Leicester City Council

Leicestershire County Council

Leicester and Leicestershire
Working Together

# Strategic Transport Priorities

2020-2050

# Contents

# 1.  Foreword

The publication of this Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities (LLSTP) document marks the start of a journey for both the city council and the county council.

We have to ensure that Leicester and Leicestershire's transport system is capable of helping to address the significant challenges that we face over the following years, as well as supporting each other and our communities to recover from the covid-19 pandemic.

We want to start by thanking the people who responded to our consultation held earlier this year – your comments have been carefully considered as we now set out our strategic transport priorities which will shape the next 30 years of our road and transport networks.

Although we sometimes have different political perspectives, we share the same goals of driving growth and attracting inward investment in Leicester and Leicestershire, and of addressing climate change, reducing our carbon footprint, encouraging 'green growth' and take action to help us make the city and county a greener, healthier and happier place to live together.

Our authorities too have a strong track record of investment in measures to tackle congestion, promote cycling and walking, and to improve provision for public transport.

However, as the overarching Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) outlines this is all about planning for our future by delivering new housing, supporting the economy, the absolutely key element of identifying essential infrastructure and protecting our environment and built heritage.

In our involvement with the SGP, we built a platform of successful joint working across both authorities.

By producing the LLSTP, we can again combine our skills and expertise to deliver common transport aims and objectives.

The LLSTP doesn't replace or supersede either of our Local Transport Plans, nor set out new policies and specific project proposals, but it does address the challenges faced in meeting the area's future housing needs, tackling the threats posed by climate change and delivering healthier and safer communities.

We also need to continue to work together with a range of local, regional and national bodies to secure our priorities at the forefront of the journey we're now all on.

Sir Peter Soulsby,
City Mayor, Leicester

Nicholas Rushton,
Leader of Leicestershire County Council

# Covid-19

C1    Much of this document was prepared prior to the outbreak of the pandemic and the profound societal, health and economic impacts it has had across the world. It is far too early to say at this time what the pandemic's long-term impacts might be on our society and for our economy.

C2    The two Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) consider that the priorities set out in this document still provide an appropriate overall starting framework within which to move forward and support Leicester and Leicestershire's sustained, long-term recovery and to meet the area's long-term housing needs. The LTAs also recognise that the extent to which each priority might be implemented  could be significantly influenced by many factors arising from the pandemic, including changes to Government policy and funding and in people's behaviour.

C3    Recognising this, the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Priorities (LLSTP) has been updated to include a new aim relating to developing an understanding of the pandemic and its implications for priorities, policies, strategies and plans.

C4    The two LTAs have each developed separate Covid-19 Transport Recovery plans, which sets out how they are seeking to mitigate the impact of the pandemic and aid recovery.

# 2. Purpose

## Aims

2.1 This document has been prepared by Leicestershire County Council and Leicester City Council to outline priorities for the two Local Transport Authorities (LTAs). It highlights where the two authorities will work together to deliver common transport aims and objectives, including those in support of the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (LLSGP). The principal aims are to:

- create high quality environments for communities to thrive;

- ensure development is sustainable and maximises social and environmental benefits;

- support the transition to a low carbon and circular economy;

- support national and international efforts in combatting the impacts of climate change and adapting to it;

- improve connectivity;

- support and drive the economy to unlock growth;

- support the efficient movement of both people and goods around and through the county;

- maximise opportunities from technological innovations;

- address wider social challenges including accessibility, severance, and deprivation;

- understand the impacts on the transport system of the Covid-19 pandemic and ensure that we have appropriate priorities, policies, strategies, and plans in place to address them;

- improve public health, by tackling sedentary behaviour and poor air quality; and

- focus transport investment and funding to achieve the biggest impact for the city and county.

2.2　This document provides an agreed framework which will seek to prepare the network for future advances in technology and changing travel and mobility patterns (e.g. mobility as a service and electric and autonomous vehicles) and deliver transformative change in transport and development.

2.3　In a similar way to the publication of the LLSGP, this document does not represent a conclusion of work; rather, it marks a starting point. Many of the priorities it contains cannot be delivered by the LTAs alone. Building on the platform of local and regional joint working that has led to the identification of many of the priorities so far set out in this document, ongoing collaborative working to develop more detailed ideas/ work programmes will be required to bring them forward in reality, including with other LLSGP partners and regional and national bodies, such as adjoining transport authorities, Midlands Connect, Network Rail and Highways England.

## Objectives

2.4　The objectives of this document are to:

- set out the Local Transport Authorities' transportation priorities to meet the challenge of economic and housing growth in the city and county;

- underline the need for continued investment in Leicester and Leicestershire's transport systems and supporting infrastructure;

- provide a framework for the work that has been, and is being, done to identify transport investment to support growth; and

- summarise how the Local Transport Authorities' will continue to work together to identify further transport investment requirements towards 2050.

2.5　This document marks the start of a journey. It is not intended to provide a detailed list of investment proposals or transport requirements. It provides the framework which the LTAs and partners (including district councils) will build on over the coming years. The LTAs will continue to prepare their own specific detailed plans and strategies that will set out detailed proposals, including their respective Local Transport Plans. Infrastructure requirements because of local growth and development will continue to be included within Local Plans.

## Working together

### Leicester and Leicestershire

2.6    The LTAs have a strong track record of partnership working to develop and deliver strategies and programmes such as Park and Ride, bus priority corridors, Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy and the Leicester and Leicestershire Integrated Transport Model. Traffic, transport and roadworks information is co-ordinated through local media and our 'Choose How You Move' travel marketing campaign and web-based information service.

2.7    The strength of the LTAs' partnership working is also recognised by wider organisations, including the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership; Midlands Connect; and the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership.

## Partners

2.8    The delivery of transport investment at the right time and in the right place in Leicester and Leicestershire will require the continued engagement and co-operation of key partners including:

2.9    **National:** Department for Transport (DfT); Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra); Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU – a Defra/DfT partnership); Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG); Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS); HS2 Ltd; Highways England; Network Rail; Active Travel England; British Cycling; Living Streets; Sustrans; Homes England; Road Haulage Association; and Freight Transport Association.

2.10    **Regional:** Midlands Connect; Transport for the East Midlands and East Midlands Airport.

2.11    **Local:** Local Authorities; the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP); parish and town councils; businesses, including universities and developers; bus and rail operating companies and other transport providers; transport interest groups; NHS; schools and residents.

## Aligning plans and strategies

2.12   The LLSTP document has been developed to align with wider local, regional, and national transport and planning policy, including the Strategic Growth Plan, Local Plans, the emerging Local Industrial Strategy, Midlands Connect Strategy, Transport for the East Midlands Priorities and DfT priorities and programmes.

2.13   This document will support the planning policy principles of:

- encouraging patterns of development which reduce the need to travel;

- the sustainable travel hierarchy which prioritises and promotes walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing in preference to single occupancy car use for movement of people;

- reducing environmental and climate change impacts, including carbon emissions; and

- encouraging efficient and sustainable movement of freight.

2.14   Transport is inextricably linked to several wider policy areas, including air quality, the environment and climate change, economic growth, housing and health inequalities. These considerations have been included within the development of this priorities document and will continue to play a fundamental role in influencing the future development of transport interventions within Leicester and Leicestershire.

2.15   The key national, regional and local plans and strategies that will be important to focus transport investment in the city and county are shown in the diagram on page 10.

## Key Policy Drivers

2.16   Current Government policy is driven by the following key factors:

- economic growth;

- housing delivery;

- the environment and climate change;

- health and wellbeing; and

- social mobility and inclusion.

2.17 At present the country is failing to provide enough housing to meet the needs of the growing and changing population. People also need jobs, and it is important that we continue to have a strong, prosperous and growing economy. Housing delivery and growth are at the heart of national Government policy.

2.18 Growth will inevitably generate additional travel demands, which will have implications for the environment and climate change. It is acknowledged that transport has a role to play in mitigating this impact. LTAs must take a leadership role in building on the global, national, and local commitments made to address the situation and we will do this by working with partners to act within Leicester and Leicestershire. Local authorities and partners have a key role to play if we want to accelerate the use of low-carbon transport and clean up our air, as we move together towards a zero-emission future. Encouraging modal shift from private car to active and sustainable travel modes, including passenger transport, is an essential part of managing and reducing the contribution of transport to climate change and carbon emissions.

2.19 The emergence of new technological innovations, such as electric vehicles and micromobility, will clearly play a significant role in helping to reduce environmental impact, whilst also opening new opportunities for the efficient operation of our transport networks. The LTAs are committed to embracing these opportunities and look forward to developing innovative measures to enable people to travel more effectively, sustainably and efficiently.

## Local Transport Plans (LTPs)

2.20 Aligning policies and resources in the City and County Councils' respective LTPs will be essential to delivering the common priorities outlined in this document. The LTPs will provide more detail of the transport projects and strategies for their funding and delivery.

2.21 Leicestershire County Council's current LTP3 sets out the County Council's overall transport strategy framework to 2026. Since its approval in 2011, a number of separate policies and strategies either have been or are in the process of being developed and approved e.g. Asset Management, Passenger Transport and Network Management Plan. These separate policies and strategies amplify and develop areas of LTP3. Given this, and the age of LTP3, the council intends to assess LTP3, with a view to considering its replacement.

2.22 Leicester City Council's LTP3 currently sets out the transport strategy framework for the city to 2026. Since 2011, a number of individual transport and related documents have been approved, which provide action plans for cycling, air quality, the economy and parking. The council intends to develop a new LTP4 document, with consultation expected in 2021.

## Key national, regional and local plans and strategies

### National

**Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy**
• UK Industrial Strategy

**Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**
• Clean Air Strategy
• Clean Growth Strategy
• 25 Year Environment Plan

**Department for Transport**
• MRN and Local Large Majors Investment Planning
• Road to Zero
• Transport Investment Strategy
• Rail Network Enhancement Pipeline
• Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking
• Inclusive Transport Strategy

**Highways England**
• Roads Investment Strategy 2

**High Speed Two**
• Emerging Phase 2b Hybrid Bill

**Ministry for Homes, Communities, and Local Government**
• Housing White Paper
• National Planning Policy Framework

**Network Rail**
• Strategic Business Plan

**Public Health England**
• Working Together to Promote Active Travel

### Regional

**Highways England Route Strategies**
• London to Leeds
• London to Scotland East
• North and East Midlands
• South Midlands

**Midlands Connect**
• A46 Corridor Study
• A5 Corridor Study
• A50 Corridor Study
• Accelerating the HS2 East Midlands Hub
• Access to HS2
• Midlands Motorway Hub
• Midlands Rail Hub
• Routes to Growth

**Midlands Connect / Transport for the East Midlands**
• Shared Vision for the East Midlands

**Network Rail**
• London North-Eastern and East Midlands Business Plan

### Local

• Local Authority Local Plans
• Local Industrial Strategy
• Leicester Local Transport Plan
• Leicestershire Local Transport Plan
• Strategic Growth Plan
• LLSTP
• Leicestershire Environment Strategy 2020
• Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy
• Prospectus for Growth
• Leicester and Leicestershire Energy Infrastructure Strategy
• Leicester City Climate Emergency Strategy and Action Plan

# 3. National and Regional Context

## Introduction

3.1　Leicester and Leicestershire cannot operate in isolation if the area is to achieve its housing and economic growth ambitions. This section sets out the wider regional and national context within which the LTAs operate, develop and deliver local strategies, identify opportunities for scheme funding and develop successful bids. It is also important that the LTAs ensure that schemes developed by other organisations, or on their networks, mitigate their impact on the local highway network and, where possible, enhance it.

## National Context

## Department for Transport (DfT)

3.2　Although not directly responsible for the road network, the DfT sets the strategic direction for Highways England and local highway authorities and provides ring-fenced funding for certain projects. It is also responsible for rail policy and investment, and for undertaking the franchising process by which train operating companies are selected to run train services.

3.3　DfT's current priorities are to boost economic growth and opportunity, improve journeys and provide safe, secure, and sustainable transport.

## National Infrastructure Commission (NIC)

3.4　The NIC provides the Government with impartial, expert advice regarding long-term infrastructure challenges.

3.5　Government has tasked the NIC with three high-level objectives: Support sustainable economic growth across all regions of the UK, improve competitiveness; and improve quality of life.

3.6　The NIC identifies improvements in transport networks as a key mechanism which can support these objectives. The organisation has some ability to influence road and rail programmes.

## Highways England

3.7 Highways England is responsible for operating and maintaining the strategic road network (SRN) in England. In Leicester and Leicestershire, this is comprised of sections of the A42, A46, A5, A50, M1, M42, and M69. It also administers some competitive funding opportunities on behalf of DfT.

3.8 Highways England's priorities are set by DfT, through Roads Investment Strategies (RIS). RIS2, covering 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2025, (published in April 2020) includes:

- DfT's vision towards 2050 for a safer, greener, smarter, more reliable and better integrated network, which supports the economy; and

- Requirements for Highways England to work more closely with stakeholders, including sub-national transport bodies (see 3.20 Midlands Connect, below) and local authorities.

## Active Travel England

3.9 Active Travel England was established by DfT in Summer 2020. It is the funding body and Inspectorate responsible for ensuring delivery of high-quality cycling and walking routes as an integral part of the transport network.

3.10 Active Travel England offers expertise in scheme design, implementation, and stakeholder management. Its role is to promote best practice, advise local authorities, train staff and contractors, and support local authorities in learning from each other.

## Network Rail

3.11 Network Rail owns and operates the railway infrastructure network (track, tunnels, signals etc) in England, Wales, and Scotland. It also receives occasional opportunities for funding from DfT / HM Treasury for bespoke additional projects through the Budget.

Network Rail publishes five-yearly Strategic Business Plans, accompanied by individual route strategic plans.

3.12 Network Rail's current Strategic Business Plan and London North-Eastern and East Midlands Route Strategic Plan run from 2019 to 2024. Current priorities are improvements for passengers, jobs and housing and supporting British technology and innovation.

## High Speed Two (HS2)

3.13    The HS2 vision is to be a catalyst for growth across Britain. Amongst other things, the project aims to:

- bring together regional clusters of highly-skilled manufacturing, universities, research centres and technology;

- enable greater pooling of people and capital around the UK's regions;

- create better access to new markets and investments, nationally and globally;

- support the distribution of the business and professional services market; and

- provide the Midlands and North with access to a critical mass of skills, services, and supply chains.

## Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs (Defra)

3.14    Defra is the UK government department with responsibility for safeguarding the natural environment, supporting the food and farming industries, and sustaining a thriving rural economy. Its priorities include a cleaner, healthier environment, benefiting people and the economy; and a rural economy that works for everyone, contributing to national productivity, prosperity and wellbeing.

3.15    Due to the links between transport and the environment, there are a number of policies and papers published by Defra which have direct implications for the city and county. Chief amongst these are the Clean Air Strategy, Clean Growth Strategy and Carbon Plan.

## Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)

3.16    The Department's relevant priorities are to deliver an ambitious industrial strategy, maximise investment opportunities and bolster UK interests and promote competitive markets and responsible business practices.

3.17    The Industrial Strategy: 'Building a Britain fit for the future' White Paper (updated June 2018) sets out key policies to achieve these priorities. It is an important document that influences the future development of transport networks.

## Ministry of Homes, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Homes England

3.18   MHCLG's principal objectives are to deliver the homes that the country needs and to support Local Authorities to deliver high quality services that are sustainable financially. Its ambition is to support the delivery of 300,000 additional homes a year on average by the mid-2020.

3.19   Homes England's priorities, as set out in its Strategic Plan 2018-2023, are to accelerate housing through driving positive market change, releasing more land to developers and ensuring that people in England have access to homes in the right places.

3.20   To support these priorities, Homes England collaborates with infrastructure providers, including transport providers, to ensure that infrastructure provision aligns with housing delivery.  This includes providing investment such as the £5.5billion Housing Infrastructure Fund, aimed at providing infrastructure up front to unlock significant housing growth.

## Public Health England

3.21   Public Health England's priorities to 2020 are set out in its Strategic Plan. These include improving the public's health and wellbeing through a place-based approach that engages local communities, building on their assets and addressing the wider determinants of health, including the built and natural environment.

## Regional Context
### Midlands Connect

3.22   Midlands Connect is a non-statutory Sub-national Transport Body, made up of 11 LEPs and 28 local authorities across the East and West Midlands. It identifies and recommends the projects needed to improve the connectivity of the region's key locations, to provide the greatest economic and social benefits for the Midlands and the UK as a whole. Its 25-year transport strategy focuses on improving connectivity in the Midlands to boost the economies of both the region and the UK.

3.23   Midlands Connect and Transport for the East Midlands have published a Shared Vision for the East Midlands. This outlines a set of strategic transport priorities for the region (see 3.24).

3.24 The Midlands Connect Strategy supports the need for a Major Road Network (MRN), which is a network of non-trunk A roads with near-equal importance to the SRN in terms of connecting the regional economies and supporting growth. Midlands Connect has carried out a study to develop the concept of a Midlands MRN and identify priorities for investment.

3.25 The LTAs are members of Midlands Connect and sit on the Steering Groups for all the various studies relating to the Leicester and Leicestershire area, including the A46 and MRN Steering Groups. Outside of the Steering Groups and Midlands Connect Board, the LTAs engage directly with Midlands Connect to ensure that work across all three organisations is coherent and consistent.

## Transport for the East Midlands (TfEM)

3.26 TfEM is made up of nine local highway authorities, who are brought together as East Midlands Councils. It provides collective leadership on strategic transport issues, agrees priorities for major investment, and collectively inputs into Midlands Connect, DfT, and delivery bodies such as Highways England and Network Rail. TfEM enables the East Midlands local authorities to talk with one voice and represent East Midlands interests at a regional and national level.

## Regional Priorities

3.27 The table below sets out the Midlands Connect and TfEM priorities for the East Midlands Region, demonstrating where there are common priorities which will impact on the Leicester and Leicestershire area. These are considered in more detail in Section 5, Theme 1: Travel Between Cities.

| | A46 Growth Corridor | A5 Growth Corridor | Transforming East-West Connectivity | Access to East Midlands Airport | Midland Mainline Improvements | Making the most of HS2 | Midland Rail Hub |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Midlands Connect** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| **TfEM** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |

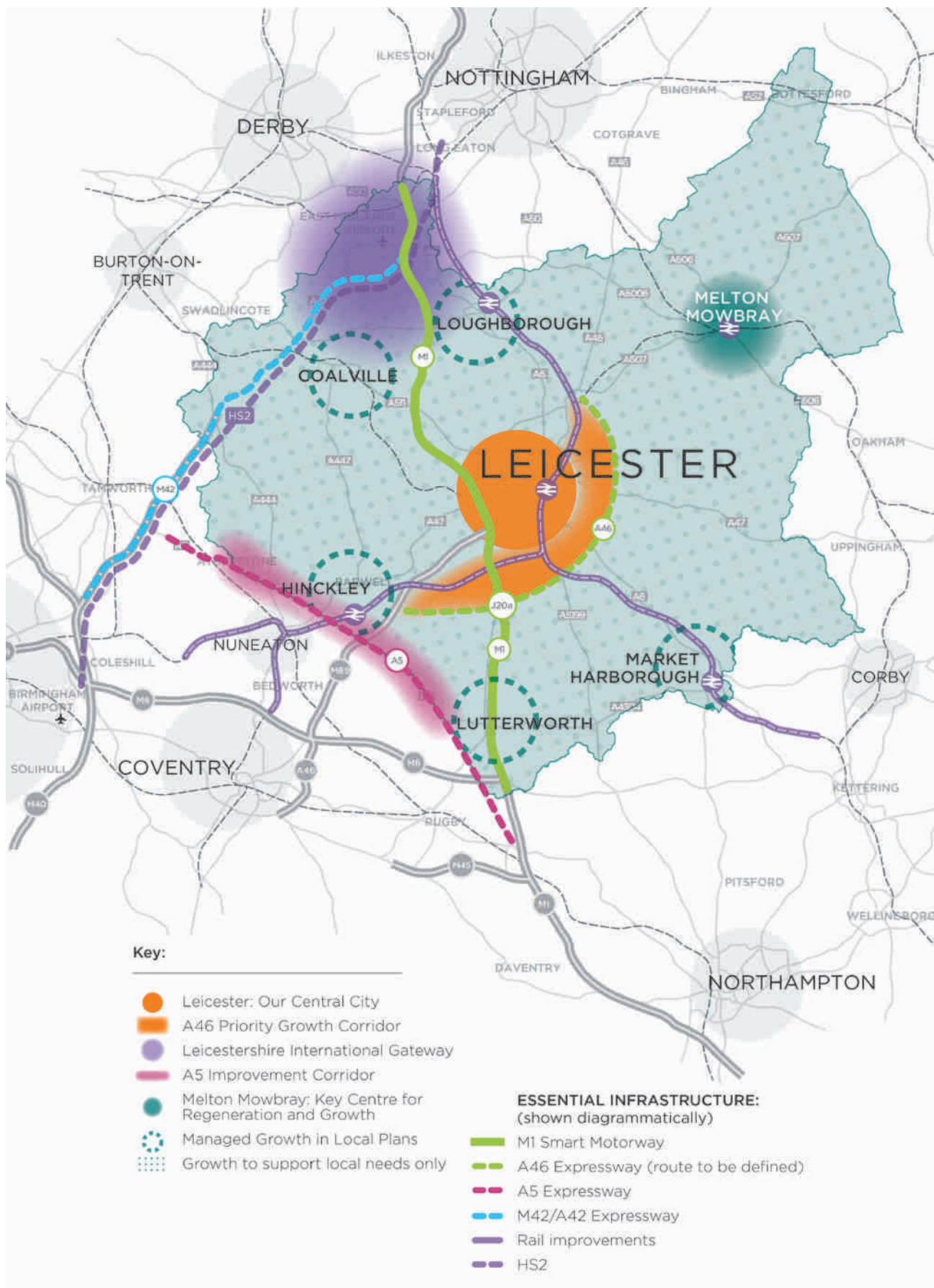# 4. Leicester and Leicestershire Growth Context

## Introduction

4.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire area is facing significant housing and economic growth in the future and this will bring challenges through the need for new and improved transport infrastructure. A number of key strategies and plans covering the city and county area will help guide and secure future investment.

- Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan

- Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership - Local Industrial Strategy

- Local plans, local transport plans, local economic strategies and joint infrastructure programmes

4.2 These plans and strategies will identify the need for transport infrastructure that will allow the transport authorities to plan to secure the necessary investment from a range of sources, including Government, Midlands Connect, LLEP, council and private sector funds.

## Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (LLSGP)

4.3 The LLSGP was approved in December 2018. It was developed through a partnership of Leicester City and Leicestershire County Councils, the seven local district authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP). The plan puts forward proposals for future development, including housing provision, that will be needed to support population change, meet housing needs and support economic growth to 2050.

4.4 The plan estimates that Leicester and Leicestershire will need 96,580 new homes and 367-423 hectares of employment land from 2011-2031. Beyond 2031, the plan identifies the need for a further 90,500 dwellings and additional employment land. The LLSGP provides a framework to guide the location of development in Local Plans.

4.5 The LLSGP identifies the following areas to focus future development:

- Leicester City, particularly the Strategic Regeneration Area;

- A46 Priority Growth Corridor to the south and east of Leicester;

- Leicestershire International Gateway, including the Airport, East Midlands Gateway freight terminal and the proposed HS2 station at Toton;

- Melton Mowbray centre for regeneration and growth.

# Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan – Spatial Strategy

**December 2019**



Key:

- 🟠 Leicester: Our Central City
- 🟧 A46 Priority Growth Corridor
- 🟣 Leicestershire International Gateway
- 🟪 A5 Improvement Corridor
- 🟢 Melton Mowbray: Key Centre for Regeneration and Growth
- ⚬ Managed Growth in Local Plans
- ⁝⁝ Growth to support local needs only

**ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE:**
(shown diagrammatically)

- ━━ M1 Smart Motorway
- ╍╍ A46 Expressway (route to be defined)
- ╍╍ A5 Expressway
- ╍╍ M42/A42 Expressway
- ━━ Rail improvements
- ╍╍ HS2

4.6 The LLSGP notes major infrastructure improvements will be needed to unlock land for development and accommodate new growth focussed on major transport corridors:

- Investment in city transport infrastructure to support improved accessibility to and within the city – principally the hub and spoke plan for bus corridors and park and ride and cycling/walking corridor improvements;

- Improvements to the city centre to improve it as a travel hub including rail and bus station enhancements together with connecting links;

- A new A46 link road to the south and east of Leicester, connecting the M1 to the south-west and A46 to the north-east of Leicester, to create a new priority growth corridor to unlock substantial housing growth. Decisions about the route and nature of the link road will be subject to extensive further development work and consultation with due consideration of any studies by Midlands Connect and the Local Transport Authorities;

- The A5 and A42 would need to be upgraded;

- Improvements to the M1;

- Improved railway lines and services from Leicester to Coventry and Birmingham, as well as improvements to the Midlands Mainline and a link to HS2 at Toton;

- Potential new rail services, including possible re-opening of the Leicester to Burton railway line;

- Investment in a new outer distributor road for Melton Mowbray, as part of a wider Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy that enables the delivery of substantial numbers of new homes; and

- Identification of, and improvements to, the Major Road Network, including works to reduce congestion, improve safety and address environmental issues along the A511/A50 corridor, which supports the delivery of new homes.

4.7 Delivery of the growth strategy will require alignment of local, regional and national infrastructure plans and strategies and substantial funding from Government, LLEP, Midlands Connect and the private sector.

## Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership

### Local Industrial Strategy

4.8 The LLEP is preparing a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) for the city and county, with the intention of identifying areas and sectors of focus to maximise future economic growth and productivity. The LIS is in preparation and, under a framework to deliver a healthy climate for growth, will include transport infrastructure requirements both to help promote and support opportunities for economic growth. This will draw on the future infrastructure requirements set out in this document.

## Local Plans, Local Economic Strategies and Joint Infrastructure Programmes

4.9 The Local Planning Authorities' local plans identify specific future development requirements for housing, employment, retail and leisure uses and the transport infrastructure required at the local level to allow development to be delivered. The LLSTP and local transport plans for the city and county will assist in providing a framework for these requirements, alongside the Strategic Growth Plan.

4.10 Leicestershire County Council's Strategic Plan 2018-22 includes five strategic outcomes in its vision for Leicestershire:

- Strong Economy;
- Wellbeing and Opportunity;
- Keeping People Safe;
- Great Communities; and
- Affordable and Quality Homes.

The strategy and priorities set out in the LLSTP outline an approach where transport is a key enabler to achieve these goals.

4.11 Many of the local councils have also developed their own economic action plans and strategies to support economic growth and productivity, including specific transport interventions, for instance the Connecting Leicester programme of cycling and walking improvements.

4.12 The City and County Councils have also developed joint infrastructure investment programmes, including the A426 Better Bus Scheme and the Leicester North West Major Transport Programme, designed to support major developments on the edge of the city and improve connectivity. Led by the City Council, the two LTAs are working jointly to develop a programme of sustainable transport improvements for the city urban area as part of the Government's Transforming Cities Fund, designed to support city regeneration and growth through investment in bus and cycling infrastructure, particularly in the central regeneration areas and to link with planned growth to the North and West. This hub and spoke concept will subsequently be applied to the South and East of the city, particularly responding to future growth planned in these areas.

## Transforming Cities - Connected Leicester Hub and Spoke plan



Legend:
- Urban Growth Areas (underway/planned)
- Regeneration Areas (housing/commercial)
- Major Retail/Leisure Expansion
- Existing out of centre employment areas
- Connecting Leicester Neighbourhoods
- Proposed Hub Improvement
- Proposed Hub Link
- Proposed Cycle/Walking Corridors
- Proposed Bus Corridors
- Orbital Bus Link - Soar Valley Way
- 10 minutes cycle time (155,000+ people)
- 30 minute bus travel time (500,000+ people)
- PR Park and Ride
- PR Proposed Park and Ride Site
- H Leicester Royal Infirmary
- Leicester City FC
- Leicester RUFC
- Leicester University
- De Montfort University

# 5. Strategic Transport Priorities Themes

5.1 Five Strategic Transport Themes have been developed, which cover the interconnected transportation issues that arise across distinctive parts the city and county and those that extend beyond the area, connecting with other cities. The themes summarise the transport aims, challenges and priorities for the City and County and where the two LTAs can work together to ensure coordination and added value to transport schemes.

5.2 Travel around the City and County does not operate within strict boundaries, and these themes should not be considered to be independent of each other. The LTAs anticipate that there will be several areas of overlap between the themes and the need to work across administrative boundary areas.

5.3 The five themes cover the transport movements in and out of the area to other cities and places, movement within the City urban area and county towns and movement around Leicestershire, as well as ensuring a transport network which is resilient to growth pressures. The themes are shown in the diagram below.

Travel between cities

Travel around Leicestershire

Resilient Transport Network

Travel around Leicester

Travel around county and urban areas
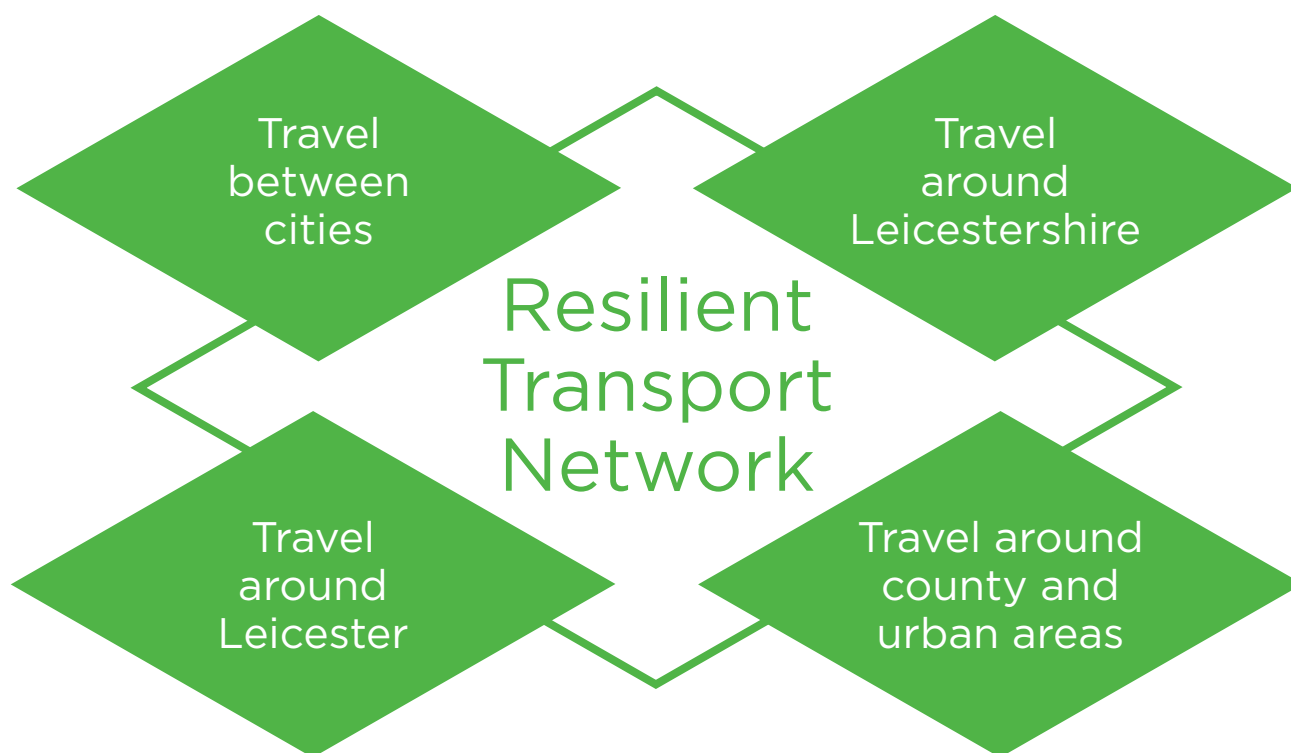
5.4 For each theme a time period for the delivery of projects and programmes is shown as follows:

- Short term priorities over the period to 2025, which is a reasonable timeframe to identify schemes that are likely to be programmed for delivery, where funding is identified or there is a reasonable prospect of it being secured;

- Medium term projects are shown to 2036, which accords with timeframes set out for infrastructure delivery in the LLSGP and most Local Plans. Some regional projects identified in Midlands Connect and Transport for East Midlands strategies may also be deliverable in this timeframe; and

- Long term priorities are set to 2050, which reflects the period over which major regional transport infrastructure projects might be expected to be delivered, including those in Midlands Connect and Transport for East Midlands Strategies.

# Travel Between Cities

## Introduction

5.5    The City of Leicester is at the centre of Leicestershire County, surrounded by smaller county towns and villages. Leicester is well-located in terms of its proximity to other cities, being approximately 27 miles from Coventry, 45 miles from Birmingham, and 100 miles from Leeds and London. Within the East Midlands, Nottingham, Derby, and Lincoln are all less than 60 miles from Leicester city centre.

5.6    This proximity has led to strong demand for travel between the cities, for commuting, business, leisure, and tourism purposes. Improving connectivity between Leicester and other cities will bring opportunities for significant economic growth, by encouraging more people to choose Leicester as a place to invest, work, shop, or visit for tourism. However, it is important to note that most inter-city travel will be via private vehicle or rail. Whilst the LTAs encourage the use of sustainable travel for shorter journeys, bus or mass rapid transit services are rarely practical or financially viable for longer, inter-city connectivity. Commercial coach services are a notable exception and have a role to play in mid- and long-distance connectivity to cities which are not easily accessible by rail.

5.7    The City is also within the logistics 'Golden Triangle' between the M42, M1, and M6 motorways. This central location means that the Leicester and Leicestershire freight and logistics sector is of significant importance to the local, regional, and national economy. As a result, investment in strategic infrastructure which supports freight has the potential for significant economic benefits.

5.8    Therefore, the LTAs' focus for measures to support inter-city travel to 2050 will be on strategic road and rail schemes, both to secure delivery of schemes which are already in development, and to develop and deliver further schemes which future-proof the inter-city road and rail networks. it is important to maintain a mix of investment, as going forward the ability to move people and goods efficiently and efficiently over long distances by road is still likely to remain an important part of peoples' lives and of the economy; albeit the power source of vehicles and their level of technological interaction with their surroundings is likely to change, in turn changing the design of the roads required. These support the priorities for Midlands Connect and Transport for the East Midlands, and will include efforts to increase the proportion of freight traffic carried by rail.

5.9    Our work to support inter-city rail travel for passenger transport will include a focus on encouraging use of sustainable and active modes for first- and last-mile travel. This may include measures to improve walking and cycling infrastructure and facilities.

5.10   The following sets out our aims, challenges and priorities for short, medium and long-term investment for movement between Leicester and other cities.

## Aims, Challenges, and Priorities

### Aims

- Improve road and rail connectivity between Leicester and cities outside of the county, including Birmingham and Coventry to the West.

- Take full advantage of the opportunities for connection to Birmingham, Leeds, London etc which will result from HS2.

- Ensure that Leicestershire's inter-city road and rail networks are fit for purpose and able to adapt to future technologies, changing travel patterns and the impacts of a changing climate.

- Encourage increased inward investment, to support economic growth, housing, and jobs within the county, the Midlands and the UK more widely.

- Support the efficient movement of freight between the Golden Triangle, Leicester, and cities outside of the County, including to seek to increase the amount of freight moved be rail.

### Challenges

- **People are increasingly likely to live in a different area to where they work.** This results in increased demand for commuter travel. Commuter travel to/from outside the County, or to/from rural villages is likely to be by private car, resulting in further pressure on the road network.

- **Unreliable journey times by road.** Parts of the M1, A5, A46, M69, A42 and A50 corridors experience localised congestion and inconsistent route quality. Journey times can vary considerably by time of day and from one day to the next. Unreliable journey times have a significant impact, particularly for freight, commuter, and business traffic.

- **Lack of fast, direct cross country rail services**. Leicester has good connectivity to London, Derby, and Nottingham. However, connectivity to other areas requires improvement. In the Midlands, journeys to Birmingham and Coventry take 53 minutes and 68 minutes respectively (with no direct rail service to Coventry). Connectivity to the major cities of the north, including Leeds and Manchester, is poor, as are some of the 'east-west' rail links to areas such as Peterborough and Cambridge. Connectivity to some southern areas, such as Thames Valley and Stansted Airport also require improvement.

- **Demographic change.** Increasing population who have more travel demands and an ageing population who have different needs.

- **Understanding likely impacts of technology and carbon reduction agendas.** New technology will have an impact on travel patterns and the needs of people. Growth must be managed and accommodated in a way which is consistent with environmental policy and the need to reduce impacts such as carbon emissions and air quality.

- **The implications for freight of the UK's exit from the EU are uncertain.** This may particularly affect the SRN, and is likely to influence future planning, especially in the freight 'Golden Triangle'.

- **Supporting freight travel by road and rail.** The freight and logistics sector is an important contributor to the local, regional, and national economy. It has particular needs which require specific consideration to support movement of goods. This includes supporting the sector to reduce its environmental impacts, for example by taking advantage of new technologies or travelling by rail instead of road where practicable.

## Priorities

### Short-term (to 2025)

- Continue supporting Midlands Connect on their A46, A50, A5, and A42 studies.

- Continue supporting Midlands Connect on strategic rail projects such as the Midlands Hub and other rail proposals that are being explored by Network Rail and other transport authorities, that will improve Leicester and Leicestershire's rail connectivity to other cities around the Country and that help to boost levels of freight moved by rail.

- Continue engaging with key stakeholders regarding development of the business case for re-opening the Leicester-Burton Railway Line.

- Continue engaging with HS2 Ltd to ensure that Leicester and Leicestershire's interests are protected and/or advanced within the HS2 Phase 2b Hybrid Bill, for example the classic compatible link and early delivery of the Toton Hub station.

- Continue to promote rail as an alternative to private car for travel between cities.

- Encourage active travel to and from stations.

- Continue to lobby and influence the franchisees to improve the quality of service on lines connecting Leicester to other cities within and outside the East Midlands region.

- Work with the rail industry, Midlands Connect, and other stakeholders to ensure that, as appropriate, the 'post-HS2 world' is reflected and planned for in future franchise planning/decision-making.

- Engage with local communities and other key stakeholders, as appropriate, to identify needs and potential solutions.

- Support commercial coach services to continue to deliver an alternative to rail for mid- and long-distance journeys.

- Provide quality and well-connected transport interchange facilities to meet local needs.

- Engage with the freight and logistics sector, to better understand the needs of the sector and ensure that schemes are developed which support the efficient movement of freight into, around, and out of Leicestershire.

## Medium-term (to 2036)

- Secure investment for the delivery of the rail infrastructure necessary to deliver substantially improved rail connectivity, including to enable direct HS2 'classic compatible' services to Cities in Northern England (e.g. Leeds) a direct, reliable rail service between Leicester and Coventry; increased capacity and improved journey times to Birmingham.

- Secure investment for, and delivery of, the A5 improvement corridor.

- Secure investment for, and delivery of, improvements to the M1 and existing A46 corridors, including M1 junction 21 and the 'Hobby Horse' roundabout.

- Secure investment for, and delivery of, the priority growth corridor to the south and east of Leicester.

- Secure investment for, and delivery of, improvements to the A42 and A50 corridors, supporting delivery of the Leicestershire International Gateway.

- Development of the existing Midland Mainline service to a modern service, fit for the future, which can compete favourably with the services offered by other cities e.g. Birmingham. This will include electrification and upgrading to modern rolling stock.

- Adapt and innovate alongside technological developments in transport.

- Provide high quality, well-connected and easily accessible transport interchange facilities to meet local needs.

- Maintain new and existing infrastructure, to support travel by passenger transport as well as by road, using a risk-based approach.

## Long-term (to 2050)

- Deliver on the potential of Leicester and Leicestershire's rail connectivity to achieve full benefits for the City and County economies.

# Travel Around Leicester

## Introduction

5.11 Leicester is the tenth largest and one of the fastest growing and most diverse cities in England. With an urban area of over 590,000 people it provides a key economic hub for the East Midlands. The city is relatively compact with a large retail, employment and leisure hub in the city centre. Outside the centre, residential neighbourhoods contain their own district centres for retail, leisure and community services. Large industrial and office-based employment hubs are found towards the edge of the city. Substantial housing and employment growth are planned and being delivered through urban extensions, largely to the North and West of the city, and central area regeneration, particularly along the River Soar.

5.12 Leicester is a primary centre offering important services and employment opportunities for both city and county residents. Nearly half of the workforce commutes into the city daily with around 30,000 people travelling into the city centre at peak times. Car, bus and freight movements in the city are largely served by a network of radial (spokes) and inner and outer orbital roads. These are crucial to the day-to-day working and economic prosperity of the city, but they also form the primary links to our County towns and rural settlements. Many parts of the key radial routes are constrained due to their Victorian in character and important local centres. A number of bus lanes and cycleways/pedestrian routes have been constructed over many years in the city supporting sustainable travel modes.

5.13 A substantial and stable commercial bus network, largely operated by First, Arriva, Centrebus and Stagecoach serves the city and surrounding areas. This is supplemented by three park and ride sites run by the city and county councils at Enderby, Birstall and Meynells Gorse.

5.14 There is a strong and growing awareness of the global climate change and local air quality and health challenges facing the city.  The city's economy continues to show good growth and substantial housing development reflects strong demand throughout the city. Fast paced technological change is evident in the transport sector, particularly in cities, and new forms of transport and innovations to make travel easier are becoming mainstream.

5.15 Balancing these dynamic issues facing the city with a constrained highway network will require a package of effective measures supporting clean, innovative and sustainable travel modes.

5.16 Aims, challenges and priorities are outlined in greater detail on the following page.

## Aims, Challenges, and Priorities

### Aims

- Ensure decisions on the future of transport in the city deliver on the ambition to develop Leicester as a highly sustainable and prosperous place to live and work.

- Ensure residents, businesses and visitors can travel easily around, in and out of the Leicester Urban Area.

- Provide accessible, reliable and affordable sustainable transport choices which offer attractive and convenient alternatives to car use.

- Support economic growth, inward investment and job creation.

- Unlock and support sustainable housing growth, particularly in the central regeneration areas and urban edge locations.

- Contribute significantly to the delivery of good air quality, healthy lifestyles and positive climate change outcomes.

- Help to connect and create quality urban places in the city centre and neighbourhoods.

### Challenges

- **Moving large numbers of people in a growing city -** the key challenge is to move large numbers of people, particularly during peak travel periods, around the city efficiently by sustainable transport modes.

- **Managing the competing demands for road space by prioritising attractive public transport and cycling and walking travel alternatives to the car -** this is a significant challenge in a compact city where many key routes are constrained and often Victorian in terms of their scale and character. Cars will become "cleaner" over time, but this does not address the issue of limited road-space and associated peak period congestion, particularly if the average number of passengers carried remains low.

- **Support economic and housing growth –** despite generally strong investment in the local economy, productivity growth in the city is relatively low compared with the UK average. The impact of congestion on journey time, reliability and cost to business is a key challenge. There are significant challenges to meet the strong growth in housing demand by unlocking major development sites, in central and urban edge locations, that have expensive and complicated infrastructure requirements.

- **Climate Change, clean air and healthy living –** The city and county councils have declared a climate emergency and clean sustainable transport choices will play a key role in reducing carbon emissions to acceptable levels. 80% of Nitrogen Dioxide is created by road transport and poor air quality remains a problem in some locations. Meeting and bettering EU emissions targets is a key challenge. Levels of physical activity and related obesity remain a concern and transport choices can contribute significantly to improved health and wellbeing outcomes.

- **Infrastructure Gaps -** Gaps exist within the bus, cycleway and pedestrian networks, particularly linking neighbourhoods and the city centre.

- **Effective public transport provision and coordination –** reflecting the national trend the city has seen declining bus patronage, mirroring national trends. Good evidence exists of reversing this trend where high quality bus priority measures are introduced. Affordability of bus travel compared with other modes remains a key factor in modal choice. The coordination of bus operators and their services is required to deliver efficient and connected transport services.

- **Road Safety –** continuing to improve road safety through local solutions such as speed cameras, 20mph zones and highway improvements remains a key challenge.

- **Managing Transition –** transport solutions and options are typically developed and promoted by national, regional and local government.  However, there are an increasing number of private sector developers who are offering transport solutions and services on a global scale (e.g. Google and Uber). The role of local authorities in delivering transport solutions and services will inevitably change as these mature.

## Priorities

## Short-term (to 2025)

### 'Connected Leicester Hub and Spoke Plan'

Deliver the first phase focussed on the North and West of the city, developed as part of the Transforming Cities Programme. This will focus on delivering key bus, walking and cycling enhancements noted below.

### Better Bus Services

Develop better bus services, including through a Bus Partnership with local operators under the Bus Services Act (2017), potentially to include:

- More efficient network by delivering bus priority infrastructure on key radial corridors and service/route optimisation.

- Improving passenger experience by providing good quality reliable information, improved driver behaviour, quality bus shelters and wi-fi.

- Smart ticketing with contactless payment.

- Improved orbital routes.

- Consider options for more affordable fares for those least able to access public transport.

- Newer, cleaner and where possible electric buses contributing to Clean Air Zone.

- Better joined-up marketing and promotion.

**Improved Transport Hubs**

- Develop and deliver phased improvement of the Railway Station and St Margaret's Bus Station and sustainable transport links to deliver quality and well-connected integrated transport interchanges.

- Develop park and ride services potentially through improved hubs and links.

**Healthier and Safer Streets**

- Deliver Connecting Leicester programme to develop main cycle and pedestrian network including priority links within and adjacent to city centre and with neighbourhoods.

- Improve accessibility of transport networks and the associated public realm for the ageing population and those with visual and mobility impairments.

- Roll out Clean Air Zone plans for Leicester including supporting ultra-low emission vehicles and fleets.

- Deliver priority safety schemes, including an extended programme of 20mph and controlled school parking zones.

- Continue to work with the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Road Safety Partnership to deliver a targeted programme of road safety initiatives.

**Smart Transport**

- Optimising transport systems - ease congestion, bus services, parking, signals/signage/information.

- Introduce 'Bike Share'.

- Data analysis - improve understanding of travel demands to improve service delivery.

- Roll out contactless parking services.

**Behavioural Change**

- Complement investment in sustainable transport infrastructure, systems and services with an innovative, targeted, effective and ongoing package of behavioural change initiatives.

**Workplace Parking Levy (WPL)**

- Assess the potential for WPL to influence travel behaviour and support sustainable transport infrastructure projects, services and initiatives.

- Develop a business case and consult the business community and public.

## Medium-term (to 2036)

- 'Connected Leicester Hub and Spoke Plan' - Deliver a second phase of the programme focussed on the South and East side of the city, supporting future planned growth.

- Continued investment in delivering public transport, cycling and walking proposals outlined in the short-term priorities above.

- Deliver final phases of comprehensive improvement of the Railway Station to deliver quality and well-connected transport interchanges.

- Ensure development is well located to minimise need to travel and infrastructure requirements.

- Effective servicing of development sites identified in local plans– roads, bus services, cycleways, paths, travel plans.

- Plan for new transport infrastructure required to support Local Plans, Strategic Growth Plan, LLEP Local Industrial Strategy and Midlands Connect led regional infrastructure links.

- Consider options for new mass transit provision.

- Consider new Park and Ride sites/stops, particularly to the South and East of the City.

- Monitor and adapt to needs of smart mobility systems and services.

- Implementation of the Workplace Parking Levy if supported following consultation.

## Long-term (to 2050)

- Continued investment in delivering public transport, cycling and walking proposals outlined in the short-term priorities above.

- Continue transport infrastructure investment to support future developments identified in Local Plans.

- Consider further mass transit options.

- Address pinch points in our radial and orbital routes.

- Monitor and adapt to needs of smart mobility systems and services.

# Travel Around Leicestershire

## Introduction

5.17   Approximately 1 million people live in Leicester and Leicestershire spread over an area of approximately 832 square miles. Of these, just under 50% are spread across the county towns, villages, and isolated rural settlements that surround the Leicester City area. Outside of the city, population density is just 860 people per square mile.

5.18   Leicestershire is well-equipped with leisure, residential, and business opportunities which encourage demand for travel across and around the county. This demand will grow as the developments identified in the district authorities' local plans, such as the East Midlands Gateway and Lubbesthorpe, are built and occupied. Many residents in Leicestershire make use of adjacent highway networks, including the strategic road network, to access services in neighbouring counties or further afield. Many residents also travel to Leicester, which provides a centre for key work and leisure facilities.

5.19   Whilst local communities and businesses are important to the county's economy, the predominantly rural nature of the county presents viability challenges for medium- and long-distance public transport, which in turn means that opportunities for residents to travel by sustainable modes are limited. Where mid or long-distance bus and rail opportunities exist, they may be infrequent, with long journey times, and stops located at potentially inconvenient locations.

5.20   The challenges faced by people travelling by public or active modes mean that the private car will remain continue to be the  choice of travel around Leicestershire for many residents. Therefore, future priorities must focus on supporting the ability of drivers to move around the county as cleanly as possible, as well as encouraging travel by passenger transport (including Demand-responsive Transit) and improving accessibility by walking, cycling, and micromobility. It will also be important to ensure that any new roads or substantial improvements to existing roads are built only where they have a clear purpose; new roads are often needed to provide for major growth, such as that identified in the LLSGP, enabling new communities to be delivered on a scale that can contain the necessary range of societal and economic facilities to provide for 'sustainable growth'. Major road improvements can also play a role in addressing air quality and other environmental problems.

5.21 The introduction of the Major Road Network (MRN) will present new requirements for managing those roads which form part of the MRN but will also offer new opportunities for funding to improve connectivity and journey time reliability along these routes, including cross-boundary funding and collaboration. Leicestershire County Council's move to a Highways Asset Management Plan approach and introduction of the Network Management Plan will set out how the Council will manage the highway network as a whole to the benefit of residents, tourism, business and freight users. This will include working with neighbouring highway authorities.

## Aims, Challenges, and Priorities

### Aims

- Encourage travel by sustainable and active modes, where it is practicable.

- Improve journey time reliability for journeys by road.

- Improve safety for all users of the transport network.

- Manage the network to ensure the smooth and efficient flow of traffic, in line with the Network Management Duty.

- Commitment to play an active role with partners to inform local decision making to improve air quality.

- Continue to support our local communities and businesses.

### Challenges

- **Leicestershire is a predominantly rural county.** Long-distance bus or mass rapid transit services are rarely practicable or financially viable in rural counties. Travel by walking or cycling is equally poor in some areas. This presents challenges for people travelling between different parts of the county (for example between different urban areas, or between the county towns and Leicester).

- **Unreliable journey times by road.** These cause particular issues for commuters, residents accessing vital services, and last-mile business/freight travel.

- **Mobility for those who do not have access to their own transport.** Although demand for car travel remains high, car ownership is decreasing nationally. Future identification of needs and development of transport schemes will need to consider those who are unable/choose not to drive or access their own transport for reasons such as disability, affordability, age or concern for the environment.

- **Supporting the growth agenda whilst guarding against urban sprawl.** Ensuring that the right developments are built in the right places, through the planning process, will be vital if we are to deliver an efficient network which is fit for the future.

- **Advances in technology.** Developments in vehicle technology (electric vehicles, autonomous vehicles etc) will not be confined to urban areas. These vehicles will also need to use more rural links, where the necessary infrastructure may not be widely available.

- **The impacts of Covid-19.** The pandemic and associated lockdown has led to unprecedented changes in transport behaviour. There are significant uncertainties regarding what the long-term impacts might be, both in terms of the need to change to manage spread of the virus, and user behaviour as a result of increased working from home etc.

## Priorities

## Short-term (to 2025)

- Develop a cycling and walking strategy for Leicestershire, alongside continuing development of Choose How You Move and encourage active and sustainable travel options, where appropriate.

- Understand the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on transport, and what is required to respond.

- Publish the refreshed Network Management Plan.

- Publish the County Local Transport Plan 4.

- Embed a risk-based approach to Asset Management.

- Deliver the first improvement scheme on Leicestershire's MRN.

- Continue to encourage use of the commercial bus network.

- Support Midlands Connect's work towards smart ticketing.

- Explore what opportunities might arise from rail work being undertaken by Network Rail, Midlands Connect and other transport authorities for improving rail travel within Leicestershire

- Learning from best practice, investigate the potential of micromobility to support sustainable and active travel, including to improve accessibility and connectivity to passenger transport.

- Develop further the use of measures such as cycle super-highways to encourage greater use of active travel.

- Continue to manage and maintain our road network, seeking to minimise the number of road casualties.

- Engage with local communities and other key stakeholders as appropriate to identify needs and potential solutions.

- Continue to seek to provide support for passenger transport services, including in rural areas.

- Continue to seek to make funding available to fund local community initiatives.

- Continue to press Government for stable, long-term funding streams, to help us look after our highways assets better; to support passenger transport services, especially in rural areas; and to enable the delivery of measures to address local community concerns.

## Medium-term (to 2036)

- Integration of communications between the strategic road network and local highway network.

- Develop use of technology on inter-urban and rural links around the county as appropriate, including adapting networks to support the potential for autonomous vehicle.

- Deliver strategic active travel links.

- Encourage greater modal shift from private car to active and sustainable modes of transport where practicable.

- Encourage the uptake and use of electric vehicles and micromobility as appropriate, including through provision of infrastructure.

- Maintain new and existing infrastructure, to support cycling, walking, and passenger transport as well as road travel, using a risk-based approach.

## Long-term (to 2050)

- Continue to adapt and maintain our road network as technologies emerge.

# Travel Around County Towns and Other Urban Areas

## Introduction

5.22 The geography of Leicestershire is best described as a hub-and-spokes arrangement, where routes radiate out from the city of Leicester to the surrounding county towns. The city itself is surrounded by an agglomeration of settlements. The map below shows the relative position of the county towns and urban areas to Leicester City, and the major strategic rail and road corridors that connect them.

### County towns, urban areas and the major strategic rail and road corridors that connect them
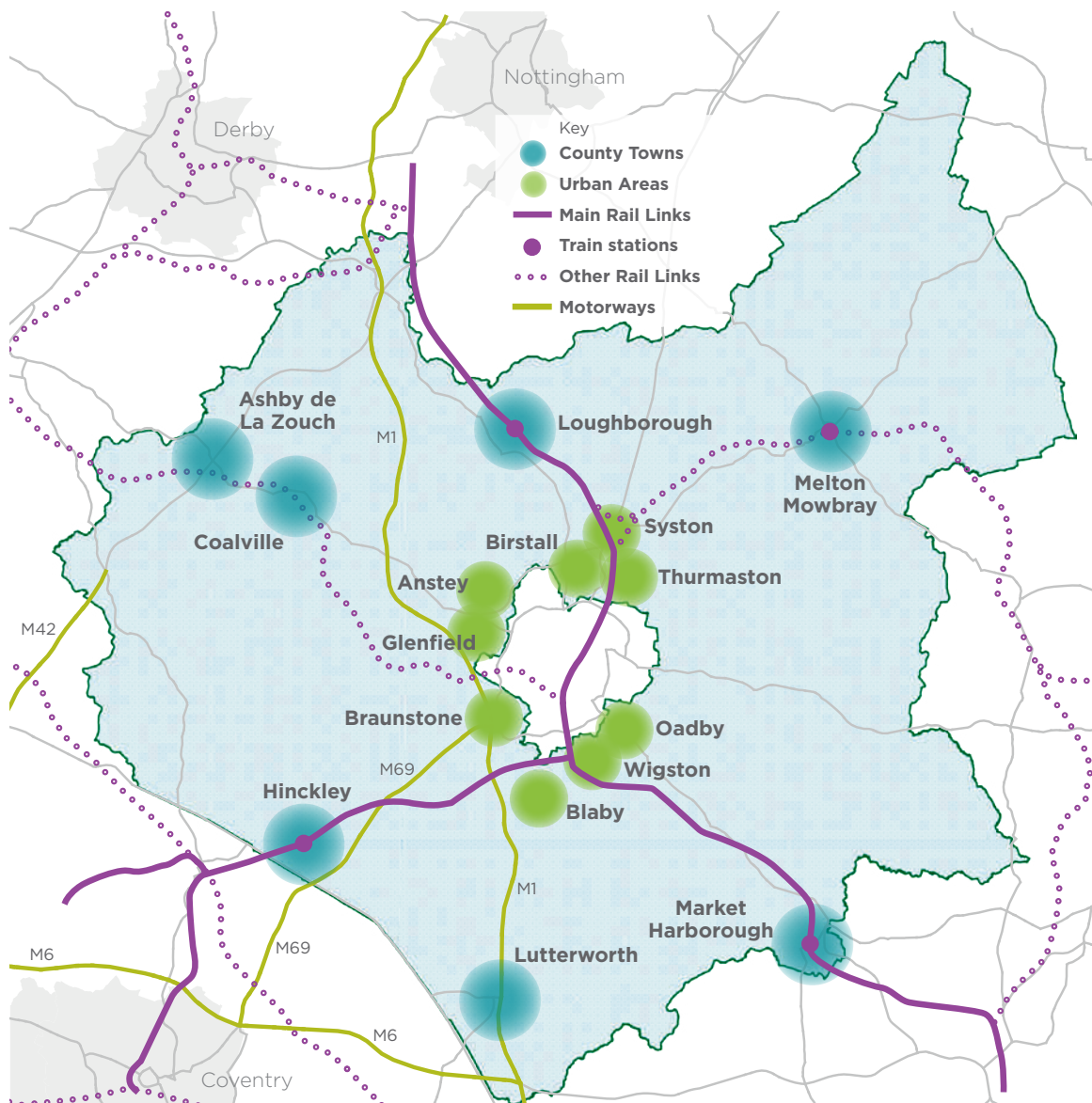
5.23 Each of these county towns has its own distinctive characteristics and provides vital services to people living in the surrounding rural area as well as the towns' own residents. They are broadly self-standing, with limited inter-town travel. The individual nature of the towns means that a "one-size-fits-all" transport approach is not appropriate.

5.24 However, one thing which they all have in common is that they are facing particular challenges from growth, changing travel patterns and the changing nature of the high street. Future development will also increase demand for travel around and to/ from the county towns, particularly for commuting.

5.25 Although the county towns face common challenges, the LTAs recognise that they have individual growth needs and local characters. The programme of transport strategies which we are currently working on, including the Loughborough Transport Strategy, Coalville Transport Strategy, South East Leicestershire Transport Study Area, and Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy, will respond to these area-specific needs.

## The Urban Areas

The urban areas surrounding Leicester are:

- Anstey

- Birstall

- Blaby

- Braunstone

- Glenfield

- Oadby

- Syston

- Thurmaston

- Wigston

5.26 Unlike the county towns, there is often interaction and demand for cross-boundary travel between the urban areas. This is often due to:

- Strategic development located close to area boundaries;

- Demand for journeys (particularly commuter journeys) on key corridors and to access services in nearby districts; and

- Key routes to major centres located through the urban areas.

5.27 The proximity of the urban areas to Leicester will result in these areas being a focus for development in the future, as outlined in the Strategic Growth Plan. This, in turn, will increase demand for travel around, between, and to/from and within the urban areas. In the short to medium term this will particularly be from developments to the North and West of Leicester (Ashton Green, Lubbesthorpe, North East of Leicester Sustainable Urban Extension etc) and in the longer term from developments associated with the Strategic Growth Plan.

5.28 The LTAs are already involved in study work to better understand the future transport needs of the urban areas, and develop the optimum package of short, medium, and long-term measures.

## Aims, Challenges, and Priorities

### Aims

- Support the continued growth of the county towns and other urban areas, whilst retaining their distinct characteristics.

- Ensure that the county towns and other urban areas are well-equipped to deal with future changes in travel and transport (e.g. electric vehicles).

- Improve connectivity to/from Leicester and within the local area by public transport, walking, cycling, and micromobility.

- Facilitate the smooth flow of traffic to and around the county towns and other urban areas.

- Identify opportunities to use active travel programmes as key approaches to improve air quality and deliver public and societal benefits.

### Challenges

- Difficulties balancing economic growth and the unique characteristics of the individual county towns and other urban areas.

- Difficulties balancing future-proofing the network with the unique characteristics of the individual county towns and other urban areas.

- Poor connectivity to existing transport hubs.

- Self-contained nature of the county towns and other urban areas means that each place will have its own infrastructure requirements, challenges, and solutions.

- The population sizes of the county towns make it difficult to roll out some transport solutions and technological innovations due to economic viability.

## Priorities

### Short-term (to 2025)

- Carry out studies into each of the county towns to identify their individual challenges, opportunities, and needs.

- Develop a programme for Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans.

- Engage with local communities and other key stakeholders as appropriate to identify needs and potential solutions.

- Continue to develop a programme of County Town and other area-specific transport strategies.

- "Quick-win" highway network improvements in the urban areas.

- Continue to encourage residents, workers and visitors to use passenger transport services in preference to the private car wherever possible, because of the environmental benefits of doing so.

- Encourage the use of electric vehicles including electric bicycles, cars, buses and freight where feasible.

- Implement schemes identified in Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans.

- Investigate the potential of the County Towns and Urban Areas as key sites to pilot new technologies and innovative ideas.

### Medium-term (to 2036)

- Smaller-scale highway network improvements.

- Develop the understanding of the impacts of technological improvements, in particular electric vehicles.

- Continue to support and work with partners to mitigate the impact of transport on air quality.

- Maintain new and existing infrastructure, to support cycling, walking, and passenger transport as well as road travel, using a risk-based approach.

### Ongoing

- Continue to engage with the LAs in developing their local plans and other relevant strategies/plans as required.

# Resilient Transport Network

## Introduction

5.29  The LTAs are responsible for managing and maintaining substantial transport assets including over 3,000 miles of roads, over 1,500 traffic signal installations, over 100,000 street lights and over 1,200 major structures.

5.30  The authorities' network management duties include the management of traffic and the co-ordination of roadworks to enable the efficient, effective and safe movement of people, goods and services.

5.31  As part of our network and asset management duties, the LTAs have plans in place which identify the important routes and transport infrastructure which will receive priority through maintenance and other measures, in order to maintain economic activity and access to key services. These routes include the Resilient Network, Major Road Network and key radial and orbital routes into and around the city and county towns. These routes are essential parts of the road network that are crucial to the economic and social life of the area.

5.32  Maintenance of the important road network assets is essential to the long-term well-being of the City and County. Our highway network is valued at £10.4 billion (County) and £3.6 billion (City). Highway bridges in particular play a vital role in ensuring the resilience of the road network and over the next 30 years many of these key assets will require significant maintenance.

5.33  Regular, comprehensive data-gathering and transport modelling is essential to ensure that we are maintaining the transport network appropriately, confirm whether we are achieving the expected benefits from transport initiatives, and develop appropriate schemes to improve the transport network further. It forms a fundamental part of the evidence which LTAs must provide when bidding for funding for schemes.

5.34  Asset maintenance and data-gathering (including modelling) also relies on revenue funding. There are often fewer opportunities to obtain additional revenue funding in comparison to the capital funding which is used to construct new infrastructure. This presents considerable challenges for LTAs. In particular, when developing schemes to provide new infrastructure, thought must be given to the long-term maintenance of how that infrastructure will be funded.

5.35  Severe weather events are a key risk to the resilience and performance of the transport network. Climate change is expected to lead to more frequent extreme weather events, e.g. flooding, prolonged cold or heat-waves. The development of emergency plans to manage the impacts of severe weather and/or the failure of critical parts of the network is an essential element of the resilient and winter network management plan.

5.36  Reducing the environmental impacts of transport, and the extent to which it contributes to climate change, will also be an essential part of our resilience in the context of both transport and our wider communities.

## Aims, Challenges, and Priorities

### Aims

- Provision of safe, well maintained highways that support and encourage new housing development, economic growth and environmental objectives.

- The roll out of modern technologies across the network, utilising evidence gathered on the Major Road Network and from key radial routes to support end to end journey planning, better traffic management, minimising congestion & improving air quality.

- Optimising the capacity and resilience of the network.

- Minimise congestion and improving air quality at priority hotspots.

- Provision of a network which is resilient to traffic incidents and climate impacts.

- To facilitate public accessibility, health and well-being.

- To facilitate gathering of data and evidence to support continued understanding of the needs and challenges of the transport network, benefits of completed schemes, and develop further schemes/initiatives to improve travel for all users.

### Challenges

- Ageing road network and infrastructure.

- Historic urban road layouts which constrain development.

- Securing adequate funding for maintenance of an ever-increasing network size, in particular for local roads which are often given lower priority than higher-trafficked, strategic, routes.

- Reduced revenue funding.

- Increasing car ownership and journeys.

- Delivering major maintenance and improvement schemes whilst minimising congestion and impacts on the public and economy.

- Embedding technological advances in asset and traffic management into the network management strategy.

- Establishing consistency between the Strategic and Major Road Network strategies and other important routes.

- Increasing prevalence of severe weather events (e.g. snow, high winds, flooding, extreme heat) affecting the road and rail networks.

## Priorities

### Short-term (to 2025)

- Network assessment and improvement prioritisation linked to Strategic Growth Plan and emerging Local Plans.

- Funding bids for maintenance and capacity improvements.

- Resilient network incident management.

- Asset and traffic management systems development linked to new technologies.

- Developing more intelligent Urban Traffic Management Control systems to help optimise traffic flow and predict or react to incidents on the network.

- Prioritising junction capacity improvements for all modes of travel.

- Asset data collection to plug gaps in network.

### Medium-term (to 2036)

- Strategic bridge maintenance programme development and implementation.

- Integration of communications between the Strategic Road Network, Major Road Network, key radials and orbitals and the local road network.

- Develop use of technology on inter-urban and rural links around the county, as appropriate.

# 6. Delivering the Strategic Transport Priorities

## Introduction

6.1  This priorities document provides a clear framework for improving and maintaining transport infrastructure across the city and county. Converting this to delivery on the ground to meet the challenges of climate change, congestion, air quality, health, economic and housing growth will require the efficient use of existing funds available to the LTAs, and identification of substantial new funding resources from external bodies.

## Funding and resources

6.2  The LTAs have been very successful in securing external resources to help fund priority transport projects. This has amounted to approaching £300million since 2011. The long-term nature of this priorities document will allow the transport authorities to plan ahead, to secure the necessary resources for project delivery.

6.3  The following table provides a summary of the resources likely to be available for transport project delivery.

| Area | Funding sources currently available |
|---|---|
| **National** | • DfT - National Productivity Investment Fund, Major Road Network, Transforming Cities, Large Local Majors, Active Travel England, National Bus Strategy Funding<br>• Rail Investment Strategy<br>• Highways England Road Investment Strategy, Designated Funds<br>• Defra – Clean Air Funds<br>• Homes England - Housing Infrastructure Fund |
| **Regional** | • Midlands Engine Funds<br>• Midlands Connect Funds |
| **Local** | • LLEP - Local Growth Funds, Growing Places Fund, business rates<br>• Council's capital and revenue programmes<br>• Section 106 developer funds<br>• Parking and enforcement fees and fines<br>• Prudential borrowing<br>• Charging schemes - The city council will be consulting on a workplace parking levy |

6.5  In making long-term plans for the area the LTAs need longer term certainty on funding.  Councils have to bid into many different (competitive) government funding streams, which provide an unpredictable and short-term funding stream and place a significant strain on the limited revenue funding available for transport planning.

6.6  The LTAs are calling for stable, devolved infrastructure budgets, like Highways England and Network Rail receive. These devolved budgets should comprise five-year settlements sufficient to cover maintenance, small to medium enhancement projects and programmes to deploy or pilot new smart infrastructure technologies.

6.7  As well as increased funding for investment, it is important that the LTAs have the resources to increase transport capacity. It is essential, therefore, that enough revenue funding is available for local project development, network management and passenger transport operations. The reliance on LTAs to develop and deliver transport schemes (and associated study work) is no longer sustainable and is likely to require wider contributions from key stakeholders in the future. There is also a need for coordinated pooling of developer contributions on a cross-boundary basis to deliver the key infrastructure required.

6.8  Support from Government will also be required to potentially support new forms of local income generation, such as Workplace Parking Levy which will be consulted on for Leicester City.

## Working Together

6.9 Many of the priorities identified in section 5 will have cross-boundary impacts. It will be essential for the LTAs to continue working together to deliver the priorities in a coherent fashion to ensure smooth travel across both the city and county as a whole.

6.10 To this end, the LTAs will continue to engage on a regular basis, identifying opportunities for joint working to deliver the priorities effectively. This may include:

- Joint funding bids;

- Developing coherent delivery programmes to take account of key dependencies and linkages between priorities in the city and county; and

- Lobbying for strategic rail and road schemes to be included in Network Rail and Highways England's programmes.

6.11 The LTAs' ongoing engagement with regional and national bodies, such as adjoining transport authorities, Midlands Connect, Network Rail and Highways England will be primary forums for collaboration regarding the Strategic Road Network, Major Road Network, and rail. The LTAs will also continue to work jointly with the other bodies party to the development of the Strategic Growth Plan, to achieve the delivery of strategic and local transport infrastructure and measures required to enable Leicester and Leicestershire's housing and economic growth out towards 2050.

6.12 Collaboration with individual planning and transport authorities will be required for smaller, more local schemes, for example those coming forward through the planning application process.