

Leicestershire's future
The plan for change



Market Harborough Transport Strategy 2017 - 2031

“A vibrant and prosperous place for people to live, work and visit.”



More detail on the Market Harborough Transport Strategy can be found online at: www.leicestershire.gov.uk/harborough-plans

“Delivering an efficient transport network and developing a well-planned infrastructure.”

Contents

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
The purpose of the strategy	4
Transport study	5
The challenges Market Harborough faces	6
What does the strategy aim to deliver	8
The proposals	9
Our proposals in detail	10
Our proposals in detail - continued	11
Next steps	14

Foreword

Market Harborough is a traditional market town, rich in heritage, character and history and is one of the largest urban settlements in Leicestershire making its economic success important not only locally but also for the county and wider region.

As part of the proposals for growth in the town, it has been important to understand the relationship between that growth and the transport system that will support it. Leicestershire County Council, in partnership with Harborough District Council, commissioned a project to develop a transport strategy for the town.

The strategy is aligned to Harborough District Council's proposals for the town's future growth and is focused on easing existing problems and helping the town cope with increased traffic as it continues to grow.

The strategy presents a range of proposals to improve access in and around the town and support people travelling as part of their daily lives.

The proposals aim to do this through influencing travel behaviour, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure whilst also providing for car and freight traffic, while reducing their negative impacts such as congestion.

Moving forward the strategy will ensure that we have a strong base of evidence, bringing together existing known and future anticipated transport issues, providing the enhanced context and justification required to make the case for government and other sources of funding.

Cllr Blake Pain

Cabinet Member for Highways, Strategic Transport & Waste

Introduction

This document presents the transport strategy for Market Harborough for the period 2017 to 2036. The strategy has been developed by Leicestershire County Council and Harborough District Council and demonstrates a collective vision for improved accessibility and a sustainable transport network to support the growth of Market Harborough.

This document provides information on what has informed the strategy, what it aims to achieve, how it is defined, what the proposals are and how the strategy will be delivered.

The purpose of the strategy

As Market Harborough continues to grow to meet future local housing and employment needs, pressures on the local road network increase. Harborough District Council's current local plan makes it clear that transport measures need to be considered to deal with the impact of development in the town.

Currently government funding for transport measures remains heavily focused on the delivery of housing and economic growth, with funding allocated through competitive bidding processes which must demonstrate how investments will support growth.

This transport strategy therefore sets out a package of transport recommendations that subject to further development and refinement will:

- assist with the implementation of Harborough District Council's new local plan, and support the planned future growth of the town.
- ensure that the county council continues to deliver an efficient transport network and develop well planned measures to support economic and population growth ambitions in the town.
- provide an evidence base together with the supporting study work to enable the county council to be in a strong position to secure government and private funding for the development and delivery of identified transport measures.

Transport study

Market Harborough has not had a significant transport study completed since the 1990s, when the A6 bypass was completed and the bypass demonstration project was implemented in the town centre.

In 2015 Leicestershire County Council and Harborough District Council approved study work to understand in more detail current and future transport issues, identify possible transport solutions and develop a transport strategy for the town.

The area covered by this study work is shown in the plan below. The initial part of the study was completed in July 2016 and looked at vehicle movements to help understand how the transport network is being used. It also looked at where the greatest levels of congestion occurred on the network and where these will occur in the future taking into account known future growth.

Based on the evidence and data collected from this work, a series of ideas and proposals were put forward as part of a draft transport strategy for consultation. Consultation is an important step in the development of the strategy and will help to put us in a stronger position to secure government and other sources of funding for the development and delivery of measures identified as part of the strategy.

Between January and March 2017 a consultation and engagement exercise was carried out including a public exhibition at the Market Harborough Indoor Market attended by more than 600 people.

Feedback was received on the issues and the solutions and this helped refine the measures and schemes which now form part of a final transport strategy.



The challenges and opportunities Market Harborough faces

A wide range of data, evidence and consultation feedback has been collated and reviewed as part of the study work. A number of existing and potential future transport challenges and opportunities have been identified through the study work and consultation:

Market Harborough faces significant growth pressures with around 2,700 new dwellings proposed before 2031 (including a total of 1,500 dwellings in a Strategic Development Area (SDA) to the west of the town), in addition to 918 dwellings built over the last six years.

Car parking on and off street needs to account for all users including residents, shoppers, visitors, disabled motorists, local businesses and workers.

In places the town centre environment is tired and would benefit from enhancement to encourage more people to walk and cycle.

Existing and historical infrastructure, such as the three rail bridges present barriers to movement across the town.

Infrastructure for walking and cycling is generally good. However, there are some gaps, which would benefit from improving.

Traffic signing can be inconsistent, cluttered and confusing in places and requires review.

HGVs using inappropriate roads in the town causes concern for residents.

Similar to other parts of the county, Market Harborough generates significant movements of pupils and their parents, putting pressure on the network at school times.

There are a limited number of routes within the town centre which could serve as alternative routes to the existing classified A and B routes.

Public Transport infrastructure needs upgrading to encourage greater bus use and improve the commercial viability of bus services.

The town has relatively low unemployment levels, and residents are generally healthier and live longer when compared to the rest of the county.

Two of the three 'A' and 'B' classified routes in the town (the B6047 and the A4304) converge on The Square and therefore, much of the traffic in the town is reliant upon using the heart of the town centre.

'Through' traffic (with no origin or destination in the town) accounts for around 10% of trips across the town.

Although traffic speeds during peak periods are better than in any other market town in the county, peak period queues and delays do occur on the A4304 and A508 corridors, on the approaches to and through the town centre.

Traffic volume in the town is forecast to increase by 24% between 2011 and 2031. Much of this is the result of general traffic increases from growth in surrounding areas.

There is local concern with regards to the proliferation speed humps.

Market Harborough is well connected to the main trunk road network (A14), however it is therefore sometimes susceptible to heavy traffic on occasions when the A14 is closed due to incidents.

Car travel remains dominant with 44% of 5km commuter journeys currently made by car within the town.

Although the town is not an Air Quality Management Area, air quality remains a concern for those who live and work in the town.

Congestion in the town primarily results from local traffic travelling to, from and wholly within the town.

The vast majority of traffic is travelling to, from or entirely within the town rather than straight through.

Rat running traffic on certain routes in the town causes concern for residents.

What does the strategy aim to deliver?

The transport strategy aims to enhance the vibrancy of the market town by taking a balanced approach, implementing walking and cycling routes and proposals to assist motorists. This approach will make it an attractive place for commuters, employees, residents and tourists alike. Protecting the local characteristics of the market town, while increasing footfall and sustaining the local economy. As a result the strategy seeks to achieve the following key aims:

- Improved performance of local roads in peak periods and more consistent, predictable and reliable journey times.
- Improved access to key services across the town (such as employment, education, health), particularly by bike and on foot.
- Traffic using the most appropriate routes.
- Local roads better able to cope with unplanned events, such as incidents on the A14.
- More journeys by public transport (through improved bus stop infrastructure).
- A more attractive town in which to live, work and visit.



The proposals

The following pages outline the package of transport recommendations which form the basis of the strategy. These recommendations have been identified to address the issues identified in the study work and refined in response to consultation feedback.

■ Proposal:

Improvements to the existing network, with no major changes to the way traffic moves around the town other than key junctions. Walking and cycling, parking and traffic management improvements will also be introduced on the existing road network.

The analysis undertaken so far shows that there is very little prospect that the scheme would justify government funding.

It is therefore proposed to include it in the transport strategy as a potential long term aspiration. (See plan 1 on page 11).

■ Benefit:

These measures would be relatively straight forward to deliver. They provide some localised congestion relief at junctions, improved connectivity for walking and cycling and better traffic and parking management at certain locations across the town. These measures do not significantly change the way traffic is routed through the town with roads remaining broadly unaltered.

■ Proposal:

Improvements that result in changes to the way that traffic would move around the town.

It considers lorry weight restrictions to enable HGV's to use more appropriate routes, the reclassification of two roads (Welland Park Road and Coventry Road) and the introduction of a relief road to the south-east of the town. (See plan 2 on page 13).

■ Benefit:

These measures would be the most costly and complex and could not be delivered without further development and refinement.

These proposals would change the main traffic routes in the town encouraging traffic, including HGVs to use more appropriate routes relieving other less suitable ones. This could alleviate congestion at certain junctions and help relieve the volume of traffic in the town centre (The Square).

The relief road would divert the main A4304 away from the centre of the town, potentially diverting through traffic and HGVs away from the town. The analysis undertaken so far shows that at present there is very little prospect that the scheme would justify government funding.

It is therefore proposed to include it in the Transport Strategy as a potential long term aspiration.

Information on these measures is provided on the following pages. Further more detailed information is available online at www.leicestershire.gov.uk/harborough-plans

Our proposals in detail

Package of measures

Improvements to existing network, with no major changes to the way traffic moves around the town

Traffic management



Junction capacity/congestion improvements.



Review locations where recorded vehicle speeds are in excess



of the threshold necessary to prompt enforcement actions



by the Police.



Review of traffic signing, and road markings across the town.

Walking and cycling



Extend and enhance the walking and cycling network. Primary routes indicated, other routes linking primary routes are also proposed across the town.



Consider improvements to existing materials and streetscape to enhance town centre for pedestrians and cyclists. Also review the suitability of additional pedestrian crossings within the town centre.

Support the above infrastructure with initiatives to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport.

Parking



Review parking controls across the town, with particular regard to the train station, the town centre and the following streets; Logan Street/ Gardiner Street/ Knoll Street. East Street, Nelson Street, Connaught Road, Kettering Road and Walcott Road.

Public transport



Localised public transport infrastructure improvements across the town.

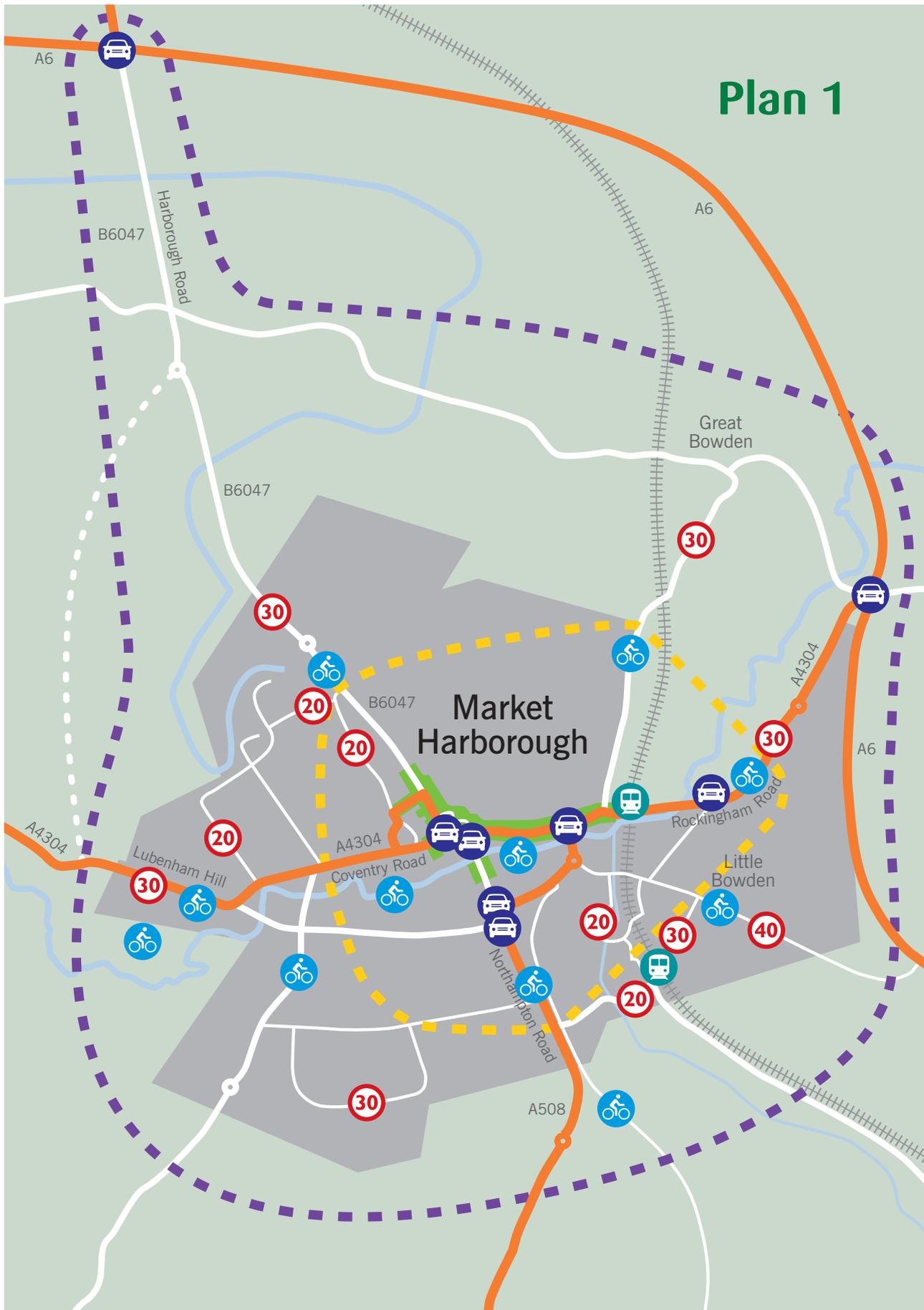


Existing main 'A' road network.

Indicative route of new road, to be provided as part of planned new development. The new road is not part of the proposals in this document.



Network Rail led projects: track realignment, platform and train station improvements and a level crossing at Little Bowden.



Our proposals in detail - continued

Package of measures

Improvements which result in changes to the way traffic moves around the town

1 Suggestion to provide a relief road to the south east of the town

between the A508 Northampton Road and A6, therefore diverting the primary A4304 route away from Rockingham Road and the town centre.

2 Upgrade Welland Park Road

between Lubenham Hill and Northampton Road to the A4304 to help redistribute unnecessary traffic away from the town centre.

This would involve downgrading the existing A4304 along Coventry

Road between Lubenham Hill to the junction of St Marys Road / Kettering Road and appropriate engineering and accommodation works on both routes.

It may also involve reversing the existing one way on Abbey Street

(to require all vehicles to travel west bound) to further deter the use of Coventry Road.

3 Make St Marys Road one way from The Square towards the Kettering Road / Clarence Street junction.

or

Make St Marys Road one way from The Square to Adam and Eve Street.

In addition signalise the junction of Church Street / High Street and remove the existing zebra crossing across High Street. These would help reduce traffic movements in The Square.

 Analyse the impact of restricting certain other traffic movements, potentially removing traffic signals or turning off certain sets of signals during off peak periods.

4 Identify unsuitable routes for HGVs and impose suitable HGV weight restrictions.

 Existing main 'A' road network.

 Indicative route of new road, to be provided as part of planned new development. The road is not part of the proposals in this document.

The route will not be classified as an 'A' or 'B' road, however in order to maximise the potential benefits of the new road, it is proposed for it to be used by all traffic except those with a max gross weight in excess of 18 tonnes (except for loading).



Next steps

The adopted transport strategy will provide a basis for a transport plan for the town. The next step will be to seek to secure funding from central government and other sources to develop and introduce identified measures identified in the strategy. Development work will include the further refinement and testing of measures and through the use of micro simulation traffic models to better understand the impact of the measures across the town.

Please note that we are still at an early stage of planning for these schemes. Any scheme that we would take forward will be subject to further design and consultation at a later stage. So if you are concerned about how any of these schemes would impact your house or the local environment, please note there will be opportunities to express these fully at a later stage of the process.



You can view the latest information in a number of ways

Visit us online www.leicestershire.gov.uk/harborough-plans

Our web pages will be kept up-to-date with the latest information and developments.



Follow us @leicscountyhall for general updates from the council, including the developments on the budget.

Alternatively, you can telephone 0116 305 0001 to ask for information in printed or alternative formats.

ਜੇ ਆਪ ਆ ਮਾਫ਼ਿਤੀ ਆਪਨੀ ਆਖਾਮਾਂ ਸਮਝਵਾਮਾਂ ਥੋੜੀ ਮਦਦ ਈਝਤਾਂ ਭੋ ਨੋ 0116 305 0001 ਨੰਬਰ ਪਰ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰਥੋ ਅਨੇ ਅਮੇ ਆਪਨੇ ਮਦਦ ਕਰਵਾ ਆਵਥਾ ਕਰੀਥੁੰ।

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਨੂੰ ਸਮਝਣ ਵਿਚ ਕੁਝ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ 0116 305 0001 ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਫ਼ੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਮਦਦ ਲਈ ਕਿਸੇ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਬੰਧ ਕਰ ਦਵਾਂਗੇ।

এই তথ্য নিজের ভাষায় বুঝার জন্য আপনার যদি কোন সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, তবে 0116 305 0001 এই নম্বরে ফোন করলে আমরা উপযুক্ত ব্যক্তির ব্যবস্থা করবো।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات سمجھنے میں کچھ مدد درکار ہے تو براہ مہربانی اس نمبر پر کال کریں 0116 305 0001 اور ہم آپ کی مدد کے لئے کسی کا انتظام کر دیں گے۔

假如閣下需要幫助，用你的語言去明白這些資訊，請致電 0116 305 0001，我們會安排有關人員為你提供幫助。

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tej informacji w Twoim języku, zadzwoń pod numer 0116 305 0001, a my Ci dopomożemy.

This information is also available in Easy Read format



Call **0116 305 0001**

or email tsap@leics.gov.uk