Suffolk County Council

Suffolk Local Transport Plan 2011-2031

Part 2 - Implementation Plan

Contents

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

1 Introduction

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

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

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

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

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

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

2 Strategic transport improvements

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

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

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

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

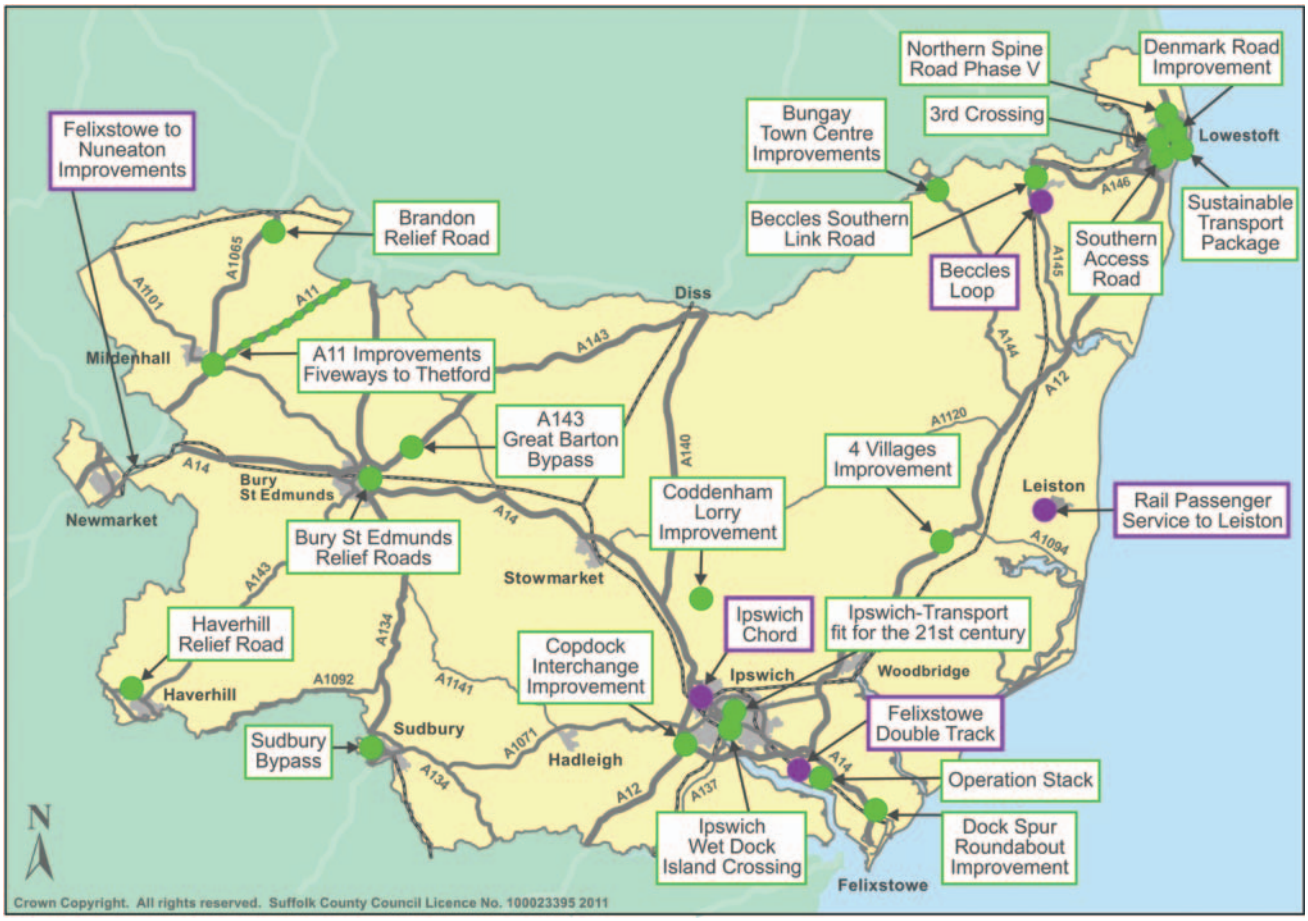

Figure 1- Strategic transport improvements

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

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

Table 1- List of strategic transport improvements

3 Maintenance

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

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

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

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

The main areas of investment are:

Principal roads

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

Non principal roads (classified and unclassified)

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

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

Bridges

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

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

Street lighting and traffic signals

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

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

Pavements

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

Public Rights of Way

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

Flooding

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

4 Plans for key urban areas

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

Figure 2- Town strategy locations

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

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

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

The three main principles are:

1. Reducing the need for travel

2. Making efficient use of transport networks

3. Improving infrastructure

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

Ipswich

Introduction

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

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

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

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

Transport strategy for Ipswich

Reducing demand for travel

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

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

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

Efficient use of transport networks

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

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

Improving infrastructure

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

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

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

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

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

Ipswich – Transport fit for the 21st Century

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

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

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

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

Figure 3- Key improvements to the Ipswich transport network

Lowestoft

Introduction

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

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

Transport strategy for Lowestoft

Reducing demand for car travel

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

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

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

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

Efficient use of transport networks

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

Improving infrastructure

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

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

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

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

Figure 4- Key improvements to the Lowestoft transport network

Bury St Edmunds

Introduction

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

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

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

Transport strategy for Bury St Edmunds

Reducing demand for travel

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

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

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

Efficient use of transport networks

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

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

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

Improving infrastructure

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

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

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

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

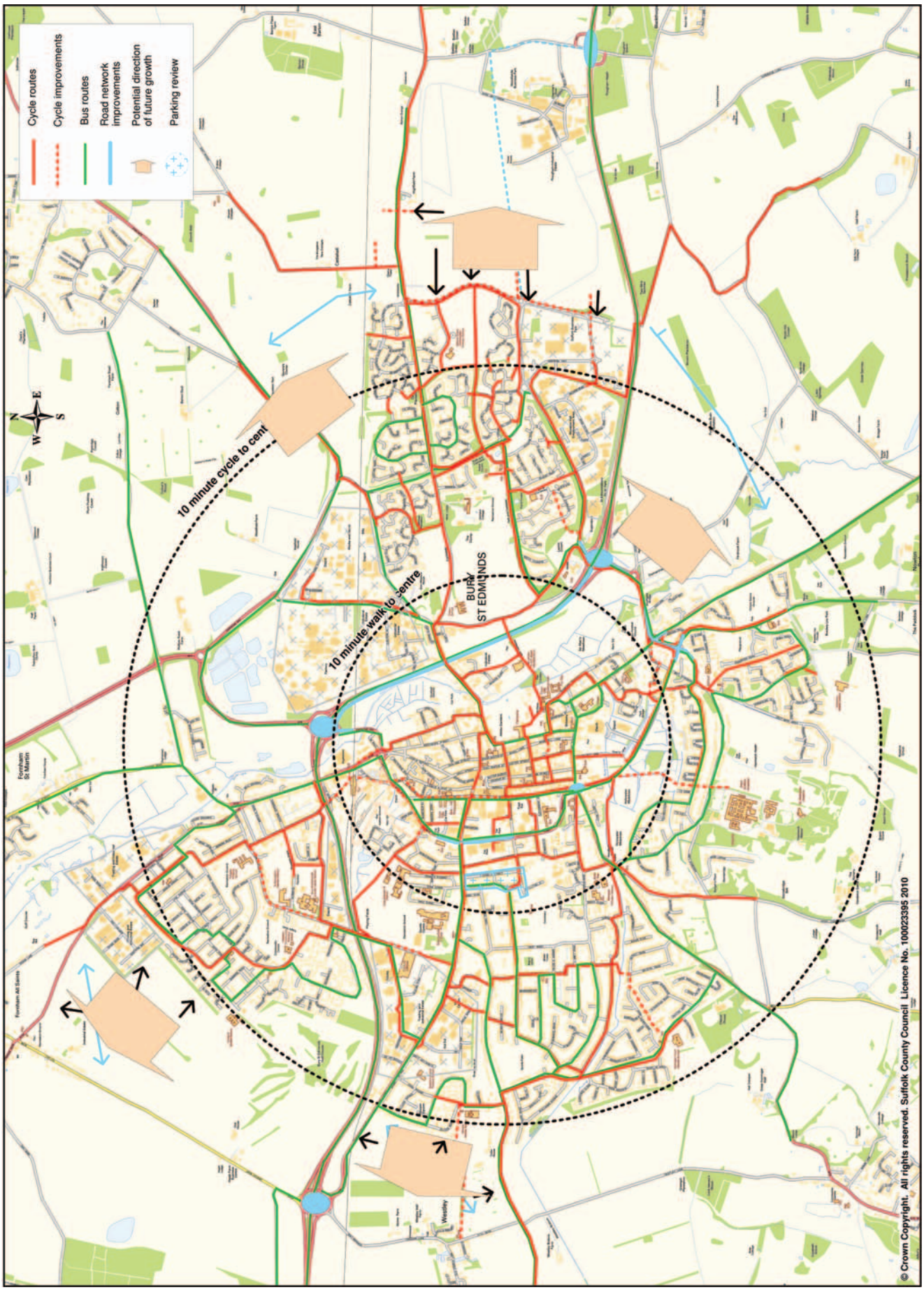

Figure 5- Key improvements to the Bury St Edmunds transport network

Felixstowe

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 6- Key improvements to the Felixstowe transport network

Haverhill

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 7- Key improvements to the Haverhill transport network

Stowmarket

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 8- Key improvements to the Stowmarket transport network

Newmarket

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 9- Key improvements to the Newmarket transport network

Sudbury

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

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 10- Key improvements to the Sudbury transport network

Beccles

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

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

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

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

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

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

Figure 11- Key improvements to the Beccles transport network

Brandon

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

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

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

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

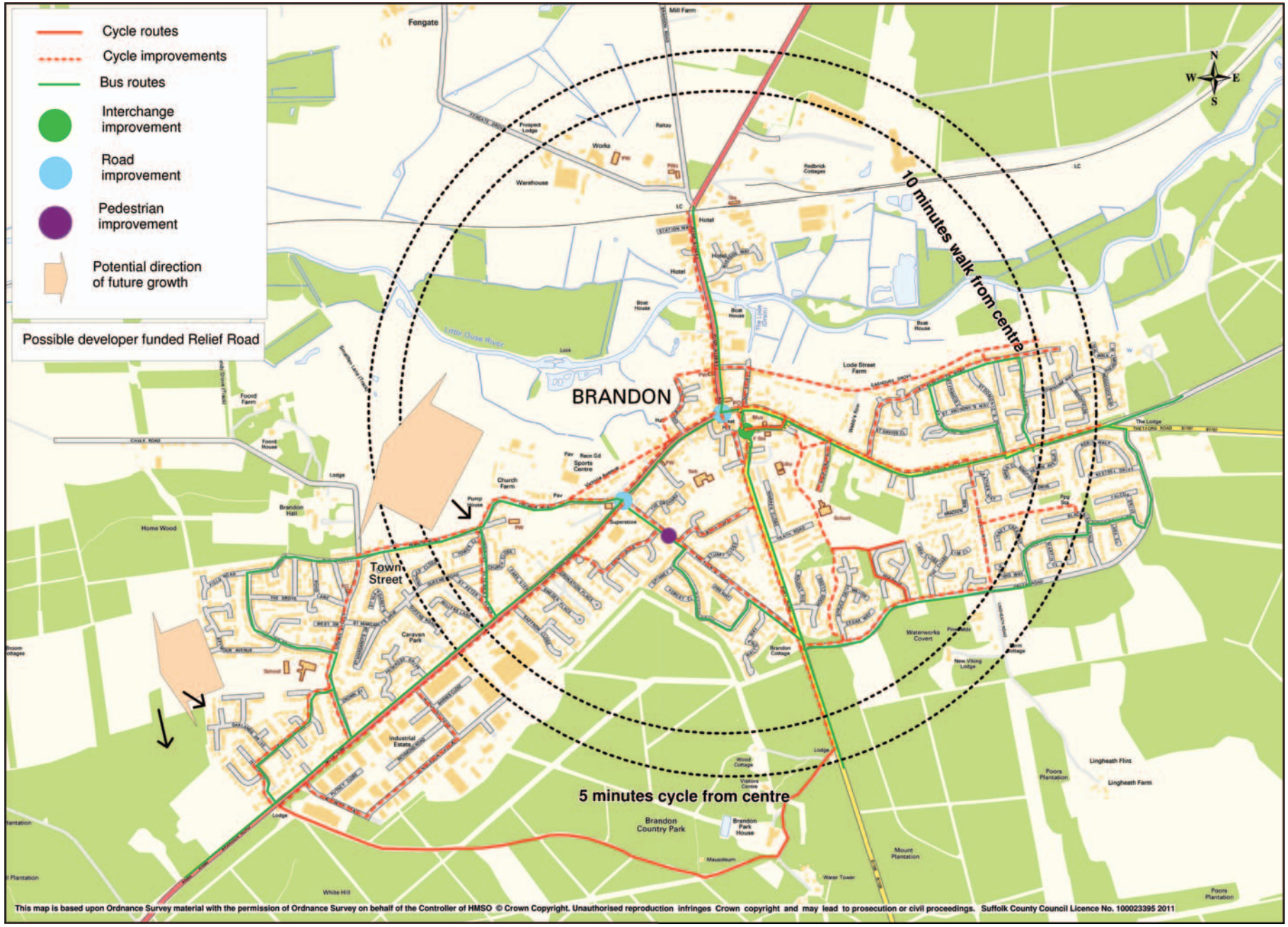

Figure 12- Key improvements to the Brandon transport network

Bungay

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

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

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

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

Figure 13- Key improvements to the Bungay transport network

5 Bus network

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

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

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

Demand responsive transport

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

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

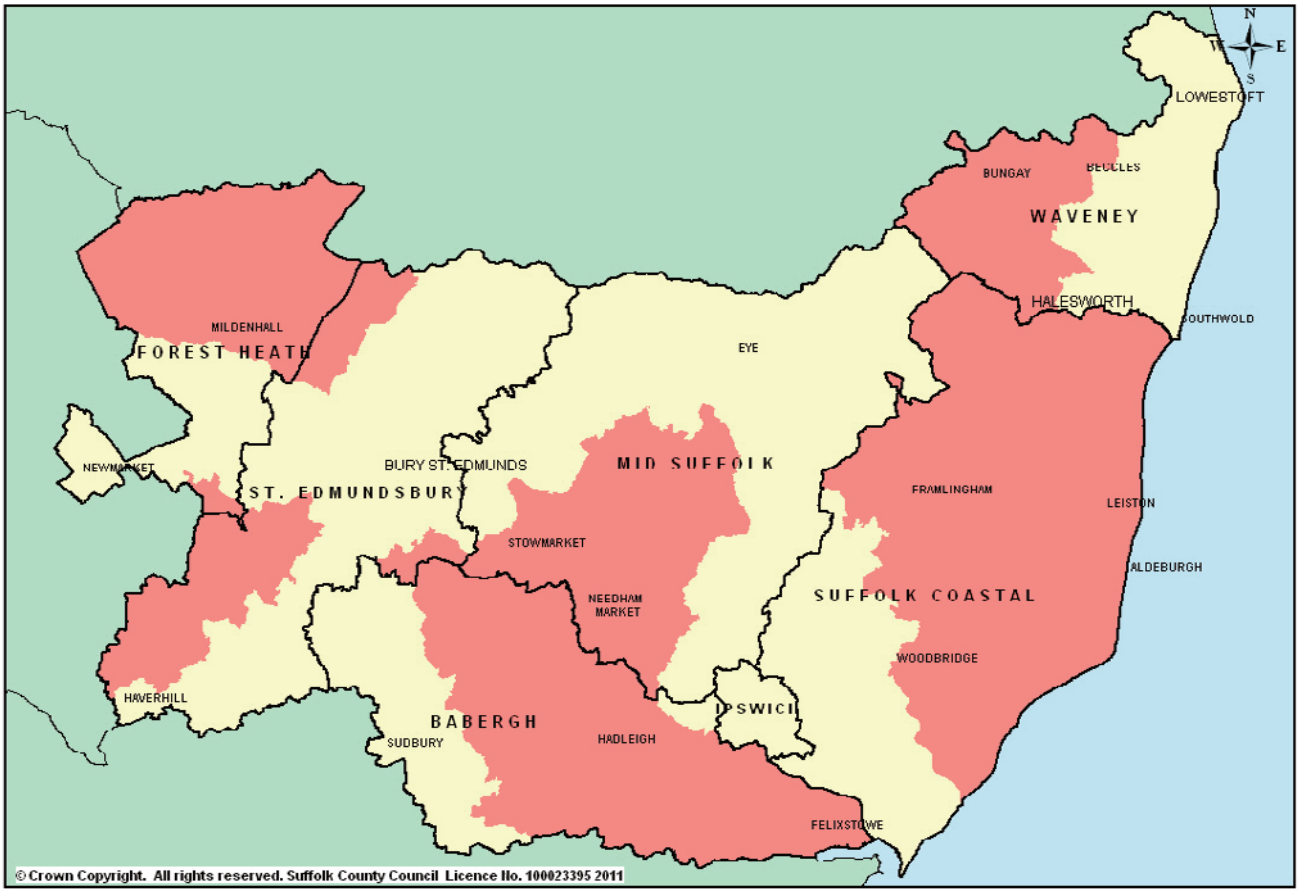

Figure 14- Demand responsive rollout to April 2011 (shown in red)

Passenger transport ticketing including smart media ticketing

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

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

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

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

Rail network

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

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

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

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

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

7 Local transport plan funding

Core funding

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

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

The distribution of integrated transport will include:

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

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

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

Additional scheme funding

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

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

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

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

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

8 The Council's investment programme

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

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

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

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

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

Highways maintenance capital programme 2011 / 2012

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