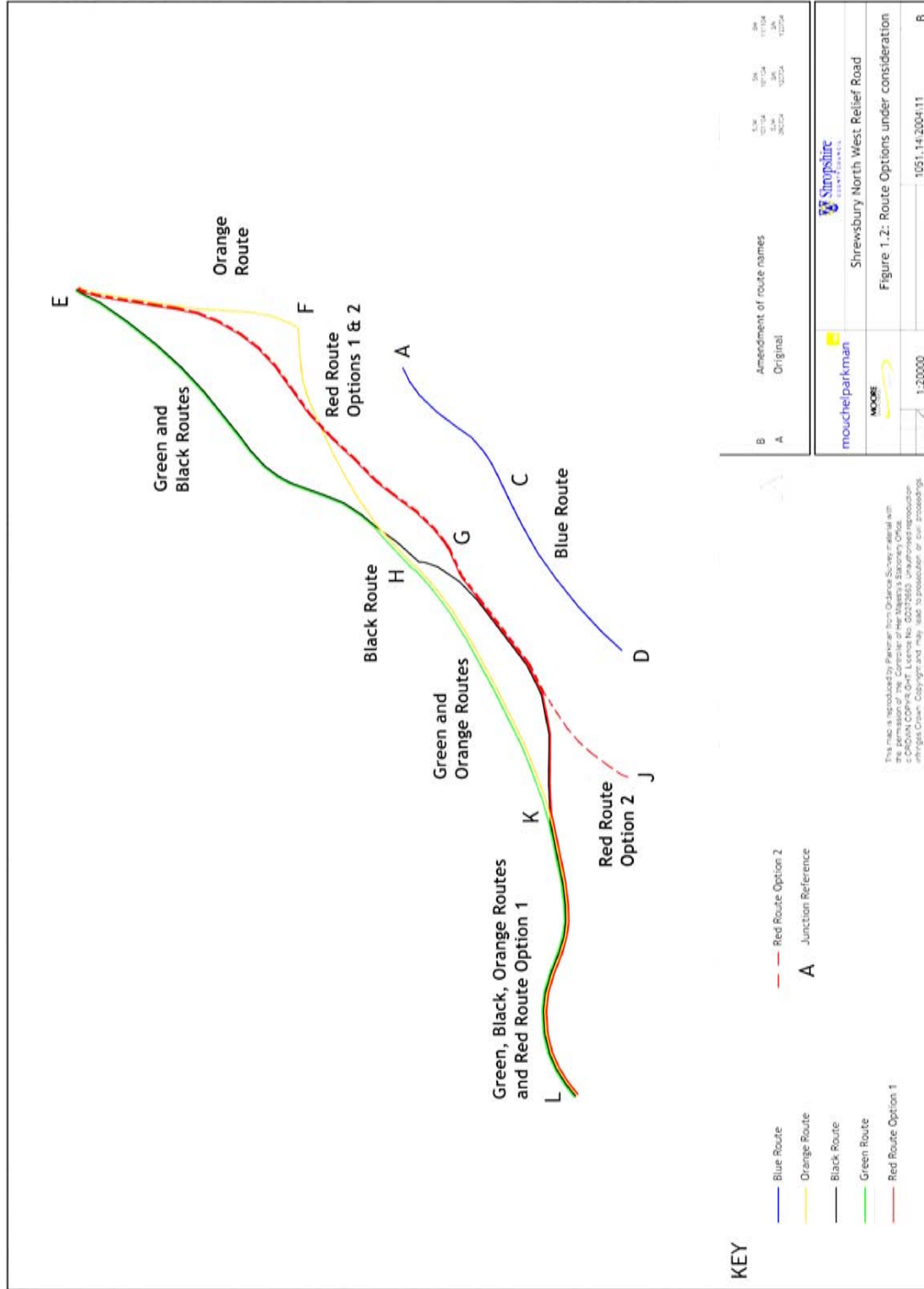




Table 6.9 Summary of NWRR route option impacts and support

Route (length)	Description	Cost (2004 base)	Benefit - cost ratio (low growth)	% respondents 1st or 2 <sup>nd</sup> choice	% rejecting option	Key Environmental impacts
Green route (6.3km)	Connecting the A5 Shrewsbury Bypass at the Churncote Roundabout to the Holyhead Road (north of the Shelton Water Tower). Crosses the River Severn at Shelton Rough. Follows an alignment to the north of Cross Hill between the Berwick Road and Battlefield Link Road.	£48.5m	4.82	43%	22%	Potential impacts on water source and floodplain Impact on biodiversity including Hencott Pool SSSI Disturb archaeological crop mark feature Impact on landscape character Positive impacts on noise, air quality, townscape and town heritage sites due to reduced traffic in town
No new Road to be built				37%	20%	
Red route Option 1 (6.5km)	Connecting the A5 Shrewsbury Bypass at the Churncote Roundabout to the Holyhead Road (north of the Shelton Water Tower) and then to the Battlefield Link Rd. Crosses the River Severn at Shelton Rough and follows Laundry Terrace between the river and Berwick Road. Follows an alignment to the south of Cross Hill between the Berwick Road and Battlefield Link Road.	£42.9m	5.13	32%	25%	Potential impacts on water source and floodplain Impact on biodiversity Disturb archaeological crop mark feature Impact on landscape character Positive impacts on noise, air quality, townscape and town heritage sites due to reduced traffic in town
Black route (6.4km)	Connecting the A5 Shrewsbury Bypass at the Churncote Roundabout to the Holyhead Road (north of the Shelton Water Tower). Crosses the River Severn at Shelton Rough and then runs parallel to Laundry Terrace between the river and Berwick Road and links with Battlefield Link Road.	£49.6m	4.71	20%	25%	Potential impacts on water source and floodplain Impact on biodiversity including Hencott Pool SSSI Disturb archaeological crop mark feature Impact on landscape character Positive impacts on noise, air quality, townscape and town heritage sites due to reduced traffic in town

Route (length)	Description	Cost (2004 base)	Benefit - cost ratio (low growth)	% respondents 1st or 2 <sup>nd</sup> choice	% rejecting option	Key Environmental impacts
Red route Option 2 (4.7km)	Connecting Shelton Road at its junction with The Mount to Ellesmere Road at its junction with the Battlefield Link Road. Crosses the River Severn at Shelton Rough.	£39.5m	5.36	10%	37%	Potential impacts on floodplain Lowest impact on biodiversity Disturb archaeological crop mark feature Impact on landscape character Positive impacts on noise, air quality and town heritage sites due to reduced traffic in town
Orange route (6.6km)	Similar to red route Option 1 but with an additional connection to Ellesmere Road north of Hubert Way.	£42.8m	5.45	10%	32%	Potential impacts on water source and floodplain Most significant impact on biodiversity Disturb archaeological crop mark feature Most significant impacts on landscape character. Positive impacts on noise, air quality, townscape and town heritage sites due to reduced traffic in town
Blue route (2.2km)	Connecting The Mount (near Richmond Drive) to Ellesmere Road (south of Hubert Way). Crosses the River Severn west of the West Mid Show ground.	£17.9m	7.86	7%	41%	Lowest impact on water Lowest impact on biodiversity Most significant impacts on landscape character. Least positive impacts on noise and air quality.



**6.7.12** As a result of this route option work it has been concluded that the blue, orange and red (option 2) are least supported and technically least acceptable and it is proposed that a preferred route be developed based on the remaining routes: green, black and red (option 1).

**6.7.13** However, the technical study also indicated that a road user charge (in conjunction with better public transport) could, in theory, achieve equivalent levels of traffic reduction to a road scheme.

**6.7.14** It is therefore proposed that further investigation of a preferred route for a NWRR is taken forward, alongside the detailed investigation of a wider package of measures that includes some form of road user charging. The Transport Innovation Fund Study will set out to do this.

During 2006/07 further NWRR investigation work will be undertaken to:

- Undertake further design work to develop a single preferred route between the A5/A458 junction and the Battlefield link road, based upon the green, black and red route (option 1) options
- Undertake a Stage 3 environmental assessment, with the particular aim of mitigating the environmental concerns identified in the recent review and consultation
- Include the NWRR, together with alternative and/or complementary transport measures, as part of the Transport Innovation Fund study.

## Transport Innovation Fund study

**6.7.15** In 2005 Shropshire County Council was successful in bidding for £480,000 of Transport Innovation Fund Pump Priming funding from the DfT. This funding is to be used to investigate solutions to the problems of congestion in Shrewsbury. The study must include a detailed consideration of how road pricing could contribute to achieving this goal.

**6.7.16** The study will set out to define and assess the impacts of different combinations of the following:

- Road pricing
- Significant improvements to alternative travel modes e.g. public transport, park and ride, parkway station, cycling and walking
- North West Relief Road

### Study elements

The Transport Innovation Fund Study will include the following stages of work :

- Inception and project management
- Media management and public consultation
- Development of multi-modal transport model
- Demand Management feasibility study
- Multi-modal transport infrastructure and service improvements studies
- Technology and procurement options for the preferred scheme
- Model testing of combined scheme packages and business case

**6.7.17** The study will be completed by mid 2007.

## Road pricing

**6.7.18** There are three broad options for road pricing (which could be applied in combination with one another) which will be investigated by the study. These are:

- Cordon pricing – charging vehicles to cross a cordon around an urban area.
- Area pricing – charging vehicles moving within a defined area.
- Route pricing – charging vehicles for moving along a route.

**6.7.19** The potential variables for charging are time, place and distance. A scheme that is able to charge vehicles for all three of these variables captures the amount of driving taking place in addition to where and when. This means that pricing would best reflect the actual social and economic costs of making a car journey in congested conditions.

## Transport Innovation Fund bid

**6.7.20** The DfT's Transport Innovation Fund will become available from 2008/09. The Fund is forecast to grow from £290 million in 2008/09 to over £2 billion by 2014/15. This represents a significant potential source of funding for innovative transport schemes put forward by local authorities prepared to take bold steps to tackle congestion.

**6.7.21** The Transport Innovation Fund clearly offers an exciting opportunity to obtain the levels of funding required to radically transform and improve Shrewsbury's transport infrastructure. Shropshire has an excellent track record of delivering on integrated transport measures, whilst the size and unique geography of Shrewsbury mean that the effects of any measures would be clearly seen and measured.

**6.7.22** It seems clear to us that the Innovation Fund represents by far the best opportunity we have ever had to make substantial improvements

to transport, access and the environment of the County town, without drawing resources away from dealing with rural accessibility problems. It could help to bridge the gap between the aspirations of the local business community for a relatively traffic-free centre, but with excellent access by all forms of transport, limits on through traffic and innovative public transport measures, and the Council's objective which is "to improve the accessibility of Shrewsbury in ways which do not increase dependence on the private car".

**6.7.23** If the outcome of our Transport Innovation Fund pump priming study is that a scheme involving some form of road pricing, combined with other significant improvements (major improvements to public transport, cycling and walking; and/or road improvements such as the NWRR) is both viable and desirable; then we would work towards submission of a formal Transport Innovation Fund bid in June 2007, for funding from 2008/9 onwards.

**6.7.24** If however, following the TIF investigation it was decided that road pricing was not appropriate for Shrewsbury, we would seek to continue to make improvements to tackle traffic and congestion in the town through our LTP funding. We would also have the option of seeking major scheme funding for improvements over £5 million from the limited West Midland Regional Transport fund.

## 6.8 Partnership working

**6.8.1** We will work with a range of partners in delivering our LTP economic strategy. Some key elements of our partnership work will include:

### Network management duty

**6.8.2** There will continue to be regular liaison with a range of partners including the police, bus operators, utilities and other local authorities in developing and implementing our Network



Management Plan. This is evidenced by the communication forum framework, set out in

Table 6.10.

Table 6.10 Network management plan communication framework

Partners and partnerships	Liaison
Joint Member Boards, made up of the Members and senior officers from the County Council and District Councils.	Quarterly , involving the Portfolio holders and senior officers.
Liaison meetings with the HA and their agents, and commitment to the Partnering Arrangement through Traffic information Service.	Quarterly , involving senior officers, and through updated Partnering Arrangement meeting every 6 months.
Liaison meetings with West Mercia Police and other emergency services.	Link to appointed person from each emergency service.
Safety Camera Partnership board meetings.	Quarterly, involving the Portfolio holders and senior officers.
Liaison meetings with passenger transport operators.	Quarterly involving senior officers and the managers from the passenger transport operators.
Midland Service Improvement Group.	Involvement in all working groups and Head of Network Management is on the steering committee.
West Midlands Traffic Operators Regional Group.	Traffic Manager attends every 6 months.
West Midlands (Shire and Unitaries) Traffic Managers Group.	Traffic Manager attends every 6 months and is in continual communication with adjacent authorities Traffic Managers.
Co-ordination and HAUC meetings with statutory undertakers.	Internal 3 area co-ordination meetings every month, taking information from all above forums, and involving all Network Management Teams. Meeting and with utilities every 3 months and monthly communication through Performance Report.

## Parking

6.8.3 We will work in partnership with the five district councils to manage Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE). This will include:

- The establishment of a Joint Parking Board including representatives of the County and District Councils to be responsible for the overall management of the scheme.
- Establishment of local Partnership Agreements with the District Councils for the employment and day to day management of parking attendants.
- Establishment of a single notice processing office for the whole County.

6.8.4 We will also work closely through joint member and officer groups with both district and town councils to develop and implement detailed parking strategies for individual towns in Shropshire

## Public transport Improvements

6.8.5 We will continue to work in partnership through the Shropshire Strategic rail working groups to lobby for improved rail services (see section 5.6)

6.8.6 We will work closely with bus operators through Bus Quality Partnership Agreements to improve the quality of commercial bus services in the County

6.8.7 We will continue to work in close partnership with Shrewsbury and Atcham Borough Council to fund and improve the Shrewsbury Park and Ride service. We will seek similar partnership with other districts and town council in the implementation further park and ride services in the county

## Public realm enhancements

6.8.8 We will continue to work with a range of local partners in developing public realm enhancement schemes, including local district, town or parish councils, local business representatives, conservation and tourism professionals as well as local community and user representatives.

## Transport Innovation Fund Study

6.8.9 The Transport Innovation Fund Study will be influenced and subject to scrutiny through a "wider reference group", consisting of representatives of a full range of partner and stakeholder interests.

## 6.9 Performance management

6.9.1 In order to monitor our performance in supporting the economy in Shropshire we have identified a series of performance indicators relating to our economic objectives and outcomes. These are outlined in Table 6.11 (Key indicators, for which we will set LTP targets, are highlighted in bold).

Table 6.11 Economic performance indicators

Objective	Outcome	Indicator
Reduce and Prevent congestion	People will make fewer car journeys in main urban areas, preventing further traffic growth and easing congestion	<b>Change in peak hour traffic in Shrewsbury town centre</b> Temporary road closures (BVPI 100) People travelling to Shrewsbury town centre and modal split Perceptions of congestion
	Bus passengers will enjoy more reliable services	<b>Bus punctuality (LTP5)</b> Number of bus priority measures
Support Rural Regeneration	People and businesses will be able to access high quality market towns more easily helping to support local economies	<b>Access to market towns from rural areas</b> <b>Access to Employment</b> Business Support - The number of businesses supported through improved accessibility of the workforce Number and designation of parking spaces Number of town centre enhancement/ regeneration schemes
	People will be able to use roads maintained in structurally sound condition	<b>Principal Road condition (BVPI96)</b> <b>Non-Principal Classified Road condition (BVPI97a)</b> <b>Unclassified Road condition (BVPI97b)</b> Percentage of resident' satisfied with road conditions in Shropshire