

**Table A8.15 Strategy funding**

Area	Cost
Making Travel Safer	£520,000
Cycling and Walking	£555,000
Public Transport	£24,000
Industrial Link Road	£3,000,000
Car Parks	£35,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,044,000</b>

A summary of the expected cost of each of the elements of the strategy is contained in Table A8.15.

## St Neots Transport Strategy

### Introduction

This is the St Neots Transport Strategy. It forms part of the Local Transport Plan and has been driven, through public consultation, by St Neots residents, stakeholders and interest groups as well as those who work in and visit the town.

The public consultation undertaken has been used to both identify that the schemes contained within the strategy are appropriate and to produce a priority order for their implementation. The aim of the strategy is to provide a programme of integrated transport initiatives up until the year 2006 that support the Local Transport Plan objectives and contribute towards the prosperity and well-being of the town.

### Background

Situated on the western border of Cambridgeshire in the south of Huntingdonshire, St Neots is the largest of the county’s Market Towns with a population in excess of 27,000. In recent years, the town has experienced considerable population growth, with a 22% increase over the last 17 years. The number of dwellings in St Neots has risen by 46% over the same period. Currently the majority of residential areas are within 2 km of the town centre. The railway station is 1.5 km from the town centre.

St Neots is one of the main weekly shopping centres in the district. As an addition to the town centre, the town’s economic strengths are in its industrial base. There are approximately 11,000 jobs in the town compared to a population of 13,000 that are economically active.

To support the economic vitality of St Neots and enhance the environment, it is important that transport and access to and within the town are improved. There are a number of key transport issues that the strategy will address by providing specific schemes and measures for implementation.

### Transport Issues

St Neots is currently provided with a range of transport services. In terms of public transport, the town has rail connections to Huntingdon, Peterborough and beyond, and direct to London with services operating on at least half-hourly frequencies. St Neots, being situated on the east-coast main railway line, is a significant railhead for the region, with 32% of passengers beginning their rail journey at St Neots being from other parts of Cambridgeshire and 11% from outside the County, with London as the main destination. Longer distance bus services to the surrounding towns of Huntingdon, Bedford and Cambridge are

frequent throughout the day and the bus service connecting Eaton Socon with St Neots runs at about 20 minute to half-hour frequencies throughout much of the working day. Services to villages are generally infrequent and some settlements have only market day services.

St Neots is well connected to the national road network. It has a western bypass, the A1(T), and a southern bypass, the A428(T). Provision for cycling in the town is not good although the town is relatively flat. The maximum cycling distance in any direction is about 4 km, or about 25 minutes at a steady 10 kph. On this basis, a higher level of cycling than the 3% currently observed could be expected.

There is significant potential to improve transport in St Neots through this strategy. The elements of the strategy detailed below will achieve this by addressing the key transport problems affecting the town, including:

- the rural nature of the surrounding area, which means that there is a significant reliance on the private car for transport
- the significant levels of commuting within the town and the close surrounding area, with 60% of people travelling no further than 9 km and 40% travelling up to just 2 km
- 65% of journeys to work are by car
- most of the major employers are in locations to the south and east of St Neots, which are poorly served by public transport and cycle facilities
- many roads in St Neots are busy and there are few off-street cycle routes
- the road accident rate in St Neots is relatively high with accidents mainly clustered in the central areas and on the main routes into the town centre
- the town centre has only one road bridge crossing the river at St Neots Road which causes congestion. The High Street is the retail centre of the town and congestion in this area could ultimately prove detrimental to its economic vitality
- lack of high quality footways that are well lit, and an absence of good river crossings.

### Aims of the strategy

**“Thank you for asking people’s opinions”**

**“At present the traffic congestion in St Neots is very bad and any attempts made to control the volume of traffic are very much welcomed”**

*Questionnaire responses*

The St Neots Transport Strategy aims to be a comprehensive and integrated transport strategy to address the issues noted above. It has at its core, three fundamental objectives drawn from the Local Transport Plan, namely to:

- make travel safer
- promote integrated and sustainable transport
- manage effective transport networks.

The three objectives encapsulate the aspirations for travel within St Neots and are shown in Table A8.16.

In addressing these, the strategy aims to contribute towards the economic vitality and viability of the town. It will also contribute towards achieving the Local Transport Plan targets for reducing the number of accidents and stabilising traffic levels, and will address wider objectives such as reducing social exclusion, promoting health and enhancing economic vitality.

The strategy also links in with a number of schemes currently being proposed or introduced in the area. Primary amongst these are:

- doubling the frequency of the St Neots–Cambridge bus service to half hourly on weekdays and hourly on weekends (negotiations are ongoing with developers of the Wyboston Innovation Centre which may lead to a further extension of this service through Eaton Socon to Wyboston)
- Huntingdonshire District Council are in the process of re-letting their bus shelter contract. The rolling improvements to bus stops in the action plan will be programmed to tie in with the replacement of existing shelters and the provision of new shelters
- the proposed Sustrans Huntingdon to Bedford cycle route that will pass through the town.

The following sections outline the schemes that form the St Neots Transport Strategy under the areas of travel that make up the three key Local Transport Plan objectives. In each case, these are prioritised and indicative costs (as at 2002) are given.

### Road Safety (including Safer Routes to Schools)

**“I find the worst junction the Potton Road/Cromwell Road one, having seen several accidents here – turning right from Potton Road is a nightmare”**

*Questionnaire response*

Road safety in St Neots is a desirable aim in itself. But road safety goes beyond just reducing the number of casualties, important though this is. Safer roads encourage people to use other more sustainable forms of transport than the car and contribute towards making the town more attractive to all users.

To achieve the Local Transport Plan targets, there is a need for a comprehensive range of road safety measures. To this end a number of schemes are included within the strategy. These have been chosen because, taken together, they will have the greatest impact in reducing accidents and will also complement other initiatives that promote sustainable transport.

The schemes within the strategy have been drawn up using a combination of the County Council’s ranking system (which looks at the worst accident spots in the County and grades them accordingly) and a system which examines the costs of the schemes, how quickly they can be delivered and, following consultation, their relative importance to the local community.

The schemes in the strategy with safety as their primary aim are shown in Table A8.17. The locations of each of the schemes are shown in Map A8.18.

As the schemes within the strategy are implemented and improvements to facilities are seen on the ground, the County Council’s Safer Routes to School team will also work in partnership with the schools in St Neots to improve awareness of transport issues and encourage use of those facilities for journeys to and from schools. This work may well identify further measures that could be implemented to improve the journey to and from schools and be funded and implemented directly through Safer Routes to School.

### Cycling and Walking

**“Cycle tracks are essential if car use is to be reduced in St Neots”**

**“I would definitely use the cycle routes as these would make me feel much safer”**

*Questionnaire responses*

Cycling and walking represent a key part of the Local Transport Plan’s strategy for sustainable travel and consequently form a major part of the strategy for the Market Towns. Cycling and walking also link to the health agenda because of their contribution to reducing the risk of coronary heart disease.

Cycling and walking have common themes. They:

- are modes of travel that can increase the health of the individual
- are non-income dependant modes
- are susceptible to considerations of personal safety
- contribute to, and benefit from, traffic reductions.

In order to promote cycling and walking in St Neots, there is a need to create a comprehensive cycling and walking network. To this end a number of schemes have been developed. These have been chosen because they will have the greatest impact in encouraging cycling and walking and promoting sustainable transport. The measures are described in Table A8.19 and shown in Map A8.20.

The cycling and walking measures contained in Table A8.19 have been prioritised to concentrate on introducing key routes that provide the most important links between the main attractions in the town, such as the schools, the town centre, employment areas, the station and residential areas. The cycling and walking

**Table A8.16 Local Transport Plan Objectives**

<i>Local Transport Plan Objective</i>	<i>Theme</i>	<i>Mode of Travel</i>
<b>Make travel safer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce road accidents and improve personal safety for all people using transport in St Neots, including Safer Routes to Schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement environmental and safety improvements to benefit all travel modes</li> </ul>
<b>Promote integrated and sustainable transport</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the impact of traffic in the town</li> <li>• Support the economy of the town</li> <li>• Maximise accessibility to jobs and services</li> <li>• Help improve the health and well-being of people across the whole community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cycling and Walking</li> <li>• New pedestrian and cycle river crossings</li> <li>• Public Transport</li> </ul>
<b>Manage effective transport networks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain and optimise the use of road, public transport, cycling and walking facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lorry management</li> <li>• Car Parks</li> </ul>

**Table A8.17 Priorities for Safety Improvements**

Priority	Scheme	Cost
1	<b>B1046 Potton Road/Cromwell Road – Junction Improvements.</b> Provide traffic signals at junction to make turning movements safer and combine a crossing facility for pedestrians and cyclists, part of the 'Tesco Eynesbury to St Neots Railway Station' cycle route.	£52,000
2	<b>B1428 Cambridge Street/Cambridge Gardens – Junction Improvements.</b> Provide crossing facility for pedestrians and cyclists, which will also form part of the 'Ernulf Community School to Longsands Community College' cycle route. Install anti-skid on approaches and on-road markings as part of the 'Cambridge Street, Market Square to Station Road' cycle route.	£40,000
3	<b>Cromwell Road (Hen Brook) Pelican Crossing – Safety Improvements.</b> Install anti-skid surfacing on the approaches to the crossing and to adjust the signal head positions to make them more visible to approaching drivers. As part of the proposals the crossing would be upgraded to a Toucan. This scheme also forms part of the 'Hen Brook Cycle Route (Railway Line to Brook Street)' scheme discussed above.	£17,000
	<b>B1428 Cambridge Street/Longsands Road – Junction Modifications.</b> Investigate installing pedestrian islands and hatching on either side of junction. The hatching will identify the turning vehicles and the islands will provide safe pedestrian crossing points, reduce vehicles speeds and further identify the junction.	£23,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>£132,000</b>

schemes will also provide secure and safe routes with improved lighting and signing, particularly on sections that pass through passages. The chosen routes will actively encourage cycling and walking within the town and meet the objectives of reducing the impact of traffic in the town, maximising accessibility by non-car modes and help improve health. They will link into and complement the National Cycle Network and will also benefit from the other measures in the strategy, particularly those that promote safety and reduce traffic congestion.

Improving the walking environment will serve to encourage walking as a primary means of transport. An improved walking environment will also make it easier for car and public transport users to get around the town once they have reached a car park, bus stop or rail station.

## Pedestrian and Cycle Bridges

**“The southern bridge is a brilliant idea, implement this as soon as possible”**

**“I am keen to see the bridges built, I would certainly use the northern bridge a lot”**

*Questionnaire responses*

The severance caused by the River Great Ouse to cross-town movements by modes other than the car is significant. St Neots' two secondary schools and five of its seven primary schools are on the eastern side of the river, as are the town centre, the Railway Station, the largest areas of industrial/commercial businesses in St Neots, and the towns largest supermarket. The private car is often the most convenient option for residents of the large residential areas of Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon when travelling to these destinations

To address this, two pedestrian/cycle bridges are proposed as part of the strategy. These will form an integral part of the cycle and pedestrian network and provide convenient links between Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon to the town centre and Eynesbury. The locations are merely indicative at this stage, and should not be seen as definitive routes. The precise location of any such facility will need to be the subject of more detailed survey work.

Apart from the St Neots Road Bridge, there are currently two locations within the town where pedestrians can cross the River. The first is between Riverside Park and Conygeare, where a narrow footbridge spans the river. The second is at the weir at River Mill. The upgrading of one or both of these two crossings was considered. The River Mill route is convoluted and would mean a significant detour on many journeys. Likewise, an upgrading of the existing pedestrian bridge between Riverside Park and Conygeare was also considered. The cost of such an upgrade would be similar to the cost of a new facility, and again, would provide a more convoluted route from Eaton Socon to many of the major destinations on the eastern side of the river.

The details of the two proposed pedestrian and cycle bridges over the River Great Ouse proposed as part of the strategy are shown in Table A8.21. These are a crucial element of the cycle and walking network as they remove the significant barrier of the river and allow direct movement between the key locations on either side of the river. The bridges will maximise accessibility in the town by sustainable modes, and also provide opportunities for school children to walk and cycle more. The scale of funding required is such, however, that these schemes have not been placed within the main priority ordering for the strategy. Sources of funding, whether they be from the Local Transport Plan, District Council or development will need to be identified before these schemes can go ahead.

## Public Transport

**“I would use my car less if we had a better bus service”**

**“Improved bus timetable information would encourage me to use public transport more”**

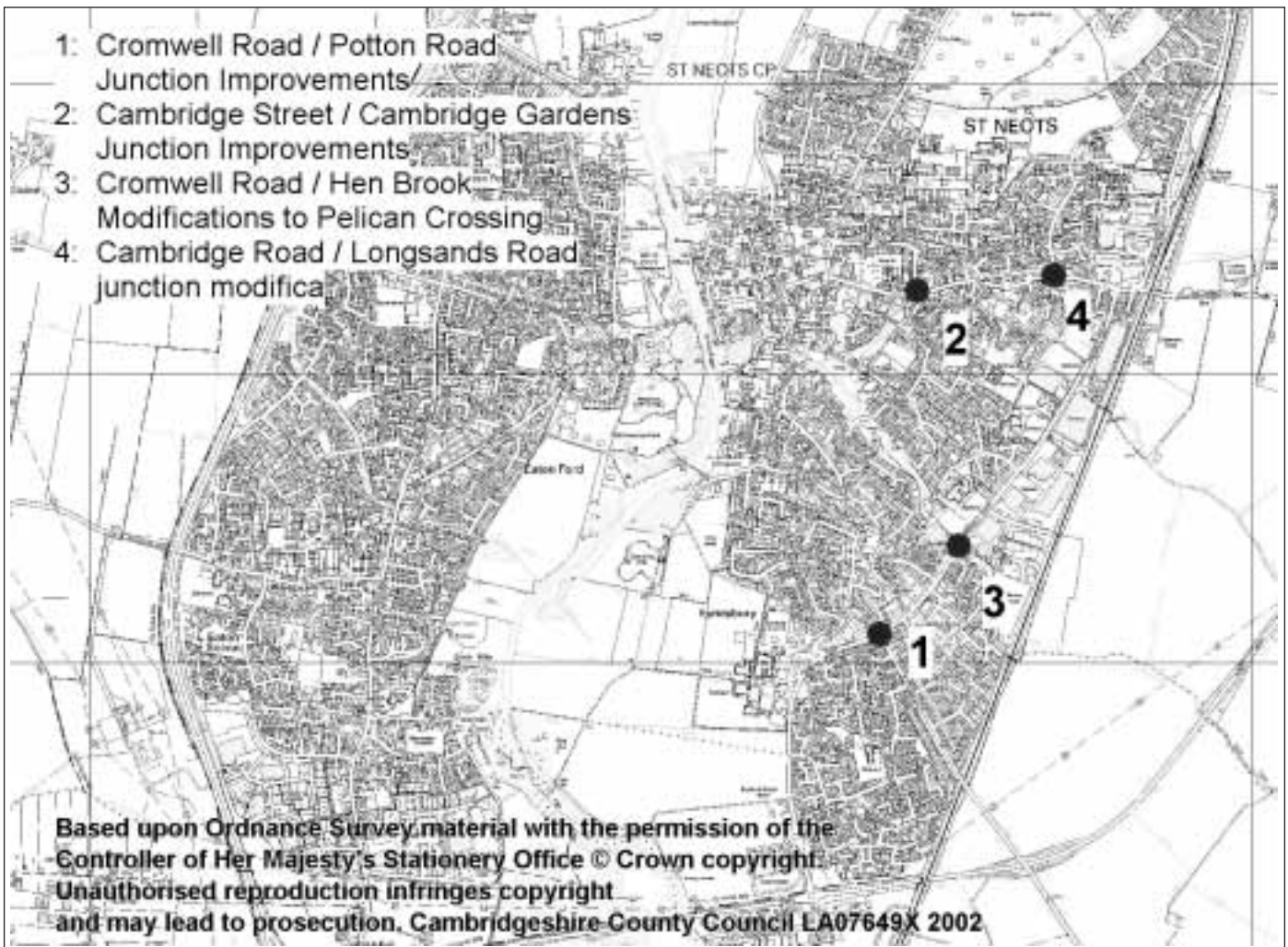
**“More buses are urgently needed, coupled with more information”**

*Questionnaire responses*

### Public Transport – Bus Services

Increasing bus travel is a key aim of the Local Transport Plan and the Bus Strategy for Cambridgeshire. For many people, the bus is a vitally important means of transport that contributes towards improving the environment and reducing the need for car travel.

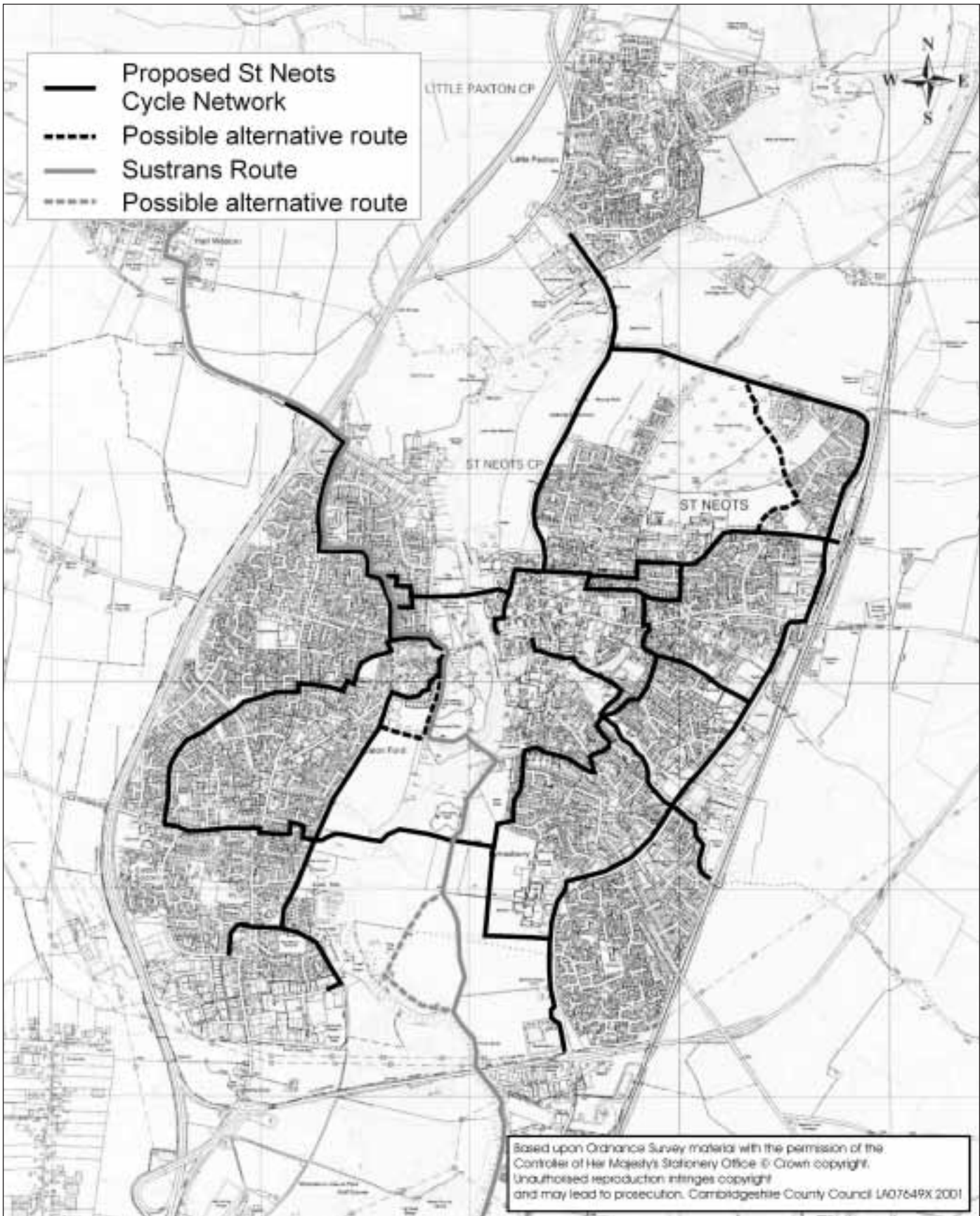
**Map A8.18 Road Safety Schemes**



**Table A8.19 Proposed cycling and walking measures**

Priority	Scheme	Cost
1	<b>Colmworth Business Park, Eaton Socon to Riverside Car Park</b> – Cycle Route. This route starts at the Colmworth Business Park and travels north to St Neots town centre, primarily by means of the existing footpath between Peppercorns Lane and the Riverside Park. From Riverside Road, Eaton Socon, the cycleway would follow the route of the existing footpaths through the Riverside Park to the Riverside Car Park. From this point, the cycleway would link with other routes travelling to the town centre, Eaton Ford and Hail Weston.	£207,000
	<b>Priory Centre to St Neots Railway Station</b> – Cycle Route. This route completes the east-west link from Eaton Ford to St Neots Railway Station. From west to east, the route travels from the Priory Centre along Priory Road, Russell Street, Avenue Road and Kings Road, and then follows the footpath link to the south of the Longsands Community College and on to the station. The east-west return route will possibly follow Shaftsbury Avenue and East Street for this section of the route.	£155,000
	<b>St Neots Bridge pedestrian improvements.</b> This scheme involves moving the lamp columns from the middle of the existing footway to the edge of the bridge parapet. This will provide a clear unobstructed width of footway of 1.75 m for the length of the bridge.	£29,000
2	<b>Tesco Eynesbury to St Neots Railway Station</b> – Cycle Route. The scheme consists of a segregated use cycleway/footway between the A428 in Eynesbury to St Neots Railway Station along Cromwell Road and Station Road. The cost includes improved pedestrian/cycle crossing facilities at the double mini roundabout at Cambridge Street/Cromwell Road/Station Road junction, and outside the station.	£265,000
	<b>Ernulf Community School to Longsands Community College</b> – Cycle Route. The route starts at the eastern end of the ‘Bushmead Junior School, Eaton Socon to Eynesbury’ scheme discussed below, and travels on road along Hardwick Road, Luke Street, Berkley Road, Shirdley Road and Duck Lane to Sandfields Road. A new crossing of Berkeley Street will be investigated. The route crosses Cambridge Street at the Sandfields Road with a new crossing, and continues to the Longsands Community College via Cambridge Gardens, Shaftsbury Avenue and Kings Lane.	£69,000
	<b>Cromwell Road to Sandfields</b> – Cycle Route. This short link provides an east-west route between the ‘Tesco Eynesbury to St Neots Station cycle route’ and the ‘Ernulf Community School to Longsands Community College cycle route’. It travels from Sandfields Road along Musgrave Way, and then along the route of existing footpaths to Cromwell Road.	£35,000
3	<b>Bushmead Road to Riverside Car Park</b> – Cycle Route. This scheme involves a cycle route along the length of the existing footpath between Bushmead Road/Bushmead Primary School and Great North Road (to the south of Honeydon Avenue). This section of route will include an upgraded crossing of Duloe Brook. A new pedestrian crossing will be provided on Great North Road. From the crossing it continues along the route of existing footpaths to Orchard Close and Mill Hill Road. At this point it joins with the route to Hail Weston (see below) and to the northern pedestrian/cycle bridge proposals. From Mill Hill Road the route travels along Hanover Close to a new pedestrian crossing on the B1046 Cross Hall Road, just to the north of the St Neots Road roundabout.	£242,000
	<b>Little Paxton to Town Centre</b> – Cycle Route. The route travels along the eastern verge of Mill Lane from Gordon Road, Little Paxton to Priory Lane St Neots, incorporating a new crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists as part of the signalisation of the Mill Lane junction.	£140,000
	<b>Cambridge Street, Market Square to Station Road</b> – Cycle Route. This route provides improved on-road facilities for cyclists on Cambridge Street and High Street between the Market Square and Station Road.	£63,000
4+	<b>Crosshall/A1(T) from Hail Weston to Town Centre</b> – Cycle Route. This scheme would provide a route combining shared use paths and on-road links from Crosshall to the St Neots cycle network at Riverside Park. The route travels along the B1048 between Hail Weston and Eaton Ford. In Eaton Ford the route travels along Great North Road to the Crosshall Junior School, to the south of which it cuts eastward to link with the northern pedestrian cycle bridge across the River Great Ouse and the rest of the cycle network.	£75,000
	<b>Hen Brook Cycle Route (Railway Line to Brook Street).</b> This scheme will provide a cycle route from the railway line in Eynesbury along the length of Hen Brook to Duck Lane. From Duck Lane it will travel on to the town centre by way of Cemetery Road and Brook Street. The Pelican Crossing on Cromwell Road would be improved as part of the proposals, and upgraded to a Toucan Crossing.	£178,000
	<b>Little Paxton to St Neots Railway Station</b> – Cycle Route. The route provides a link along the east-west spur of Mill Lane, Little Paxton from the ‘Little Paxton to Town Centre cycle route’ to St Neots Railway Station, including a link through Priory Park and Longsands Road.	£63,000
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,521,000</b>

**Map A8.20 Proposed cycling and walking network**



**Table A8.21 Proposed river bridges**

<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Cost</i>
<b>Bushmead Junior School, Eaton Socon to Eynesbury</b> – Cycle Route including Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge over River Great Ouse. The scheme consists of a cycle route between the Bushmead Junior School area and Eynesbury, including a new pedestrian/cycle bridge over the River Great Ouse. The route also includes an upgrading of the pedestrian crossing on the Great North Road.	£1,610,000
<b>Gainsborough Avenue to Priory Centre</b> – Cycle Route including Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge over River Great Ouse. This scheme will provide a cycle link from the Priory Centre to Gainsborough Avenue, Eaton Ford, including the provision of a new pedestrian/cycle bridge across the River Great Ouse.	£1,150,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,760,000</b>

**Table A8.22 Proposed bus service improvements**

<i>Priority</i>	<i>Scheme</i>	<i>Cost</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>Extension to Service 462.</b> Trial extension of service 462 along Cambridge Street, Hawksden Road and Longsands Road. Extend the hours of the service to run into the evening. Revenue from the service will be available to be put in to further action plan measures. This could subsequently be extended to include the proposed development east of the rail line subject to the outcome of the inspectors report into the alterations to the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.	£100,000 per year for 3 years
		<b>£300,000</b>

The Local Transport Plan has three objectives relating to bus services in the Market Towns, which are reflected and further developed in the County Council's Bus Strategy. These are:

- enhancing links with main cities and towns;
- improving bus provision within and between towns; and
- providing bus connections with railheads.

All of St Neots town bus services were operated commercially until January 2001. These were complemented by Rural Bus Grant service 190 which served the Gransdens and Gamlingay into St Neots and also provided a link to Little Paxton. The commercial services were extended to April 2001 through County Council funding. When Huntingdon and District Bus Company withdrew the town services the 461 and 462 contracts were tendered for operation from April 2001. Whippet Coaches Ltd operates both contracts using low-floor specification vehicles. The contracts run for three years, expiring in March 2004.

The strategy contains targets for increasing the level of public transport services and usage in St Neots. These will be achieved through a combination of service improvements and enhanced infrastructure. The proposed improvements to bus services are shown in Table A8.22. In terms of the improved services, these are aspirational at this stage and will depend on developer or other external funding, or continued and extended Local Authority support.

As part of any negotiations with bus companies over provision of services, the opportunity to develop Quality Bus Partnerships will be investigated, and taken forward where appropriate.

Additionally, it is possible that other new services could be introduced as part of the bus service contracting process as supported services come up for renewal. Changes could include:

- additional services to Eynesbury, linking to St Neots Station and to the Town Centre
- a half-hourly service to Cambridge, starting at Wyboston and stopping at St Neots Station

- an hourly service to other surrounding towns
- the gradual extension of town services 461, 462 and 463 into the evening.

These levels of service aimed for are aspirational, and in many cases will depend on developer funding or continued Local Authority support.

## Public Transport – Improvements to Facilities

The provision of additional bus services on their own is unlikely to lead to significant increases in patronage. Public perception of the services, the provision of accurate and easily comprehensible timetable information and provision of good quality waiting facilities have a major role to play. At the most basic level, it is vitally important that potential bus passengers know that services are available which will cater for their needs.

The quality of bus stop facilities in St Neots is generally poor, with significant numbers of stops being without even a basic bus stop flag. Many stops do not have any timetable information, or even destination information, and other facilities such as litterbins are often lacking. The County Council will be replacing bus stop flags and providing timetable information at all stops as a matter of urgency. As part of ongoing work on timetabling, it is planned that each stop will also have timetable information tailored to its individual services. This work is not included as a scheme in the strategy as it is an ongoing responsibility of the County Council.

Details of improvements to bus stop facilities and passenger information proposed as part of the strategy are shown in Table A8.24.

Huntingdonshire District Council is in the process of renegotiating its district wide bus shelter contract, and as a result, it is likely that a significant number of new shelters will also be available for installation in St Neots. It is important that

**Map A8.23 Proposed extension to service 462**



**Table A8.24 Proposed improvements to bus facilities**

Priority	Scheme	Cost
1	<b>Integrated Passenger Information at St Neots Station.</b> The proposals involve the provision of integrated passenger information for both rail and bus services at St Neots Station using plasma screens. Real-time rail information would be shown. Bus information would initially be 'as scheduled' but with the potential for RTPI (Real-time Passenger Information) (driven by GPS) to be added at a future date. The £10,000 amount allocated covers the cost of a Rail Passenger Partnership bid to the Strategic Rail Authority, and a contribution towards the cost of installing the system. Funding for the implementation of the scheme would be from a partnership of Local Authorities, train operators and other private sector partners. The level of funding and funding partners will be identified in the preparation of the bid.	£10,000
	<b>Improved Rail/Bus Interchange at St Neots Station.</b> This scheme will improve the bus stops at St Neots Railway Station. Additionally, it will look to improve information available to rail passengers both inside and outside the station building, and look at the timetabling of bus services to meet with train arrivals at the station.	£10,000
2+	Rolling programme of improvements to bus stops in St Neots. Improvements at individual stops will include some or all of the following measures: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• raised kerbs at bus stops to allow easier access to buses for passengers (can be especially effective when low floor buses are used).</li> <li>• resurfacing of pavements/new footpath where required in the vicinity of bus stops where the surface is particularly poor.</li> <li>• bus boarders (kerbs/footway built out into the carriageway at locations where buses have difficulties pulling into the kerb).</li> <li>• modifications to or introduction of waiting restrictions in the vicinity of bus stops where problems with parked vehicles prevent buses pulling into the stop.</li> </ul>	£150,000 over 4 years (£60,000 in year 1 and £30,000 in each of the next 3 years)
		<b>£170,000</b>

the work detailed in the schemes is programmed as much as possible to complement the installation of new bus shelters.

Real-time Passenger Information (RTPI) has the potential to further improve the quality of information provided at bus stops and other key locations. While the provision of RTPI in St Neots is not included as a scheme in the strategy, it is an aspiration for the future, looking beyond the initial four-year programme detailed in the main report. However, in this context, it should be noted that all new bus shelters in St Neots will be compatible with the future installation of RTPI.

## Lorry Management

**“We are becoming more aware of lorries travelling through the town”**

*Questionnaire response*

The existing St Neots and Little Paxton zonal weight limit was designed to allow lorry drivers to access the town for the delivery and collection of goods using the most convenient route, but prohibit lorries travelling to locations outside the zone from travelling through it. Lorries wishing to travel to locations such as the industrial areas of Eynesbury and Eaton Socon should use the A1 and A428 to get to the south of the town.

There is concern that too many lorries are using Mill Lane (which falls within the zonal weight limit) given the nature of the road, and that there may be a high level of contravention of the zone, again, particularly affecting Mill Lane. The County Council has therefore commissioned a survey to establish what the current lorry flows are on the main roads and what the likely outcome is of any changes to the restrictions. Initial conclusions from this work include:

- action on Mill Lane to limit its use by lorries would have the effect of displacing lorries onto other routes. If local lorry

traffic accessing the town centre were removed from Mill Lane, it would have to use another of the radial routes into the town, adding to the existing flows. This is unlikely to be popular with local residents on the affected routes

- a number of changes to the directional signing could be made without amending the weight limit order that may help to resolve the potential for driver confusion and consequent contravention.

Given the timing of the lorry study, specific measures are not included in the strategy save an indication of the need to improve signing to provide lorry drivers with more appropriate guidance on routes.

## Car Parks

**“There are not enough disabled parking spaces in St Neots”**

**“Free parking outside the town centre needs expanding”**

*Questionnaire responses*

Demand for parking in St Neots is high. Providing facilities and services to give a viable alternative to the private car will go some way towards managing the demand for car parking spaces in the town centre. However, issues still remain. Accordingly, Huntingdonshire District Council will be carrying out a detailed study into parking across the district, including St Neots, that is likely to report in the autumn of 2002. Rather than prejudice the results of that study, the strategy instead identifies areas for consideration, and recommends possible measures to be taken in line with the aims and consultation priorities of the strategy.

The strategy recommends that the following areas could be considered in the parking study to be undertaken by Huntingdonshire District Council.

- There appears to be an imbalance in supply and demand for long-stay parking, which may be concealed by the use of long-stay car parks by short-stay users. There is scope to reduce the amount of long stay parking in the town centre, coupled with changes to the charging regime to discourage short stay use of long-stay car parks (see below).
- The charging regime for short and long stay parking in the town centre currently allows all day parking in a long stay car park for 70 pence, while a 3-hour stay in a short-stay car park costs 90 pence. This leads to significant numbers of short-stay car park users parking in the long-stay car parks. If long-stay car parks in the town centre are to be retained, the charges for use of the long-stay car parks should be set at a level that discourages short-stay usage.
- A further option for dealing with this problem would be to remove long-stay car parking from the town centre (excepting disabled provision), and provide for all-day parking at the edge of centre sites. This option would have the potential to

intercept peak hour trips that currently travel through the town centre to get to a long-stay car park. There are a number of problems with this option that would require detailed consideration. The Riverside car park provides an obvious location for Eaton Ford and Eaton Socon traffic to the town centre to park, and Cambridge Street fulfils this function for traffic from the east. However, the lack of an obvious site on the southern side of the town centre to cater for long-stay parking is of concern, and would need to be addressed.

Great care needs to be taken to ensure that short-stay parking does not occur to the detriment of those who need to use the long-stay parking. This will to some extent depend on the level of provision and the proximity of the long-stay car parks to the town centre. The charging regime associated with any such proposal will therefore need to be considered in some detail, to ensure that any modifications along these lines have an impact on traffic flows through the town, and do not simply change the pattern of traffic flows.

**Table A8.25 Strategy Programme**

<b>1</b>	Buses  Walking & Cycling	Bus Stop Improvements Improved Rail/Bus Interchange at St Neots Station Integrated Passenger Information at St Neots Station St Neots Bridge pedestrian improvements Colmworth Business Park, Eaton Socon to Riverside Car Park – Cycle Route Priory Centre to St Neots Railway Station – Cycle Route St Neots Town Centre – Improvements to Traffic Signals	
<b>Total Phase 1</b>			<b>£506,000</b>
<b>2</b>	Buses  Walking & Cycling  Making Travel Safer	Extension of Bus Service 462 Bus Stop Improvements Tesco Eynesbury to St Neots Railway Station – Cycle Route. Ernulf Community School to Longsands Community College – Cycle Route Cromwell Road to Sandfields – Cycle Route B1046 Potton Road/Cromwell Road – Junction Improvements.	
<b>Total Phase 2</b>			<b>£551,000</b>
<b>3</b>	Buses  Walking & Cycling	Extension of Bus Service 462 Bus Stop Improvements Bushmead Road to Riverside Car Park – Cycle Route Little Paxton to Town Centre – Cycle Route. Cambridge Street, Market Square to Station Road – Cycle Route.	
<b>Total Phase 3</b>			<b>£575,000</b>
<b>4+</b>	Buses  Walking & Cycling  Making Travel Safer	Extension of Bus Service 462 Bus Stop Improvements Hen Brook Cycle Route (Railway Line to Brook Street) – Cycle Route Little Paxton to St Neots Railway Station – Cycle Route. Hail Weston to Town Centre – Cycle Route Cromwell Road (Hen Brook) Pelican Crossing – Safety Improvements B1428 Cambridge Street/Cambridge Gardens – Junction Improvements. B1428 Cambridge Street/Longsands Road – Junction Modifications	
<b>Total Phase 4+</b>			<b>£526,000</b>
	Pedestrian/Cycle bridges across the Great Ouse	Bushmead Junior School, Eaton Socon to Eynesbury – Cycle Route including Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge over River Great Ouse. Gainsborough Avenue to Priory Centre – Cycle Route including Pedestrian/Cycle Bridge over River Great Ouse.	
<b>Strategy Total</b>			<b>£4,918,000</b>

It is essential to consider the split of short-stay/long-stay parking that would best cater for the town centres requirements, mindful of the need to avoid prejudicing the success of other measures contained within the strategy.

## The needs of people with disabilities

A number of measures in the strategy will benefit people with disabilities. These include:

- the introduction of taxis with wheelchair access – now a legal requirement for new taxi licences
- the careful introduction of road safety measures so as to make it easier for those with certain disabilities to get around St Neots
- continued support for disabled parking
- pedestrian enhancements in the form of improved paths.

As individual schemes from this strategy are brought forward, the needs of disabled people will also be considered.

## Implementing the Strategy

### Programme

The programme of schemes within the strategy reflects the priorities arising through public consultation combined with a recognition of the realistic timescale for the implementation of such schemes. It shows how the measures will be combined so as to provide an integrated package that will address the needs of St Neots. The overall programme, based on the previous sections, is shown in Table A8.25.

### Funding

Funding for the strategy will need to come from a variety of sources. These include the Local Transport Plan, developer contributions, district council contributions and new sources of revenue arising as a result of some of the proposals within the strategy. The pace at which the strategy can be delivered will depend upon the availability of this funding. By providing a clear statement of the schemes for which there is public support in the town, this strategy aims to provide a clear platform for securing a wide range of funding sources.

### Targets

The measures within this strategy are consistent with the Local Transport Plan objectives of achieving stability in peak hour traffic flow and a positive change in modal split in the Market Towns. To measure the performance of this strategy, a series of detailed targets have also been developed for St Neots. These are:

- a 10% increase in public transport use by 2006
- doubling the number of cyclists by 2006
- a 10% increase in walking by 2006.

If met, these targets will contribute significantly to the success of the Local Transport Plan.

## Conclusions

### “The Transport Strategy is a welcomed idea”

#### Questionnaire response

The St Neots Transport Strategy will provide a number of benefits for St Neots, it will:

- provide a clear programme of transport enhancements for the town to 2006

- significantly increase walking and cycling in the town
- improve public transport within the town
- improve access to parking within the town
- provide safety measures that will reduce the numbers of accidents.

The strategy gives a clear indication of the transport measures that should be introduced in St Neots up to 2006 and reflects the responses from the strategy consultation process. The measures in the strategy will ensure St Neots continues to be a pleasant place to live and visit.

## A Transport Strategy for Huntingdon and Godmanchester

### Introduction

This is the Huntingdon and Godmanchester Transport Strategy that forms part of the Local Transport Plan (LTP). The strategy provides a programme of integrated transport initiatives up until 2011, and, depending upon the pace of proposed development, possibly beyond, that supports the Local Transport Plan objectives and contributes towards the prosperity and well-being of the town.

The Huntingdon and Godmanchester strategy is unique in that the scale of development envisaged in the town, as a result of the Structure Plan and more particularly the Huntingdonshire Local Plan related development briefs, are of greater significance than with other market towns in the county. For this reason the strategy needs to be more wide ranging in order to ensure that these developments can be accommodated in an integrated and sustainable way. The towns also represent an individual case within a specific geographical context within the Cambridge Sub-Region and with strategic transport links passing through the towns they have a close relationship with Cambridge. The towns therefore experience similar economic growth and development-related infrastructure pressures to Cambridge.

Of longer term significance to the strategy are other parallel studies, with proposals for the A14, stemming from the Cambridge to Huntingdon Multi-Modal Study (CHUMMS), and the implementation of the Cambridge to Huntingdon Rapid Transit (CHRT) system arising from CHUMMS. For this very reason it is important that the strategy acknowledges CHUMMS and therefore the programme of schemes and measures also looks to the longer term, beyond 2008, and these issues are discussed further in Section 6.

The proposed schemes and measures for the CHRT system in Huntingdon are identified within the strategy, with funding coming through the new LTP. In addition, a number of the schemes and measures within the strategy will compliment the operation of the CHRT system and have therefore been integrated with the proposed timescales for implementation of the CHRT system within Huntingdon.

Other external influences in the longer term would be any development at Alconbury airfield, which may impact on the aims and objectives of the Strategy. Additionally, the need to consider issues arising from the operation and future role of the A141 Huntingdon Northern by-pass may arise, particularly in relation to the future of Alconbury and issues arising from CHUMMS.

### Background

Huntingdon and Godmanchester are situated in the western quadrant of Cambridgeshire 15 km north of St Neots and 25 km west of Cambridge. Huntingdon stands on the north bank of the