

4.110 The table above shows that none of the settlements within 5kms is thought to have anything more than a low demand for a cycle route to Yeovil, reflecting the hilliness of the surrounding area.

4.111 However, if the entrance to Augusta Westland is taken as the centre of the 5km ring, two outlying settlements would appear to possibly have a considerable demand for a cycle route. Odcombe would be awarded a 'medium' demand for a cycle route to Yeovil, and Montacute would have a 'high' demand. This assessment is based on the criteria described above and does not consider the current level of service for cyclists travelling to or from these villages.

Safety

4.112 An analysis of accidents involving cyclists had been undertaken and was reported in the Baseline Review of Transport Conditions. Four accident clusters were identified at:

- ◆ Preston Road/Western Avenue (Asda) roundabout;
- ◆ Larkhill Road/Stiby Road junction;
- ◆ A37 Ilchester Road/A359 Mudford Road Fiveways roundabout; and
- ◆ A30 Sherborne Road/Lyde Road mini-roundabout.

4.113 A Toucan crossing and associated cycle lanes have recently been introduced at the Larkhill Road/Stiby Road junction so the accident cluster at this junction should not occur any longer. The other three sites are heavily trafficked roundabouts, a type of junction that generally attracts high levels of cyclist accidents.

4.114 Methods which can be used to improve actual and perceived safety for cyclists at roundabouts include the following (taken from 'Cycle-friendly Infrastructure' the current DfT national cycle-design guidance):

- ◆ When redesigning a junction, consider whether the roundabout is the best solution;
- ◆ Alter the geometry of the roundabout to make it more cycle-friendly. This could involve reducing the width of the circulatory carriageway, increasing the deflection on entry, and improving signing, road marking and conspicuity;
- ◆ Principles for roundabout design developed in continental Europe may be effective in reducing accidents and perceived danger for cyclists. These reduce the speed of motor vehicles on entering and negotiating the roundabout, and improve the visibility of cyclists. The capacity is less than one based on the UK geometric design parameters but may still be adequate for geometric flows of up to 2,500 vehicles per hour.
- ◆ Signal control of roundabouts is now seen as the best technique for making large roundabouts safer for cyclists.

New development

4.115 It is important that all new developments, both residential and employment, incorporate cycling facilities as part of their design. All three of the proposed large residential developments (Lyde Road, Thorne Lane and Lufton) could be accessed by cycle routes that follow the contours east-west across the north of Yeovil.

4.116 Similarly the large employment development proposed at Bunford will be adjacent to the existing cycle route along the A3088 Lysander Road which has already been shown to have a good level of service.

Conclusions

4.117 A number of approaches have been followed in this review of cycling in Yeovil. The topography in the town has been found to be one of the hilliest of all the Somerset towns that have been assessed and it is encouraging that levels of cycling, as measured by the journey to work data, are so high.

4.118 The explanation for this is likely to be the very high level of cycle commuting at Agusta Westland where over 10% of staff cycle to work. If you ignore the cycle commuters here, Yeovil would have around the average level of cycling in Somerset, rather than a considerably higher amount. It is very important, therefore, that efforts are made to sustain and increase cycle commuting at Agusta Westland. Cycling is already encouraged at Agusta Westland where a Bicycle User Group exists.

4.119 Although Yeovil, as a whole, is a hilly town, topography varies considerably in different areas. The hilliest area is on the south west side of the town on the A30 corridor. To reach this part of Yeovil, cyclists would need to climb approximately 40m with gradients of around 10% which would discourage all but a very small proportion of people from making a journey by bike.

4.120 Resources spent in this, and other hilly areas, are therefore likely to have a very small impact on levels of cycling. The corridors which approach the town centre from the eastern and, in particular, the western directions have much more cycle-friendly topography. Expenditure in these areas is, therefore, likely to be more effective at generating higher levels of cycling.

DEVELOPING A PEDESTRIAN STRATEGY

4.121 The YTSR set the following pedestrian linked objectives.

Source of Objective	Objective
LTP – Yeovil Specific	Increase the number of walk trips
LTP - Countywide	Significant increase in approval rating by pedestrians after implementation of specific schemes

4.122 Many of the other study objectives are linked to changes in the level of pedestrian activity. The result of those parts of the strategy that seek to reduce car usage could be an increase in pedestrian activity and conversely an increase in walking through the Pedestrian Strategy could lead to less car use. The YCRT included the following pedestrian related recommendations:

- ◆ Recommendation 3: It was recommended that there should be pedestrian routes with enhanced surfacing, crossing, signing, seating and security linking the main community buildings of Yeovil. The routes should be well lit with distances marked and dropped kerbs throughout.
- ◆ Recommendation 4: The YCRT Panel recommended that Pelican crossings should be upgraded to Puffin crossings and extra crossings should be installed, especially on the A30 Sherborne Road.

- ◆ Recommendation 5: It was recommended that children should be encouraged to walk to school.
- ◆ Recommendation 6: Security should be improved on pedestrian routes by extending CCTV to parking area, enhancing subway lighting, smartening up the environment and publicising the low crime rates in Yeovil.
- ◆ Recommendation 8: The Panel felt that improving pedestrian routes would provide larger payoffs in terms of modal shift compared to spending on cycle provision.
- ◆ Recommendation 9: Walking or cycling were said to be important foundations to a healthier lifestyle and should be encouraged. 'Walk for Health' programmes were suggested as a means of encouraging walking.
- ◆ Recommendation 33: The YCRT Panel recommended an urgent review of pedestrian facilities.

Walking in Yeovil

Pedestrian Activity

- 4.123 It is difficult to accurately estimate the number of trips made by foot in Yeovil. However, it is known that around 16% of trips to work are made on foot which is well above the average for Somerset and the South West (both 12%) and that at most schools walking is the dominant mode of travel to school (between 43% and 92% for all Yeovil schools).

Pedestrian Facilities

- 4.124 There are a number of controlled pedestrian crossing facilities in Yeovil including zebra crossings, subways, footbridges, traffic signal controlled junctions with pedestrian phases (including Pelican and Toucan crossings) and traffic signal controlled junctions with no pedestrian phases. The number and types of crossings varies considerably across Yeovil, for example there are no controlled crossings in a large part of north east Yeovil whilst there a number of traffic signal controlled crossings at the Reckleford Gyratory.
- 4.125 SCC is currently developing proposals to improve pedestrian crossings at two locations. These are the introduction of a pedestrian phase at the traffic signal controlled junction of Preston Road and Larkhill Road and the installation of a Toucan crossing on the A30 Sherborne Road at Pen Mill station.
- 4.126 In recent years SCC has also undertaken a programme of implementing dropped crossings and tactile paving at a large number of junctions across Yeovil. These have significantly enhanced pedestrian routes especially for disabled people.

Pedestrian Issues

- 4.127 The town centre of Yeovil is bounded by the A30 Queensway and the A30 Reckleford dual carriageway which has the effect of severing Yeovil Town Centre from the rest of the town. Crossing the A30 is an important issue for pedestrians travelling to and from the town centre and the surrounding areas. This includes commuters as two of the town's long stay car parks (Goldcroft and Huish) are located outside of the A30.

- 4.128 The A30 Reckleford is crossed by a subway at the Hospital Roundabout and a traffic signal controlled crossing adjacent to the Market Street junction. It is possible to cross the A30 Reckleford at a number of locations along its length as although there are pedestrian barriers on the central reservation there are many gaps for the pedestrian to utilise. Analysis of accident data shows that there have been a number of pedestrian accidents on the A30 Reckleford.
- 4.129 The A30 Queensway is grade-separated from the local road network. Crossings are limited to a subway at West Hendford and bridges at Huish and The Park. All these crossings have ramped access to cater for cyclists and people with disabilities. It is very difficult for pedestrians to cross the A30 Queensway at other locations due to the road being fully segregated from the local road network.
- 4.130 The grade-separated crossings of the A30 are not welcoming to pedestrians; this is particularly true of the subways at West Hendford and the Hospital Roundabout. The bridges are more acceptable but the Huish bridge is very circuitous and adds a significant distance for pedestrians crossing the A30 Queensway. There are significant pedestrian movements across this bridge as it is the main access into the town centre from Huish car park and provides access to the adjacent Tesco supermarket.

DEVELOPING A TRAVEL PLANNING AND TRAVEL AWARENESS STRATEGY

- 4.131 The following travel planning and awareness linked objective was set for the YTSR.

Source of Objective	Objective
LTP – Yeovil Specific	Eight major employers with Travel Plans in operation by 2006

- 4.132 In addition a large number of the other study objectives will be influenced by the adoption of a more focused travel planning and travel awareness strategy. Such a strategy should result in a reduction in car usage and a possible increase in usage of other modes. This underpins many of the objectives of the YTSR.
- 4.133 The YCRT supported the adoption of ‘Green Travel Plans and included the following recommendation:
- ◆ Recommendation 13: The YCRT panel recommended that all firms with a staff of more than 30 should work towards a green travel plan with agreed targets and applications for planning permission should only be granted if accompanied by tough travel plan. The YCRT also recommended that travel plans should not be confined to individual firms, and that firms should be encouraged to combine their travel plans.

Background

- 4.134 Managing the change of land-use and development over time can have major impact on future travel demands, but these are felt to be in the longer term. More immediate impacts on travel patterns can be achieved through initiatives targeted at changing travel behaviour relating to well established land-uses.
- 4.135 A travel plan is a general term for a package of measures tailored to the needs of individual companies and other institutions (i.e. hospitals, colleges and schools) and aimed at promoting more sustainable travel choices. It involves the development of a

set of mechanisms and targets that together can enable an organisation to reduce the impact of travel and transport on the environment. It can also bring a number of other benefits to an organisation as well as the employees and staff.

- 4.136 Travel plans have been around for over 25 years in the United States, 15 years in the Netherlands, but were first introduced in the UK in 1995. They are an accepted method of reducing travel to work internationally.
- 4.137 National Government strongly support travel plans and Planning Policy Guidance 13 (PPG13) includes the following statements in encouraging sustainable transport access to new developments:

"The Government considers that travel plans should be submitted alongside planning applications which are likely to have significant transport implications... They should have measurable outputs which might relate to targets in the local transport plan, and should set out the arrangements for monitoring the progress of the plans, as well as the arrangement for enforcement, in the event that agreed objectives are not met. They might be designed for the applicant only, or be part of a wider initiative, possibly organised by the local authority, involving other developments in the area" (DTLR, 1999: 24-25)."

- 4.138 PPG13 also states for the first time that it is appropriate for a local planning authority to require planning applications to be accompanied by a Travel Plan in the following circumstances:

- ◆ For all major developments comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services;
- ◆ For smaller developments comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services which would generate significant amounts of travel in locations where there are local initiatives or targets set out in the development plan for the reduction of road traffic, or the promotion of public transport, walking and cycling. This particularly applies to offices, industry, health and education uses;
- ◆ Proposals for new and expanded school facilities should be accompanied by a local school transport plan which promotes safe cycle and walking routes, restricts parking and car access at around schools, and includes, amongst other things, on-site changing and cycle storage facilities; and
- ◆ Where a travel plan would help address a particular local traffic problem associated with a planning application, which might otherwise have to be refused on local traffic grounds.

Current travel plans and travel awareness in Yeovil

- 4.139 The development of travel plans in the UK has grown dramatically over the past three years due largely to the intervention of the government, funding of Local Authority Travel Plan Co-ordinators and the increasing use of the planning process. Travel planning in the Yeovil area (and Somerset) is on the whole still at an early stage of development, with a small number of major employers currently at different stages of implementing their respective travel plans. The current status of these travel plans is shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 – Existing travel plans in Yeovil

Company	Travel Plan Status
Agusta Westland	In place
Aerosystems International, Yeovil	In place
East Somerset NHS Trust (Yeovil Hospital)	In place
Safeway Store, Yeovil	In place
Screwfix, Yeovil	In place
South Somerset District Council, Yeovil	In place
South Somerset Homes, Yeovil	In place
Dorset & Somerset Strategic Health Authority, Lufton Way, Yeovil	In place
University Centre, Yeovil	In place
Department of Social Services, Yeovil	Developing
Proposed Offices at Alvington, Houndstone Corner, Yeovil	Developing
Quedam Shopping Centre, Yeovil	Developing

Source: SCC

4.140 In addition, a car share scheme is in operation in Somerset. Currently three organisations (Abbey Manor Group, Department of Social Services, and South Somerset District Council) based in Yeovil are members of this scheme, but it is hoped that this will increase in the future. Several potential new members have already been identified, including:

- ◆ Aerosystems International;
- ◆ East Somerset NHS Trust;
- ◆ Quedam;
- ◆ Screwfix;
- ◆ South Somerset Homes;
- ◆ Agusta Westland; and
- ◆ Yeovil College.

4.141 SCC is committed to delivering improved transport choices for all. In getting started they have recently undertaken a considerable amount of work with employers throughout Somerset to raise the awareness of what impact car use has on the local environment and economy. This includes raising awareness of how these conditions will deteriorate further should car use continue to grow, and how travel plans can be used to improve the situation for all involved.

4.142 SCC has made itself available, primarily through their Business Travel Plan Co-ordinator, to offer free advice to organisations interested in developing a travel plan. They have made excellent progress to date including:

- ◆ Launching the Somerset Car share scheme which is now available to over 12,000 employees and growing;
- ◆ Have produced a number of information leaflets on bus travel; car sharing, cycling and walking;
- ◆ Developed an extensive website providing advice and guidance including templates that can be downloaded;
- ◆ Produced an employers guide to developing travel plans which has been sent out to over 350 employers;
- ◆ Established good links with development control officers in SCC and local District and Borough Councils;
- ◆ Reviewing public transport provision with local operators to ensure its compatibility with travel plan initiatives is optimised; and
- ◆ Promote initiatives including Somerset Bike2Work Day.

4.143 In addition, SCC is making progress to identify a number of businesses with similar transport challenges to form a Travel Plan Network for Yeovil. This forum would allow experiences together with guidance on best practise to be shared amongst local organisations.

Travel planning and travel awareness process

Background

4.144 There are strong potential synergies between travel plan initiatives and other elements of the transport strategy. For example, benefits could be maximised by co-ordinating travel plans with schemes to enhance public transport provision and pedestrian/cycle links between employment centres, the railway station and other transport interchanges.

4.145 A co-ordinated approach to travel plans could seek to exploit the potential synergies between different types of travel plans, for instance a school travel plan which releases the parent from the need to drive their children to school, and an employer's travel plan which encourages its staff (parents) to use public transport.

4.146 In recent years, there has been growing interest in a range of initiatives, which are now widely described as 'soft' transport policy measures. These seek to give better information and opportunities, aimed at helping people to choose to reduce their car use while enhancing the attractiveness of alternatives. They are fairly new as part of mainstream transport policy, mostly relatively uncontroversial, and often popular. They include:

- ◆ Workplace and school travel plans;
- ◆ Personalised travel planning, travel awareness campaigns, and public transport information and marketing;
- ◆ Car clubs and car sharing schemes;
- ◆ Teleworking, teleconferencing and home shopping.

4.147 The site specific nature of travel plans cannot be emphasised enough. The literature and experience indicate that the amount of money applied to a travel plan is not

always an accurate predictor of its success. With regard to the measures in travel plans current DfT advice ('Smarter Choices-Changing the Way We Travel', DfT 2004) states that the following can be achieved:

- ◆ A plan containing only marketing and promotion is unlikely to achieve any modal shift;
- ◆ A plan with car sharing and cycle measures may achieve 5-8% reduction in drive alone commuting;
- ◆ A plan with the above measures plus large (30%+) discounts on public transport plus works buses may achieve around a 15% reduction; and
- ◆ The combination of all of the above measures plus disincentives to car use may achieve a larger (20%+) reduction in drive alone commuting.

4.148 It is recognised that the outputs of the YCRT are unlikely to assist travel plans in delivering large reductions in drive alone commuting. The strategy will not be recommending the punitive disincentives to car use which would assist in achieving this goal.

4.149 There are a number of possible approaches and tools to develop and encourage the travel planning and awareness process and these are described below.

Using the planning process to secure travel plans

4.150 Securing travel plans through the planning process is still at an embryonic stage and this has resulted in the production of many "greenwash travel plans". For companies in the UK, the statutory nature of the UK Planning system is increasingly being used to realise private sector contributions to travel plan projects. DfT guidance (Using the Planning Process to secure Travel Plan, July 2002) offers best practice on effective and efficient ways for local authorities to meet travel plan requirements that accompany a planning application.

Interim/supplementary planning guidance

4.151 A great deal of scope exists to secure more travel plans through the planning process. There needs to be improved communication between those tasked with delivering travel plans and those dealing with development control.

4.152 Increasingly Local Authorities are adopting Supplementary/Interim Planning Guidance for travel plans and several have usefully covered both travel plans and transport assessments in the same guidance. The best examples (i.e. Surrey County Council and London Borough of Camden) cover a wide range of related matters, including these main headings:

- ◆ Purpose and scope of a travel plan;
- ◆ National and regional and local policy framework;
- ◆ When a travel plan is required;
- ◆ Process for determining travel plan requirements;
- ◆ Establishing targets;
- ◆ Components ('actions') of a travel plan;

- ◆ Assessment of the travel plan;
- ◆ Ways of securing the travel plan (including standard clauses);
- ◆ Procedures in relation to speculative developments;
- ◆ Monitoring and review procedures; and
- ◆ Enforcement.

4.153 In spring 2004 SCC hosted a Travel Plan seminar at County Hall to discuss how they along with local District and Borough Councils could incorporate travel plans into the planning process. One of the main outcomes of the day was the need for the establishment of Supplementary Planning Guidance on Travel Plans, to ensure a consistent approach across the County so that everyone involved in the process knows, amongst other things, when they are required and what should be included. It was decided at the seminar that this process was to be lead by SCC.

Funding

4.154 Two of the key barriers to the take up and implementation of travel plans are funding and site specific advice. There is a need for SCC to publicise the funding streams available to organisations to assist them with the development of travel plans. One way of organisations starting out in the travel plan process to get both advice and funding is five free days of consultancy advice available from the Transport Energy Best Practice Programme. SCC also needs to provide organisations with advice on where they can apply for other funding sources.

Database of Travel Plan Activity

4.155 The SCC Travel Plan Co-ordinator already maintains a database of both Travel Plan and car share activity in Yeovil. This should be developed further into a simple database that identifies details of all travel plans required as part of Section 106 agreements. SSCDC should be encouraged to keep such records having first defined the content of them.

Travel Plan Evaluation Tool

4.156 The DfT has recently published a workplace travel plan evaluation tool. The software enables the assessment of travel plan documents and evaluates the 'process' of developing a travel plan, which in turn should help to predict the 'outcomes'.

4.157 The tool is useful to:

- ◆ Organisations that are developing their travel plan and need to know what should be in the plan - and also what to do if their targets are not achieved;
- ◆ Developers and others that are proposing travel plans as part of a new development; and
- ◆ Local Authorities that want to assess the credibility of travel plans proposed by developers.

4.158 SCC should use this Travel Plan tool as a way of monitoring local travel plan development and effectiveness in Yeovil. By doing this they will be able to establish a local accreditation standard by which all travel plans could seek to be recognised.

Travel Plan Network

- 4.159 There are many benefits from the development of Yeovil Travel Plan Network which will help to improve the standard to which travel plans are implemented by the sharing of good practice.
- 4.160 Travel Plan Networks are groups of organisations working together to reduce their car use. The types of organisations that manage and run travel plan networks include local authorities, campaign groups, companies, chambers of commerce and others whose activities can generate large volumes of travel.
- 4.161 Concerted action within the network can be a catalyst for action as benefits can form from the greater influence of large numbers and also through economies of scale. The four main roles of travel plan networks are as follows:
- ◆ To exchange information, ideas and good practice;
 - ◆ To provide practical support for those engaged in travel plan development;
 - ◆ To make viable the provision of services relating to travel plans on a collective basis; and
 - ◆ To combine efforts to generate an effective bargaining force.

Multi-media awareness, branding and information

- 4.162 There is a need to continue using the strategic Travel Awareness brand (TravelWise) across SCC and Yeovil. It is important from the outset to ensure continuity during the Marketing of travel plans. In addition there needs to be a continual feed of information rather than just big awareness events in order to maintain the momentum of travel plans and ensure their successful implementation. SCC already has a distribution scheme for displaying information on transport at over 120 outlets across Somerset. This could be used to promote sustainable transport including travel plans for employers.

Personalised Journey Planning

- 4.163 There are proposals to produce site specific Public Transport information (bus) focusing on the major traffic generators and attractors in Somerset's urban areas. The scheme would utilise the electronic data collected and held in conjunction with the PTI2000/Traveline project. Priority should be given to those employers that have established travel plans or are in the process of developing travel plans.

Regular newsletters/information

- 4.164 A newsletter is an effective way of maintaining interest in travel plans as it keeps the concept present in people's minds and is a key tool for employee participation. A newsletter could include reviews of initiatives in place indicating the level of success in Yeovil. People can be easily put off and if benefits of an initiative are not apparent this could discourage those who might be sceptical.
- 4.165 Information from other travel plans around the county or within a forum could be included to provide a comparison for those taking part. Feedback forms within the newsletter would provide an opportunity for people taking part in the travel plan to

indicate their feelings on how the plan is working and what (if anything) they would like to see done better.

SCC and SSSDC – leading by example

4.166 SCC is in the process of updating its Travel Plan and has recently undertaken and analysed another Staff Travel Survey in order to ascertain the impact of initiatives that have been implemented. It is important that this process continues in order to show the local employers in Yeovil that SCC are leading by example. They should produce an A4 colour factsheet detailing what SCC are doing at County Hall in relation to their travel plan.

4.167 Similarly SSSDC has an important role in showing the benefits that their travel plan is bringing to Yeovil. Local employers and employees need to see that the process can work and that is accepted and regarded as successful by employers and employees alike.

Role of travel plan co-ordinator

4.168 For the travel planning process to succeed it is essential that SCC have an adequate travel plan co-ordination resource. The role of a travel plan co-ordinator is an important one whose remit will span the whole of the Somerset including Yeovil. The Travel Plan Co-ordinator will be expected to:

- ◆ Plan, develop, negotiate and support implementation of travel plan strategies and travel plans for Yeovil;
- ◆ Encourage the take up of comprehensive, effective and innovative travel plans by developers, major employers, the local councils, and other trip-generating organisations/sites; and
- ◆ Develop and disseminate best practice in travel planning as an interface between land use and transport strategy.

4.169 At the moment the Travel Plan Co-ordinator at SCC is employed on a short term contract. This role should be made permanent as the work they undertake contributes to the overall strategy in relation to the management of traffic growth and congestion. Additional resources should be made available for another member of staff to assist with the promotion of travel plans, car sharing and travel awareness across Somerset.

DEVELOPING A SCHOOL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

4.170 The following travel planning and awareness linked objective was set for the YTSR.

Source of Objective	Objective
LTP – Countywide	70% of secondary and middle schools, 40% of primary schools and 100% of FE colleges to have participated in the Safe Routes to School Process. Reduce proportion of children travelling to school by car from: 36% to 10% for secondary school children and 48% to 38% for primary school children.

4.171 In addition a large number of the other study objectives will be influenced by the adoption of a school transport strategy. Such a strategy should result in a reduction in car usage and a possible increase in usage of other modes. This underpins many of the objectives of the YTSR.

4.172 The YCRT supported the goal of encouraging walking to school:

- ◆ Recommendation 5: The YCRT panel recommended that an audit should be carried out for every school in Yeovil from which could be developed a green travel plan.

Background

4.173 School travel is regarded by many as one of the key causes of highway congestion during the peak hours (particularly the morning peak hour). The Baseline Review of Transport Conditions showed that at many schools the car is a significant mode of transport for children travelling to school and at a few schools the majority of pupils travel by car.

4.174 With large numbers of children coming from outside schools' catchment areas the length of school journeys has increased although in Yeovil the average distance travelled by pupils at all of the schools does not exceed two kilometres.

4.175 To try and address this situation the concept of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) schemes and School Travel plans has been developed. In the UK this has grown dramatically over the past five years largely due to the intervention of government funding and the increasing use of the planning process.

4.176 Safe Routes to Schools projects encourage and enable children to walk and cycle to school through a combined package of practical and educational measures. Safe Routes to Schools projects aim to;

- ◆ improve road safety and reduce child casualties;
- ◆ improve children's health and development; and
- ◆ reduce traffic congestion and pollution.

4.177 Successful SRTS projects are child-centred, build on small steps to raise awareness and change travel behaviour and benefit the whole local community by helping to create safer, healthier environments.

4.178 Each school is different, with its own local problems and possible solutions. Developing a SRTS/School Travel Plan scheme can help ensure the complete situation is considered and that appropriate action is taken.

4.179 A high quality school travel plan puts forward a package of measures to improve safety and reduce car use, backed by a partnership involving the school, education and transport officers from the local authority, the police and the health authority. It is based on consultation with teachers, parents, pupils and governors and other local people.

4.180 National Government strongly support travel plans and PPG13 includes the following statements in encouraging sustainable transport access to new and expanded school facilities:

"The Government considers that travel plans should be submitted alongside planning applications which are likely to have significant transport implications... They should have measurable outputs which might relate to targets in the local transport plan, and should set out the arrangements for monitoring the progress of the plans, as well as the arrangement for enforcement, in the event that agreed objectives are not met. They might be designed for the applicant only, or be part of a wider initiative, possibly organised by the local authority, involving other developments in the area" (DTLR, 1999: 24-25).

4.181 PPG13 also states for the first time that it is appropriate for a local planning authority to require planning applications to be accompanied by a Travel Plan in the following circumstances:

"new and expanded school facilities which should be accompanied by a school travel plan which promotes safe cycle and walking routes, restricts parking and car access at and around schools, and includes on-site changing and cycle storage facilities".

4.182 In 2001 funding was made available for the three year appointment of school travel plan co-ordinators to work in local authorities on school travel. In addition, the Transport Energy Best Practice Programme set up an advice scheme whereby schools could request five free days of advice on developing a school travel plan.

4.183 A new joint initiative was launched by the departments of Transport and Education in September 2003. This has seen the funding for local authority based school travel advisors and regional travel advisors based in each government office region for at least two years. Somerset County Council was successful in securing funding through this new initiative. In addition, local authority schools with an authorised travel plan have also become eligible for capital funding (approximately £5,000 per primary school and £10,000 per secondary school) to fund their travel work.

4.184 In March 2004 'The Draft School Transport Bill' was published which proposes to set up a number of 'school travel schemes' in local education authority areas. These schemes would enable local authorities to pilot new approaches to school transport with the stated aim of reducing road congestion caused by the increasing proportion of children being driven to school.

4.185 Over the past twenty years the proportion of children travelling to school by car has almost doubled. The National Travel Survey 2002 shows that 41% of primary school children and almost 24% of secondary school pupils are driven to school each day even though many of these journeys are less than two miles.

4.186 Although education trips made by car are a fairly small proportion of the overall car trips made in Yeovil, they can make a significant contribution to traffic congestion problems. This is because the trips focus on a few destinations and over a very short timescale which, as the schools all start at 9am within Yeovil, coincides with the morning commuter peak.

- 4.187 In 2002/03 Somerset County Council (SCC) undertook travel surveys at schools in Somerset, in some cases including nearly all pupils attending each school. It is clear that the dominant modes for school travel include the private car and walking. In Yeovil car use ranges from 8% to 56% of trips to primary schools and likewise the proportion of trips made on foot range from 43% to 92% across the different schools.
- 4.188 It is possible to see a relationship between the mode of travel and the average distance travelled by each pupil. Generally the larger the average distance, the smaller the percentage walking and the greater the percentage travelling by car.
- 4.189 National policy to increase parental choice of schools has made it more difficult to get pupils to school by bus, foot or cycle and this is true in Yeovil. There are concerns that this could limit the effectiveness of school travel plans if parents increasingly choose to send their children to schools outside their local catchment area.

Safe Routes to Schools in Somerset

- 4.190 SCC is committed to delivering improved transport choices for all travellers and have undertaken a considerable amount of work with schools throughout Somerset to raise the awareness of what impact car use has on the local environment and economy, how these conditions will deteriorate further should car use continue to grow, and how travel plans can be used to improve the situation for all involved.
- 4.191 SCC has made itself available, primarily through their Safe Routes to School Team, to offer free advice to schools interested in developing a SRTS programme. They have made excellent progress to date including:
- ◆ Schools have Young TransNet embedded in their own intranet sites;
 - ◆ 80 schools are currently registered and about half of these have produced travel data;
 - ◆ Promote Walk on Wednesday during Green Transport Week;
 - ◆ Offer incentives to encourage the development of travel plans (i.e. free bike racks); and
 - ◆ Organise 'Right Track Cycling Awareness Courses' for schools.

Young TransNet

- 4.192 Young TransNet uses IT and the internet to assist children and young people in transport research and action. The long term aim of Young TransNet is to increase walking, cycling and the use of public transport, and to reduce motor traffic. The Somerset Young TransNet portal is the result of a joint collaboration between SCC Safe Routes to School Team and Young TransNet.
- 4.193 The Young TransNet site contains many useful links and shows examples of how transport initiatives being used in Somerset in the curriculum and the local area in general including:
- ◆ A Highway Code for Young Road users;
 - ◆ A Safer Journey to School;
 - ◆ Green Club Magazine;

- ◆ Guidelines for cycling to school; and
- ◆ How Far is it? Distance Lesson Plan.

Walk on Wednesday

4.194 During Green Transport Month SCC promote ‘Walk on Wednesday’ where it encourages schools to participate and seek more pupils to walk, cycle, use the bus or car share. The event is run as a competition and there are prizes for the school that achieve the best results.

Right Track Cycling Awareness Course

4.195 The aim of the Right Track Cycle Awareness Scheme is to promote safe cycling by developing the cyclist’s awareness and judgement. There are two types of course, Pre-Right Track for the under nine’s and the full Right Track course for age nine and above.

4.196 Courses are run with volunteer tutors who are trained by the SCC Road Safety Trainer. The course goes back to basics, with how a bike works, a bike check, control exercises and learning the correct road procedures. This all helps to develop good riding skills which can be transferred to the road

DEVELOPING A PUBLIC TRANSPORT STRATEGY

4.197 The public transport strategy has assessed both bus and rail transport in Yeovil. The following public transport linked objectives were set for the YTSR.

Source of Objective	Objective
LTP – Countywide	Reduce level of unmet rural bus demand to 2%. Increase rail passengers boarding/alighting at Yeovil’s rail stations by 15%. Increase approval rating for bus access and facilities and access on QBP routes. Increase the proportion of rail passengers accessing stations by non-car modes from 35% to 50%. Provide 25 transport interchanges. Increase the percentage of users satisfied with local provision of public transport provision to 45%.
LTP – Yeovil Specific	Increase bus use.

4.198 In addition a large number of the other study objectives will be influenced by an increase in bus or rail use resulting from the adoption of the public transport strategy.

4.199 The YCRT supported the goal of encouraging public transport:

- ◆ Recommendation 11: Creating the conditions to enable reliable bus and taxi operations. Suggestions included opening up the High Kingston/Reckleford junction for buses and similarly allowing buses to travel east from Market Street;

- ◆ Recommendation 12: Creating demand for public transport. The YCRT Panel recommended that new development should be of a higher density with good public transport;
- ◆ Recommendation 15: The need for accessible vehicles. It was recommended that SCC provide subsidies to enable the purchase of accessible vehicles and there was felt to be a need to adapt bus stops for wheelchair access;
- ◆ Recommendation 16: The role of the bus station – an interchange not a terminus. The bus station should be enhanced and with proposed cross-town bus routes the buses should stop at the bus station for interchange, not terminate;
- ◆ Recommendation 17: A round the town hop-on/hop-off service. The YCRT Panel recommended the establishment of a round town hop-off hop-on minibus service;
- ◆ Recommendation 18: Coaches. A need was identified for a coach park remote from the bus interchange recommended in Recommendation 17;
- ◆ Recommendation 23: Create a partnership to develop travel information. This should include all bus companies, rail operators and a large employer, not only in Somerset but also Dorset;
- ◆ Recommendation 37: Bus priorities. A bus and taxi access should be provided to gain access from Reckleford. In the longer term Sherborne Road could be made a priority route for buses, taxis and cyclists by constructing a road from Pen Mill to Reckleford and Summerhouse Terrace/Old Station Road.

4.200 The work undertaken in developing both the bus strategy and rail strategy are discussed in the following sections.

Bus Strategy

National Policy and Legislation

4.201 The following section provides a brief summary of current legislation and policy relating to the bus industry.

Transport Act 1985

4.202 The operation of local bus services is determined by the provisions of the 1985 Transport Act. The provisions were effective from October 1986 and are commonly considered as 'deregulation'. The 1985 Act removed the requirement to prove the need for a service and operators became free to operate whatever services they wished, subject to their holding an Operators Licence and registering it with the Traffic Commissioner at least 42 days prior to its introduction.

4.203 One major result of this change was the introduction of competition to the supply of bus services. In the early days of deregulation there was substantial competition in a number of major urban areas but this has tended to subside, particularly as many larger operators have become part of major groups.

4.204 Local authorities are left to determine what transport need is not being met by the commercial service provision and, then, to seek bus services to meet these needs

through competitive tendering. The Act also obliged local authorities who wish to subsidise local bus services to go to open competitive tender and to determine which tender to accept solely by reference to what, in their view, is the most cost effective and economic application of the funds available for such subsidies. There was also a duty not to inhibit competition between operators as a result of providing service subsidies (although under the Transport Act (2000) this is replaced by a duty to have regard for the interests of the public and of operators when inviting and accepting tenders).

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995

- 4.205 The DDA introduced accessibility regulations for local buses and scheduled coaches, but not coaches used for holiday tours, contract and private hire. New coaches with a seated capacity of 23 or more were required to provide full wheelchair access by the start of 2005.

The Competition Act 1998

- 4.206 The Competition Act 1998 introduced conditions to prohibit anti-competitive behaviour, including price fixing and market sharing. It has had a particular bearing on the bus industry. The Act specifically prohibits:

- ◆ agreements between undertakings, decisions by associations of undertakings or concerted practices which have the object or effect of preventing, restricting or distorting competition in the United Kingdom; and
- ◆ conduct by one or more undertakings which amounts to the abuse of a dominant position in a market in the United Kingdom.

- 4.207 Particularly relevant to the bus industry, in terms of providing a co-ordinated service, is the prohibition of:

- ◆ directly or indirectly fixing purchase or selling prices or any other trading conditions; and
- ◆ sharing markets or sources of supply.

- 4.208 In terms of fixing prices it had been fairly common practice to offer joint or multi-operator ticketing. In terms of sharing markets, some bus services have traditionally been provided by two or more operators, particularly those of a longer-distance nature. Effectively the Competition Act, as initially implemented, does not allow for a ticket to be offered at the same price by different operators. Equally, it does not allow for a jointly provided service to be the subject of discussion between the operators making the provision of a co-ordinated timetable rather difficult.

- 4.209 There is a block exemption for multi-operator tickets, although operators seeking specific rulings on individual schemes face an administration fee of £13,000. The complexity of the situation can lead to operators being unwilling to consider joint ticketing schemes, although provisions in the Transport Act 2000 allow for local authorities to set up such ticketing schemes whereby operators of local bus services are required to make and implement the necessary arrangements.

The Transport Act 2000

- 4.210 The Transport Act 2000 requires local authorities to produce Local Transport Plans and bus strategies, information strategies, and provide a concessionary travel scheme for elderly and disabled groups. The Act also included Quality Bus Partnerships (QBP's) and Quality Contracts (QCs) to help deliver bus strategies.
- 4.211 The Transport Act 2000 has, however, introduced minimum standards for concessionary fares schemes. In England this comprises a 50% reduction on full standard adult fares for pensioners and the disabled (excluding weekday morning peak periods).
- 4.212 The Act also imposes a number of other duties and responsibilities on local authorities in terms of public transport. It imposes a duty on authorities to prepare and publish a Local Transport Plan setting out their policies for the promotion of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport facilities in their area, and to develop a bus strategy for carrying out their bus functions. Authorities are also expected to implement a Public Transport Information Strategy.
- 4.213 An important change brought about by the Transport Act 2000 is the revocation of the requirement for local authorities to behave "so as not to inhibit competition" when tendering for non-commercial services. This is replaced by a duty to have regard to the interests of the public and of operators.
- 4.214 Specific details with respect to Quality Bus Partnerships, Quality Contracts and ticketing schemes, and information strategies are also contained within the Transport Act 2000 and these are described more fully in the following sections.

Quality Bus Partnerships and Quality Contracts

- 4.215 The concept of Quality Bus Partnerships (QBP's) has been around for some time and generally, involves one or more bus operators and one or more local authorities agreeing a partnership. The operator(s) agree to provide a certain standard of service, usually through the introduction of low-floor buses, whilst the authority agrees to provide some infrastructure improvement, such as bus priority or improved shelters/waiting arrangements, to assist the operation. Such schemes have been non-statutory.
- 4.216 The Transport Act 2000 allows for statutory schemes, the principal difference being that they would be enforceable at law. The improvements to be provided under a scheme must include facilities at specific locations along bus routes, or prospective bus routes, which bus operators can use. Information facilities, often included as part of non-statutory schemes, may not be included if the authority has already determined that these must be provided throughout their area as part of provisions in the act relating to information provision. Standards may then be imposed upon operators, but these specifically must not include service frequencies or timings.
- 4.217 A statutory scheme requires formal consultation with operators and interested parties and once in operation must remain so for at least five years.
- 4.218 Quality Contracts differ from Quality Partnerships in quite fundamental ways. Sections 124 to 134 of the Transport Act 2000 enable local authorities, either alone

or jointly, to make a Quality Contract (QC) scheme provided that they are satisfied that it is the only practicable way to implement their bus strategy or strategies.

- 4.219 Under a QC scheme, the authority will determine what local services should be provided in the area concerned and to what standard. Contracts would then be let with bus operators, granting them exclusive rights to provide services to the authority's specification. The contracts may last for no more than 5 years.
- 4.220 If a QC scheme is implemented, the standard provisions of the 1985 Transport Act would no longer apply. Operators would not be able to register any service wholly within the QC area for commercial operation. For that reason, full consultation is required and a scheme could not come into operation for at least 21 months after it is made. The White Paper 'Future for Transport: a Network for 2030 (DfT 2004)' confirms that the government intends to reduce the time between making and implementing a scheme a minimum of six months but only in cases where this will have a minimum effect on bus operators. In addition, the local authority must demonstrate that this is the only practical way of delivering its bus strategy.
- 4.221 A recent development, outlined in the White Paper, is that routes which are procured under a Quality Contract will not receive a Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) but instead a parallel sum of money will be transferred to the local authority for procurement of bus services.

Ticketing Schemes

- 4.222 Sections 135 to 138 of the Transport Act 2000 empower local transport authorities, alone or jointly, to set up ticketing schemes, whereby operators of local bus services are required to make and implement arrangements to accept each other's tickets or provide integrated ticketing in ways specified in the scheme.
- 4.223 In making a scheme, the local transport authority must be satisfied that it is in the public interest and helps to implement the bus strategy.
- 4.224 Some operators are already involved in area-wide ticketing, although as already noted the provisions of the Competition Act have stifled developments, but they cannot be compelled to do so. If a scheme is made, operators will be compelled to participate if they wish to provide local bus services in the area.

Funding Local Bus Services

- 4.225 For local bus services which are not commercially viable there are a number of funding sources available. These include:
- ◆ *Local Authority Revenue Support:* The system of local authority support for socially necessary services supports around 15% of services in Somerset. The level of revenue support in 2001/02 was £502 million across the whole of Britain.
 - ◆ *Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG):* RBSG was introduced in 1998/99 and provides for additional local bus services to rural communities previously not well served. The grant is distributed to English local authorities and allocations are based on numbers living in rural areas. The rules of the scheme were made more flexible in 2001/02 so that it could support existing

as well as new services, and to apply to larger rural towns. Total allocated to Somerset for 2003/04 was £1.518m out of a national budget of £48.5 million, which is due to increase by 5.1% to £51 million in 2004/05. Recently the rules for this scheme have been relaxed to allow Local Authorities more freedom in the way they allocate funds.

- ◆ *Rural Bus Challenge:* The Rural Bus Challenge is an annual competition in which local authorities bid for funding for schemes aimed at stimulating innovation in the provision and promotion of rural public transport, improving quality and choice across the country. It is available for towns less than 25,000 in population. The challenge funding provides support for a limited period and as part of the “exit strategy” the authority is supposed to identify whether the scheme will be commercially viable or what alternative funding sources will be available once the period of the challenge funding has expired.
- ◆ *Urban Bus Challenge:* Similar to Rural Bus Challenge funding, the project must serve a town of at least 25,000 in population. In 2003 the Government’s set aside £18 million across England and Wales. Also in 2003 the Kickstart initiative was introduced to support projects which pump-prime new services, or provide service improvements, with the objective of increasing bus patronage and developing bus services as an alternative to car use.
- ◆ *Bus Service Operators Grant:* BSOG is currently paid to all operators of local bus services available to the general public. It reimburses most of the fuel duty paid by operators (100 per cent for new cleaner fuels). From 1 May 2002 the scope of the scheme was extended to include a wider range of Community Transport Services.
- ◆ *Concessionary fares:* Operators are reimbursed for revenue foregone as a result of the concessionary fares scheme. Nationally the level of concessionary fare reimbursement was £501 million in 2001/02.

4.226 A review of bus subsidies was undertaken in 2002 to ensure that the money provided by the government is best used to meet policy objectives. The review focussed on whether BSOG is the best way to allocating funds to help deliver the Government’s bus policy objectives. The conclusion was that *‘the benefits to be gained from any change are not certain enough to justify the costs and disruption at a time when we want operators to focus all their energy on improving services for passengers’*.

The Future of Transport: A Network for 2030 (Department for Transport 2004)

4.227 The recent White Paper highlights the need for bus services to be:

- ◆ punctual – achieved through buses priority in congested areas and greater use of pre-paid ticketing to speed boarding;
- ◆ good value – for both the traveller and the taxpayer;
- ◆ frequent and reliable – with up-to-date travel information that is easy to obtain;
- ◆ seamless – with good integration of bus services and other travel networks;
- ◆ safe – both when travelling on the bus and when walking to and from the bus stop; and
- ◆ clean, comfortable and attractive – with well-designed and maintained buses.

4.228 The White Paper also states that additional funding might be available, through the Transport Innovation Fund, for Local Authorities who wish to design and implement bold projects combining:

- ◆ radically enhanced bus services; and
- ◆ plans to tackle congestion through measures such as congestion charging schemes.

4.229 The benefits of demand responsive transport in rural areas are also outlined in the document, including:

- ◆ providing the same, or better, levels of service while using fewer vehicles and drivers;
- ◆ providing more personalised travel, which can be 'door to door'; and
- ◆ services do not need to run when there is no demand.

4.230 Recent legislative changes to support the establishment of these services include:

- ◆ changes to make it easier to register a service with routes and timing that vary with demand; and
- ◆ making demand-responsive services eligible for BSOG and extending RBSG to include demand responsive and taxi-based services.

Good Practice

4.231 The White Paper highlights a number of areas where significant improvements have been made to the quality of bus networks. Examples of this Good Practice include:

- ◆ a QBP corridor between Leicester, Loughborough and Shepshed attracted 26 per cent more passengers in its first year;
- ◆ a partnership between Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, Arriva Midlands, First, Kinchbus and Trent Barton provides real-time bus information for over 30 routes at bus stops, on the internet or by text message to a mobile phone;
- ◆ successful corridor improvements, including bus priority linked to park and ride sites and traffic restraint measures in the city centre in Cambridge has helped to produce an overall 7 per cent increase in patronage in 2003;
- ◆ improvements in Brighton including CCTV, a simplified flat fare system and a colour-coded network of core routes with frequent services. These have been supported by infrastructure improvements including bus priority and new shelters. A joint council/operator vehicle location scheme provides bus priority at traffic signals and information for real-time passenger information displays. Bus use in the city grew by 50 per cent over the last 10 years;
- ◆ in Lincolnshire the InterConnect network of inter-urban services has been established with rural bus grant and challenge funding. Core routes are linked to flexible feeder services giving the more remote rural communities across the county access to Lincoln and the market towns. Increases in patronage on the corridors range from 40 to 140 per cent over a two to four year period;
- ◆ in Telford and Wrekin the local authority, in partnership with the local bus operator, effectively re-designed the local bus network to meet the needs of

the travelling public. The Wrekin Connect services link dispersed rural communities with the urban network. Taken together, these measures have helped to boost bus usage across the borough by 14 per cent since 1999; and

- ◆ a taxi-bus servicing the railway station in Bicester was introduced in 2002. It features eight routes, with one vehicle on each, serving four urban housing estates and four surrounding villages. In the first 18 months there was a 250 per cent increase in passengers.

Regional Strategy

Developing the Regional Transport Strategy - Investment Priorities for the South West

4.232 This summary document has been published as part of the task of developing and updating the current Regional Transport Strategy. The Regional Transport Strategy needs to be updated to take in to account the outcome of multi-modal studies, SWARMMS, and the national Airports Policy Review. Transport funding is limited and therefore investment priorities need to be clear.

4.233 The key transport problems and issues for the South West which need to be addressed with investment are:

- ◆ Peripherality: SWARMMS concluded that without investment, accessibility will decline due to congestion and this will widen regional disparities;
- ◆ Congestion and the development of Principal Urban Areas: RPG10 identifies PUA's as major engines for economic growth. Congestion and capacity constraints will impinge on their future growth;
- ◆ Accessibility and social exclusion: Transport services are generally better in urban areas but services tend to focus on routes in and out of town, with limited links to residential areas. In some urban areas employment sites are located where they are poorly served by public transport;
- ◆ Reducing the impact of transport on the environment: Reducing the need to travel in the interest of the global environment is an objective of the Governments transport and planning policies. Closer integration of environmental and transport objectives has the potential to deliver benefits to the region; and
- ◆ Inter-Urban congestion is becoming apparent on most routes into the South West. SWARMMS predicted that unless investment is made, congestion will increase and journey time reliability decline. The rail network also has problems, which is apparent in the overcrowding of trains and bottlenecks.

4.234 The objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy are covered by five main heading:

- ◆ Economic including:
 - ◆ Providing efficient transport;
 - ◆ Reducing inequalities;
 - ◆ Reducing peripherality; and
 - ◆ Contributing to national targets.
- ◆ Environmental including:

- ◆ Protect and improve character and diversity;
 - ◆ Reduce pollution;
 - ◆ Reduce impact of congestion.
 - ◆ Social including:
 - ◆ Improve safety;
 - ◆ Improve rural accessibility;
 - ◆ Reduce travel demands; and
 - ◆ Increase sustainable travel.
 - ◆ Spatial including:
 - ◆ Relieve congestion.
 - ◆ Delivery: Projects that are affordable and offer value for money.
- 4.235 The Regional Assembly recently consulted on a range of draft priorities for the South West. Particularly relevant to the bus strategy are:
- ◆ development of major public transport systems including bus 'showcase' routes on congested corridors;
 - ◆ park and ride strategies (linked to other solutions); Network management measures to manage the demand for road space;
 - ◆ parking strategy to discourage long stay commuters (who will be encouraged to switch to other modes of travel and/or park and ride; and
 - ◆ emphasis on investment in bus interchange hubs for public transport integration.

Local Strategy and Policy

Local Transport Plan

- 4.236 The SCC LTP reports that bus service coverage within Yeovil can be patchy although the document suggests that since 1999 (when First took over the local services) there have been:
- ◆ improvements to vehicle quality;
 - ◆ improvements to bus shelters (through SSSDC working with an advertising company); and
 - ◆ bus priority measures are planned with improved access for buses to the Borough (2000-01 financial year).
- 4.237 The Yeovil strategy outlines three main elements:
- ◆ managing traffic growth by encouraging alternatives to the car by controlling long stay parking;
 - ◆ improving journey alternatives within the town by:
 - ◆ Improving facilities for those who wish to walk for short journeys in the town centre;
 - ◆ Ensuring a network of routes is available to improve access for people with disabilities;

- ◆ Encouraging greater use of town bus services; and
- ◆ Encouraging greater use of cycling.
- ◆ improving travel alternatives for journeys from outside the town by encouraging greater use of longer distance bus services.

4.238 Specific objectives within each of the strategy elements included:

- ◆ to encourage the development of a quality and accessible town bus service for Yeovil serving the needs of its residents;
- ◆ to work towards a better and more reliable bus service that becomes an acceptable alternative to the car; and
- ◆ to encourage the development of an improved network of bus services into Yeovil from neighbouring towns and villages.

4.239 Measures which are recommended to meet these objectives include:

- ◆ encouraging businesses to control commuter and other business related car journeys through the development of travel plans;
- ◆ the development of a Quality Bus Partnership with the town bus service provider and with providers of key routes from outside the town;
- ◆ implementing bus priority schemes to improve bus service reliability inside the town and along key corridors outside the town;
- ◆ improvements to bus shelters and providing for low floor buses at bus stops both in the town and surrounding areas;
- ◆ assisting the funding of non-commercial services to provide a more complete service coverage; and
- ◆ the development of a Quality Bus Partnership for key routes with bus service providers (outside the town).

Annual Progress Reports

4.240 Achievements which have been outlined in the LTP Annual Progress Report include:

- ◆ the development of an Integrated Public Transport Unit, co-ordinating public transport, community transport, health, education & social service transport and linking with non-emergency health;
- ◆ completion of a QBP on the Yeovil – Bristol corridor;
- ◆ county council subsidies have offset the decrease in public transport services on key routes where commercial services have been withdrawn;
- ◆ implemented passenger and pedestrian facilities at The Borough; and
- ◆ continued programme of bus stop improvement.

Somerset Bus Strategy

4.241 The Bus Strategy ‘Buses for All’ for the County was included within the Local Transport Plan for Somerset 2001-2006 and the vision was for the strategy to:

- ◆ provide access to main destinations to all sections of the community;
- ◆ improve use of public transport by making it more attractive;

- ◆ reduce the indiscriminate use of cars for all trips; and
- ◆ lead towards a more sustainable transportation policy for the whole county

4.242 Given the limitations that the authority has in defining the bus network, with the majority of the network being commercially operated, the strategy deliberately focused on areas where the authority could have an impact rather than being limited to bus service improvements which are difficult to influence or fund. Thus the strategy primarily focussed on improving infrastructure, as a way of improving public transport services.

Somerset Passenger Transport Strategy

4.243 Atkins is currently developing a passenger transport strategy on behalf of Somerset County Council. The main objective is to deliver an improved step change in the quality and quality of integrated Passenger Transport across the County. Subsidiary objectives are to:

- ◆ increase accessibility to employment and services;
- ◆ increase passenger transport mode share;
- ◆ meet statutory requirements;
- ◆ strive to achieve Best Value and the efficiency of delivery of Integrated Passenger Transport; and
- ◆ support development of principle urban areas in Somerset so that the rest of the County can benefit from their economic growth.

4.244 Strategy elements which are particularly relevant to the development of the Yeovil Bus Strategy include:

- ◆ passenger information including real time information, timetables and Travel Line;
- ◆ ticketing including integrated ticketing and discount ticketing;
- ◆ infrastructure including stops, Park & Ride (if feasible) and bus priority;
- ◆ services including network hierarchy, and quality bus corridors;
- ◆ marketing including branding, discounts and promotion; and
- ◆ monitoring including satisfaction surveys, performance and mode share.

Yeovil Transport Strategy (Atkins, 1998)

4.245 The Yeovil Transport Strategy suggested that the most important requirements to persuade people to make greater use of bus services were:

- ◆ improvements to existing service quality;
- ◆ improving the image of the bus so that it becomes more socially acceptable;
- ◆ a service which covers all parts of the urban area; and
- ◆ services which start earlier and finish later.

4.246 The proposed list of actions to achieve these requirements included:

- ◆ providing better access to the town centre for buses through bus lanes and bus only routes;
- ◆ making the cost of bus travel more competitive by keeping fares low and increasing the cost of parking;
- ◆ providing better facilities for passengers including new or improved bus shelters;
- ◆ improving the quality and availability of information on bus services including better information at stops, more detailed timetables and the use of information technology;
- ◆ working with the town bus service operator to improve the quality of the bus fleet and make access to buses better;
- ◆ improving bus services to recently developed parts of town;
- ◆ ensuring new development is designed to provide for access by bus;
- ◆ providing every opportunity to promote cross-town services to provide for suburban to suburban trips; and
- ◆ developing a complete service covering the period before the morning peak and into the evening.

4.247 Many of these schemes have not yet been implemented and would feed very well into the YTSR Public Transport Strategy.

SWARMMS

4.248 The SWARMMS strategy (2002) for the London to Exeter corridor recommended the development of an integrated strategic express bus network focussed on Yeovil. It suggested that such a network will improve inter-urban, local and regional services and links into the long distance coach and rail networks at key interchange locations.

4.249 A proposed service pattern has been developed to meet a number of criteria, many of which will have a direct effect on Yeovil. They include:

- ◆ one coach per hour between key settlements including Yeovil, Exeter, Salisbury, Andover, Basingstoke, Heathrow and London;
- ◆ an enhanced express bus network between Weymouth and Yeovil (via Dorchester), Taunton and Yeovil (via Ilminster, Chard and Crewkerne), and Yeovil and Bath/Bristol/Trowbridge (via Shepton Mallet); and
- ◆ closer integration between express bus, local bus services and coach networks in rural areas, with local bus schedules arranged to minimise waiting time for passengers to ensure reliable connections.

4.250 Under the proposed service pattern the level of service from Yeovil would increase from 2 to 10 coaches each hour. The proposals seek to develop a regular pattern of services focused on Yeovil and radiating out to Taunton, Bath, Warminster, Trobridge, Bristol, Dorchester and Weymouth.

4.251 As a principal interchange 'node' on the corridor Yeovil will experience significant increases in daily service level including:

- ◆ increase from 15 to 32 services daily to Crewkerne;

- ◆ increase from 11 to 27 services daily to Taunton;
- ◆ increase from 0 to 16 daily services to Exeter Airport;
- ◆ increase from 6 to 32 services daily to Shepton Mallet; and
- ◆ increase from 5 to 16 services daily to Dorchester.

4.252 In order to support the enhanced network the SWARMMS strategy proposed a number of highway infrastructure improvements on the A30 and A303 as well as priority measures in congested urban areas. In addition, improvements to interchange facilities within Yeovil were recommended including:

- ◆ increased frequency of bus links between the rail station and the town centre;
- ◆ improvements to the bus station including:
 - ◆ extending the waiting area to provide adequate seating, passenger information, toilets and payphones;
 - ◆ upgrading the current cafeteria to provide a modern eating area with good buffet facilities;
 - ◆ providing full timetables and audible announcements in the waiting areas; and
 - ◆ ensuring that the station is staffed at all times when there are services operating.

4.253 The introduction of such a network and the importance of Yeovil in it would have a great number of advantages for the town. As well as increasing the number of inter-urban links Yeovil would benefit from improved interchange facilities and increased levels of bus priority. In addition, the services would increase the level of service to many of the satellite towns and villages around Yeovil.

Yeovil Community Review of Transport

4.254 The Yeovil Community Review of Transport highlighted a number of issues with local buses in Yeovil including:

- ◆ bus/train timetables not being consistent with hours of work;
- ◆ difficulties in establishing where/when to catch bus; and
- ◆ being subjected to cold and wet weather when waiting for a bus, especially where there is not bus shelter

4.255 Recommendations made as part of the review include:

- ◆ redressing the imbalance between parking charges and bus fares to encourage more motorists to use the bus, most likely to be achieved by increasing bus fares;
- ◆ creating conditions to enable reliable bus and taxi operations including:
 - ◆ opening up Higher Kingston for buses to drop passengers at the hospital before going on to filter onto Reckelford and allowing a right turn for buses at the new traffic lights; and
 - ◆ allow traffic coming from Market Street to turn east towards Sherborne at new traffic lights on Reckelford;

- ◆ creating demand for public transport through high density development with good access to public transport;
- ◆ supporting green travel plans to introduce measures including work buses, adapting routes, offering shared taxis, organising car sharing, building secure cycle parks with showers, and providing allowances or loans for season tickets;
- ◆ changing eligibility rules for children's free transport (it is felt that expecting children under eight to walk two miles and over eight to walk three miles is not reasonable);
- ◆ making accessible vehicles and stop infrastructure available through council subsidies to the local bus operator;
- ◆ developing the bus station so that it is perceived as an interchange and not a terminal. Under this existing vehicle parking areas would be removed to allow room for more passenger facilities including enhanced waiting and rest room facilities; and
- ◆ introducing a round town hop on/hop off service stopping at key points such as the leisure centre, hospital, bus station, library, and the top, middle and bottom of High Street.

4.256 Many of these recommendations are still relevant and are consistent with the YTSR Bus Strategy outlined below.

4.257 Buses are the main form of public transport, nearly two thirds of public transport journeys in England are made by bus. The objective of this strategy is to improve the quality and availability of bus services so that they provide an attractive alternative to the private car for some trips.

4.258 Bus services in Yeovil are of variable frequency and quality with some residential areas benefiting from a reasonably frequent service. However, this is not the case in all areas and indeed, the SCC LTP showed that bus accessibility within Yeovil was variable with a lack of penetration and accessibility in many parts of the town.

4.259 Generally, barriers to bus use might include:

- ◆ complicated service routes or timetables;
- ◆ long waiting times;
- ◆ service unreliability;
- ◆ poor waiting environment;
- ◆ buses that are old and / or in poor condition;
- ◆ poor fare value;
- ◆ difficulty in accessing buses;
- ◆ low standards of customer care;
- ◆ longer journey times compared to the car;
- ◆ poor standards of publicity and presentation;
- ◆ inferior standards of comfort and convenience compared to car journeys;
- ◆ personal security considerations; and

- ◆ failure by the industry to adopt new technology enhancements.

4.260 Many of these barriers to bus use can be seen in Yeovil. There are a number of problems and issues which are considered below.

Interchange

4.261 Within the town centre the main interchange points are the bus station and the Borough (situated on the High Street). Yeovil is also served by two rail stations, Yeovil Junction and Yeovil Pen Mill, both of which are some distance from the town centre.

The Bus Station

4.262 Yeovil bus station is situated to the east of the town centre. It has 14 bus stops, split between two main areas. The area closest to the shopping area is effectively a bus lane with buses pulling up along the kerb for people to board. This is used by the most frequency town services. The other area, which is accessed on foot by crossing the bus lane, is used by less frequent and longer distance bus services; bus bays here are arranged in a saw tooth pattern and buses have to drive on and reverse off of the stands. A zebra crossing is provided for passengers wishing to access the main section of the bus station.

4.263 Despite there being 14 bays there are times when buses struggle for space within the existing bus station.

4.264 Facilities in the bus station include an information office (open 09.15–16.45), toilets, a café and newsagent. There is also a waiting room although this is not currently operational. There is one bus shelter in the bus lane, although the overhang from the shopping centre provides shelter for waiting passengers. All stops in the main bus station are provided with shelters.

4.265 The bus station looks very tired and would benefit from some cosmetic improvement. A bus station working group exists with the primary responsibility of delivering health and safety improvements. Funds of £75,000 have been committed for safety related improvements, including the introduction of barriers and improvements to signage within the bus station.

4.266 In addition it is hoped that the waiting room can be merged with the travel enquiry office (which is operated by First) to allow the waiting area to be reopened to the public. This would also provide an information point for South West Coaches.

4.267 Timetable information is available from the information office. In addition, all stops have an extract from relevant timetables. Train departure information is provided but the information board does not provide details of how to get to the rail station.

4.268 Although the bus station is not far from the main shopping streets it is physically separated from them by Glovers Walk and The Quedam shopping centre. There are no signs from the bus station to any of the shopping areas, and no map showing people where they are in relation to the town centre and highlighting the best walking routes.

Yeovil Town Centre

- 4.269 The main stop within the city centre is located at the Borough. The stop is situated on the High Street and is well used by passengers. There are two bus shelters and both contain timetable information for services calling there. Only a handful of other stops exist in the main shopping area. For buses entering Yeovil via Princes Street, for example, there is no bus stop until they reach The Borough. At times buses can be delayed due to other vehicles already being on the stop at the Borough.
- 4.270 Parts of the town centre are currently pedestrianised and a number of streets are one way which restricts bus access to the town centre. Buses operate via the High Street to serve the Borough then turn off onto Silver Street to serve the bus station.
- 4.271 Within the main shopping area there is no information on where to catch buses other than timetable extracts at the Borough and the bus station. Passenger information is particularly important as buses do not follow the same route into and out of the town centre.
- 4.272 Although some signs exist for the bus station, there is a need for additional signage to ensure people follow the quickest route to the bus station.
- 4.273 The route operated by buses varies in and out of the town centre, which could potentially be confusing for infrequent users. However, the limited number of stops in the town centre minimises any confusion which might be caused as a result of the routes being poorly advertised.

Yeovil Junction

- 4.274 Yeovil Junction is currently served by the 680 service which operates between Yeovil and Barwick. The frequency and departure time varies across the day but in the main there is one bus each hour in each direction. The service is supported financially by Somerset County Council, South Somerset District Council and South West Trains.
- 4.275 In addition, the 204 service between Thorncombe and Yeovil operates via Yeovil Junction. This service only operates one journey in each direction two days a week.
- 4.276 In total there are currently 17 buses each day between Yeovil Junction and the bus station. In 2003 there were approximately 20,000 passengers on the 680 service, the majority of which were travelling to and from the villages beyond the station.
- 4.277 There is no guaranteed connection offered between bus and rail services at Yeovil Junction. After serving the station services operate to the villages beyond; this reduces the flexibility for buses to be held at the station to wait for late running trains to arrive. The current arrangement can result in a bus departing as a train arrives at the station.
- 4.278 The level of rail service has recently increased to provide an hourly service to London. As a result an enhancement is required for bus service to Yeovil Junction. The Local Authority is already looking to find means of operating a dedicated bus service between the town centre and the rail station, but there are funding issues in achieving this aspiration.

- 4.279 In addition, the physical layout of roads in the station, and in particular the amount of space available for buses to turn around limits the size of vehicle which can serve the station. The shared use of the approach road by vehicles accessing the business units is a further issue for concern if the number of buses is increased.
- 4.280 At the station there is a bus shelter with departure times for all buses to Yeovil. The bus shelter is of poor quality and would give little protection in bad weather. There is no information on the platform to direct passengers to buses or provide details of the services which operate to the town centre. The timetable booklet for South Somerset contains full timetable information for buses serving Yeovil junction but there is nothing, other than the route description, which indicates that the 680 is the main rail link service. Likewise there is no route branding, or branding on the stop at the bus station to distinguish this service from the others.

Yeovil Pen Mill

- 4.281 Rail patronage from Pen Mill is low, with only 5 trains daily in each direction. Buses do not serve the station directly but there are bus stops on Sherborne Road at the end of the station approach and on Lyde Road.
- 4.282 A number of services operate along Sherborne Road, with the most frequent being the 57 and 58 services which operate hourly. Other services operate less frequently including the X94 (peak only 3 days/week); 5 (1 journey Wed only); 68 (4 journeys/day); and 69 (1 or 2 journeys 3 days/week). Lyde Road, which is served by the service 2 and 932 is also only a short walk away from the station.
- 4.283 The walking route between the station and the bus stop is not ideal as it is on an incline and there is no crossing point on Sherborne Road for people wishing to travel towards Yeovil. Signage between the bus stop and the rail station is also poor.
- 4.284 SCC are currently constructing a toucan crossing on the A30 Sherborne Road and a ramp from the crossing to the station to improve pedestrian / cycle access..
- 4.285 A bus information board is situated outside the station which contains details of the buses which depart from Sherborne Road. Again this only contains extracts from the relevant timetables.

Roadside Infrastructure

- 4.286 Roadside infrastructure is generally of a poor quality. Where they exist, bus shelters would generally benefit from some cosmetic improvement. Timetable information is only available at stops which have bus shelters and again it is just an extract from a timetable. There is no evidence of raised kerbs where low floor buses operate to assist passengers with boarding.
- 4.287 Some infrastructure improvements will be introduced as part of the QBP schemes currently being developed for routes 54 and 58.

The Existing Network

- 4.288 Yeovil is served by a mixture of local services which operate within the urban area, and longer distance services which operate to the satellite town and rural and urban areas further a field.
- 4.289 Within Yeovil services 1, 2 and 3 provide for journeys between the town centre and residential areas to the north-east and north-west of the town and between residential areas. Service 11/11A also provides a link between the north west of town and the town centre and service 4 operates a circular route around Hendford Hill, Forest Hill and Lysander Road, to the south of Yeovil.
- 4.290 Services 1, 2 and 3 operate the highest frequency. Service 1 operates every 15 minutes and service 2 and 3 each operate on a twenty minute frequency. Service 11/11A operates every 30 minutes, although it operates mainly in the off peak, and service 4 provides an hourly service which increases to every 30 minutes in the peak.
- 4.291 Services 2 & 3 operate together to provide a ten minute headway at a number of places on route, and some sections of services 1 and 11/11A are also consistent and provide a combined headway. Service 4 (Borough – Forest Hill) operates an hourly service which is increased to half hourly during peak periods.
- 4.292 A number of routes from satellite towns and rural areas around Yeovil serve key radial routes into Yeovil, but do not penetrate residential areas. Frequencies on these routes vary with the most frequent service operating hourly. Some less frequent services operate only a handful of journeys each day and some only run on certain days of the week. Along the radial routes the combined headway can be as high as three buses each hour.
- 4.293 A number of special services operate to Yeovil supermarkets from the satellite villages and town outside of Yeovil.
- 4.294 The most obvious gaps in the network are some of the residential areas to the south and the industrial areas to the east, west and south of the town. To the north east and north west of the town, where the majority of the town services operate, there are areas which are not served directly, although majority of houses are within 400 metres of a bus stop.
- 4.295 The Local Transport Plan outlines a desired frequency for bus services of:
- ◆ a bus every 15 minutes in urban areas;
 - ◆ a bus every hour from satellite towns and villages; and
 - ◆ a bus every 2 hours to the wider rural area.
- 4.296 In many cases, these targets are not being met by the existing network of buses which serve Yeovil. In addition, the operating hours of services regularly do not meet the requirements of shift workers.
- 4.297 All services currently operate on a fixed route with the exception of Nippybus (launched September 1st 2004) which operates in the evenings. These services operate on a part fixed (within Yeovil), part demand responsive (area of service outside Yeovil) basis three nights each week.

- 4.298 Further residential and employment development is planned for Yeovil with large residential developments planned for the north, north-east and north-west, and employment development to the east and south west. These developments will need to be served by new services or by the diversion and/or extension of existing services.
- 4.299 The majority of bus operators in the area are experiencing some level of driver shortage which can impact on the level and stability of the local bus network. As a result of this First greatly reduced the level of service two years ago.

Congestion and Priority Measures

- 4.300 The main congestion problem is experienced by traffic entering Yeovil from the east along the A30 Sherborne Road. There is congestion along other routes at times but in most cases this is unpredictable. In addition, there are a number of pinch points within the town centre where buses can be delayed by delivery vehicles loading and/or people waiting to park. A particular problem has been identified at the bus station where traffic queues for the Quedam Centre car park can cause problems for buses attempting to access the bus station.
- 4.301 Yeovil currently has very limited bus priority measure; there is a short length of bus lane on the southbound approach to the Hospital Roundabout and at the Borough.
- 4.302 Both the original Yeovil Transport Strategy and the more recent YCRT recommended opening the junction of the A30 Reckleford and Higher Kingston to provide westbound buses with direct access to the hospital and also to allow buses full access at the junction of the A30 Reckleford and Market Street.
- 4.303 The recently introduced SCOOT controlled traffic signals at the Reckleford Gyratory has the ability to provide priority for buses through the junctions using transponders fitted to the bus fleet. The system is expected to be commissioned shortly.
- 4.304 Providing bus priority along the A30 Sherborne Road is a challenge; potential solutions are limited by the lack of space available for physical priority measures. Potential solutions to these problems are discussed as part of the Highway Strategy.

Vehicle Quality

- 4.305 On the whole, the fleet operating in and around Yeovil is dated. Many of the town services, including supermarket contract services, are operated by older minibuses and coaches which do not provide the accessibility benefits offered by modern low floor vehicles. Service 1, one of the town services, is operated by more modern low floor minibuses and some longer distance services are operated by more modern, larger vehicles.
- 4.306 On some First services there is more than one vehicle livery which could confuse passengers. Some vehicles are painted in the First corporate livery whilst others are painted yellow and green.

Information Standards

- 4.307 An area wide timetable booklet is produced for South Somerset in addition to individual timetable leaflets which are produced by operators. Timetables are not distributed to individual households to publicise services.
- 4.308 Roadside information, including that in the bus station and town centre, is an extract from the service timetable with the location of the stop highlighted. This is not passenger friendly and could deter some passengers from travelling by bus. Very little information is available on fares and few services carry distinctive route branding. Further, this information is not available at all stops.
- 4.309 Traveline provides an area wide (south west) telephone and internet journey planning service which covers the Yeovil area.

Quality Bus Partnerships

- 4.310 A Quality Bus Partnership is currently being introduced on just one route which serves Yeovil, the 376. Despite this Yeovil has not benefited from any infrastructure improvements. This situation will however be resolved when the developing QBP's on the service 54 and 58 are implemented (they operate along the same corridor). Service 1 also operates under an unofficial QBP agreement between the local authority and South West Coaches.

Funding Issues

- 4.311 Funding is a major issue for bus services and public transport infrastructure in the Yeovil area. Many commercial services are considered to be marginal financially, limiting the potential for quality enhancements. The level of local authority funding is also an issue in both supporting socially necessary services and introducing infrastructure schemes. This is also an issue in developing further QBP corridors.
- 4.312 The low revenue support budget means that the council have to constantly review what is available and a policy review is currently being undertaken on behalf of SCC. One major aspect of this is to investigate the potential of increasing the role of community transport in order to release revenue support from some existing services and transfer it to others.
- 4.313 There is no funding available for cosmetic improvements to the bus station and a reluctance to spend any money on it. The main reason for this is that the bus station is located in an area which could potentially be redeveloped.

Rail Strategy

- 4.314 Yeovil is served by two rail stations; Yeovil Junction and Yeovil Pen Mill located on the South West Trains London-Exeter and Wessex Trains Weymouth-Bristol Temple Meads lines respectively. Both stations are located away from the town centre with Yeovil Pen Mill being on the edge of the eastern urban area and Yeovil Junction located south of Yeovil.
- 4.315 Yeovil Junction is the main station serving the town with a recently introduced hourly service eastwards to London Waterloo. There is an irregular train service serving

Yeovil Pen Mill. Trains on each line are segregated in that no service operates between the stations.

- 4.316 It is not currently possible to directly interchange between the stations by public transport, so it is necessary to travel into Yeovil town centre and change buses. The issues surrounding bus access to the stations is discussed above in the bus strategy section.
- 4.317 The capacity of both lines is constrained by long single-line sections of route. A number of proposals have been put forward to increase capacity, especially on the London-Exeter line through Yeovil Junction. There have also been proposals to reintroduce a passenger service over the existing curve between Yeovil Junction and Yeovil Pen Mill. Another proposal that has been put forward is to replace both stations with a 'parkway' station at the intersection of the two lines which would allow interchange between the two routes.
- 4.318 Any proposals for improvements to rail services or the rail network must be seen in the context of the limited impact they will have on traffic conditions in and around Yeovil. The costs of undertaking any enhancements are likely to be significant and will need to involve the Strategic Rail Authority, Network Rail and the train operating companies. It is therefore unlikely that the YTSR could realistically recommend improvements to the National Rail network that could be delivered as part of the SCC LTP2 process.
- 4.319 This was confirmed in the YCRT which made no specific recommendations for rail services, similarly the YTSR set just one rail based objective which was the LTP Countywide objective to increase rail passengers boarding/alighting at Yeovil stations by 15%.
- 4.320 There are measures that could be taken at both stations which would improve the environment for the rail passenger. These could include improved waiting facilities, better information and improved transport links to the stations.

DEVELOPING A PARKING STRATEGY

Objectives

- 4.321 The following specific parking linked objectives were set for the YTSR.

Source of Objective	Objective
LTP – Yeovil Specific	Reduce free parking in town centre from 50% to 40% of total, with increase in pay parking from 50% to 60%

- 4.322 The control of car parking is a key part of any transport strategy as it has the potential to significantly influence the demand for travel by car. This was recognised in the YCRT which made a number of parking related recommendations. These are shown below:

- ◆ Recommendation 6: It was recommended that security should be improved by extending CCTV to parking areas and providing secure parking for motorbikes, mopeds and cycles.

- ◆ Recommendation 10: The YCRT Panel recommended that the imbalance between parking charges and fares should be addressed. It was noted that as it was cheaper to pay the cost of parking than to pay bus fares consideration should be given to higher parking charges.
 - ◆ Recommendation 25: The Panel recommended that the Council continue to seek opportunities to implement residents' parking schemes.
 - ◆ Recommendation 26: It was proposed that all car parking in the town centre should be designated for short/medium stay use with charges increasing steeply for parking longer than four hours.
 - ◆ Recommendation 27: The YCRT Panel recommended that all town centre car parks should be designated and charged as short term with pay on exit charging to replace the current pay and display. Parking should also be consolidated into a few large car parks.
 - ◆ Recommendation 28: Car park charges should be reviewed and brought in line with comparable towns. The Panel recognised that charges are a sensitive issue but felt that modest increases would bring in valuable extra revenue without driving users away in significant numbers.
 - ◆ Recommendation 29: Although the Panel did not have the necessary data it believed that with the increase in residential developments would require additional car parking in Yeovil Town Centre which could be achieved by adding extra levels to one or more of the existing surface car parks.
 - ◆ Recommendation 30: It was recommended that park and ride sites, along with 'Green Travel Plans', should be considered on the east, north and west sides of the town.
 - ◆ Recommendation 31: The YCRT Panel strongly supported the introduction of Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in Yeovil.
- 4.323 Although a car parking strategy can have a significant impact on reducing car usage the YTSR did not feel that it was appropriate to implement such draconian measures without providing quality alternatives to the car. The overall YTSR strategy will go some way towards this but will not provide such alternatives for all motorists.
- 4.324 It was recognised that the car would remain the main mode of travel in Yeovil and so the car parking strategy is aimed at encouraging some mode shift but it is also important not to alienate those motorists with no alternative mode of travel. This could result in people not travelling to Yeovil for work and leisure and possibly threatening the economic vitality of the town. The parking strategy has been developed from this realism.
- 4.325 As part of the development of the Parking Strategy the study was also tasked with assessing the potential for introducing park and ride in Yeovil. The development of a park and ride model as a sub-model of the Yeovil Traffic Model and results from a series of runs are discussed in Appendix C. The role of park and ride in the parking strategy is discussed in the following sections.

Parking in Yeovil

- 4.326 Current parking control in Yeovil is restricted to the area within and around the town centre. There is little parking control in the residential and industrial areas outside of

the town centre. It is estimated that in Yeovil town centre there are approximately 3,509 parking spaces of which 3,074 are off-street spaces located in 24 car parks whilst the remainder are on-street. There are proposals for seven controlled parking zones (CPZ) in and around the town centre of which four are currently operating.

- 4.327 Car parking in Yeovil is categorised as short stay, medium stay, medium/long stay and long stay. It is the medium/long stay and long stay parking supply that is used by commuters as the other categories either restrict the length of time allowed for parking or charge a much higher rate for parking all-day long.
- 4.328 Analysis of car park usage showed that in any weekday hour no more than 71% of the available car parking spaces were occupied although there is a lot of variation in occupancy by car park type and car park location. All of the medium/long stay and long stay car parks tend to have occupancy levels of greater than 90% for most of the day reflecting the use of these car parks by commuters.
- 4.329 Parking costs in Yeovil are lower than many of the other towns in Somerset. The average all-day parking cost in Yeovil is around £1.50 although a number of the car parks only charge £1.30. The equivalent cost in Taunton is approximately £2.20 and £1.90 in Bridgwater.
- 4.330 Parking in Yeovil is characterised by a large number of small car parks (over half have less than 100 spaces). In the future the Yeovil Vision process has identified a number of these car parks as sites for future development. SSDC has provided details of which car parks they expect to be developed and the mix of development that is likely on these sites. Details of these assumptions are provided in Appendix A.
- 4.331 Most of the car parks are operated by SSDC although there are two large private car parks at the Quedam Centre and the Yeo Leisure Park. Yeovil does not operate Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE).
- 4.332 Running parallel to the development of the YTSR was the development of SCC's Parking Strategy (October 2004). It is important that any proposals for the YTSR fit within the framework provided by the SCC Parking Strategy.

Development of the Parking Strategy

- 4.333 The following areas of parking policy have been considered during the development of the parking strategy:
- ◆ Public and Private Off-Street Parking;
 - ◆ Private Non-Residential Parking;
 - ◆ Controlled Parking Zones; and
 - ◆ Decriminalised Parking Enforcement.
- 4.334 Car parking standards have not been considered specifically for Yeovil as part of the YTSR. There is no obvious justification for adopting standards for Yeovil which differ from those used in the rest of the county. Parking standards for new developments are detailed in the recent SCC Parking Strategy.

Public and Private Off-Street Parking

- 4.335 The majority of the car parking in Yeovil Town Centre falls into this category of parking. In this instance private off-street parking refers to parking that is available for public uses which in Yeovil means the car parks at the Quedam Centre and the Yeo Leisure Park. These car parks are privately operated but to many motorists these are seen as performing the same function as those operated by SSDC.
- 4.336 The control of off-street parking can be an important tool in the management of private car usage. This can be achieved through a number of different interventions including:
- ◆ parking charges;
 - ◆ charging structure (cost of short, medium and long stay parking); and
 - ◆ number of car park places by type of charge (short, medium and long stay).
- 4.337 It has been seen that the medium/long stay and long stay parking in Yeovil is already approaching capacity whereas the other types of parking are less well used. Long stay parking charges are low when compared with other Somerset towns and the high levels of car park usage suggest that the current parking charges are not acting as a deterrent to car usage for commuting.
- 4.338 The SCC Parking Strategy states that as a general rule long stay off-street parking charges should be set above the daily travelling cost for an adult using public transport. In Yeovil this is £2.00 for an adult day pass on First Bus services which can be compared to the £1.50 average cost of long stay parking.
- 4.339 A policy of increasing long stay parking charges may deter some car usage for commuters who have alternative means of travel to work but would not be expected to harm the economic vitality of the town.
- 4.340 The cost of short stay and medium stay parking is often a concern to retailers who feel that it is an important factor for shoppers when they determine in which town they are going to shop. As with commuters it is likely that there are some shoppers who could travel using alternative modes and so a modest increase in short stay charges could be considered.
- 4.341 Parking charges are flexible in that they can be changed reasonably easily. This can also include the structure of the charges and the relative differences between the different types of charges to allow particular types of travel to be targeted.
- 4.342 The YTSTR has included in its reference case a number of developments planned to be constructed on existing car parks. Although the YTSTR includes measures that will assist in making alternative modes of transport more attractive, traffic is still forecast to grow in the coming years which will lead to an increase in demand for car parking in Yeovil.
- 4.343 Although it has been shown that the YTSTR does not promote a 'predict and provide' approach to the provision of car parking it is important that there are enough car parking places available for those who have no alternative to using the car. This could be achieved by changing the type of parking allowed in some car parks or if necessary creating additional capacity through developing new sites (such as part of

the proposed Cattle Market development) or exploiting further the existing sites through creating multi-story car parks.

- 4.344 It may also be necessary to consider the role of the privately owned large Quedam Centre and Yeo Leisure Park car parks which contribute around 30% of Yeovil's parking supply but are usually less than 50% full during weekdays.
- 4.345 The SCC Parking Strategy recommended that the town centre car parks should be rationalised to allow the re-development of some town centre car parks. This concept has already been included in the YTSR reference case.

Private Non-Residential Parking

- 4.346 The amount of private non-residential parking (PNR) within Yeovil town centre is not accurately known. From observations it is not believed that there is a significant quantity of workplace PNR parking within the town centre. Outside of the town centre there are large areas of workplace PNR parking with all the major employers providing parking for their staff.
- 4.347 Local authorities do have the powers to implement workplace parking charges although the SCC Parking Strategy does not propose that these should be used in Somerset due to the highly car dependent nature of the county.
- 4.348 Retail parking is also a type of PNR which should also be considered as part of the Parking Strategy. Outside of the town centre there are a number of large supermarkets and other retail developments that provide free parking to their customers. Although these stores could be encouraged to introduce parking controls it is believed that most of the observed parking is through legitimate business and so there would be little to gain from introducing parking charges at such locations.
- 4.349 Adjacent to the A30 Queensway and within the town centre is the 600 space car park at Tesco supermarket. Parking is free for up to two hours and thereafter is charged at £2.00 per hour. Although it is likely that shoppers combine a trip to the supermarket with shopping in the town centre the punitive hourly parking charge after two hours will deter long stay parking. It is important to ensure that at locations such as this the stated parking controls are enforced.

Controlled Parking Zones

- 4.350 It is SCC's aim to implement CPZ's in areas where there are on-street parking problems. Often these are caused by commuter parking. CPZ's or residents parking zones require residents to purchase a parking permit to park on-street within a defined area. This removes the ability of commuters to park as they are not entitled to a permit and the pay parking stock is charged at short stay prices.
- 4.351 The main advantage of CPZ's is that they give residents the priority for parking and also provide short stay on-street parking for visitors. Visitor parking can be a problem as residents are usually provided with a limited number of visitors permits and the cost of short stay parking for non-permit users can be prohibitive.
- 4.352 In Yeovil areas where the introduction of CPZ's would be beneficial such zones have already been identified by SSDC. These will lead to the control of all on-street

parking in the town centre and the adjacent areas. When all seven zones are implemented there will be no uncontrolled on-street parking within reasonable walking distance of the town centre or the hospital.

Decriminalised Parking Enforcement

- 4.353 Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) changes the enforcement of parking restrictions from a criminal offence to a civil offence. This means that enforcement becomes the responsibility of the local authority (in Yeovil this would be SSDC) and the police are no longer required to enforce parking restrictions.
- 4.354 Enforcement is often carried out by a contractor appointed by the local authority whose wardens enforce the parking regulations through Penalty Charge Notices (PCN). These PCN's are civil debts that can be recovered through the civil debt recovery process. Revenues from DPE are usually ring-fenced and often used for parking or highway purposes.
- 4.355 The SCC Parking Strategy notes that the level of enforcement by the police is reducing due to resources being concentrated on other priorities. This may lead to less compliance with parking regulations which in turn could lead to disruption to traffic.
- 4.356 It is recommended in the SCC Parking Strategy that DPE is implemented across the county (currently only Taunton Deane has DPE). This will allow more effective and responsive enforcement of parking regulations which should contribute to the ability to manage congestion.

Park and Ride

- 4.357 Appendix C describes the park and ride study carried out as part of the YTSR. This includes details of the SATURN/SATCHMO sub-model that was developed specifically for the park and ride study.
- 4.358 The study looked at the introduction of a service running between Bunford to the west and Babylon Hill to the east via the town centre. Stops were provided at the bus station and at Augusta Westland on the A3088 Lysander Road with a fare of £1.50 per passenger being assumed for the service. Demand forecasts were prepared for a number of alternative scenarios which included changes in parking charges in the town centre (from £1.50 to £5.50), fares for the service (£0.50 to £1.50), headway (12 minutes and 15 minutes), different levels of bus priority and the service only running between Bunford and the town centre.
- 4.359 A financial evaluation was undertaken for each of the scenarios and it was calculated that in all case the demand for park and ride did not provide enough revenue to cover the cost to operate the service. An operating loss of more than £100,000 per annum was seen in all scenarios and this did not include an additional £150,000+ per annum non-bus service site costs and monitoring costs. The capital costs associated with establishing the service are not included in the above figures.
- 4.360 The study showed that even though there would be some demand for park and ride to operate a service would require a very substantial subsidy as the service revenue would be insufficient to cover the cost of the service. The greatest demand could

only be achieved by increasing car parking charges significantly. Some of the best performing options financially were those which assumed a long stay car park charge of £4.50 which would be a threefold increase on the current charges.

5. Elements of the Preferred Strategy

INTRODUCTION

5.1 This section details the elements of the preferred strategy that have been developed during the YTSR. It discusses each of the elements identified in Section 4 and recommends which parts of these should be taken forward into the overall YTSR strategy.

5.2 The elements that have been developed are listed below:

- ◆ The Highway Strategy;
- ◆ The Cycling Strategy;
- ◆ The Pedestrian Strategy;
- ◆ The Travel Planning and Travel Awareness Strategy;
- ◆ The School Transport Strategy;
- ◆ The Public Transport Strategy; and
- ◆ The Parking Strategy.

5.3 Each of these elements stands alone and can be implemented in isolation, although to gain the full benefit from the YTSR Strategy it is important that each of the elements of the strategy are introduced in their entirety.

THE HIGHWAY STRATEGY

5.4 The following recommendations have been developed from a comprehensive assessment of future conditions on the highway network using the Yeovil Traffic Model. This has been used to test a number of schemes that have been shown to reduce delays at junctions, take traffic from unsuitable roads and distribute traffic more evenly at key junctions.

5.5 The Highway Strategy has not only looked to make better use of the existing highway network but it has also assessed the likely benefits from a number of major highway schemes that have been identified as possibly having some merit.

5.6 The following sections detail each of the elements of the Highway Strategy whilst Figure 5.1 shows the locations of the schemes that have been recommended in the Highway Strategy.

At-Grade Roundabouts

5.7 It is recommended that the following large at-grade roundabouts in Yeovil are converted to signalised roundabouts:

- ◆ A30/A37 Hospital roundabout;
- ◆ A30/A3088 Police Station roundabout; and
- ◆ A37/A359 Fiveways roundabout.

- 5.8 The modelling has shown that this will result in more balanced flows at the roundabouts resulting in substantially reduced delays on the majority of approaches. It is proposed that at the A30/A3088 Police Station Roundabout and the A37/A359 Fiveways roundabouts the signals should include pedestrian and cyclist phases (and also be suitable for disabled users), it is not proposed to include such phases at the A30/A37 Hospital Roundabout as there are existing subways at this location for use by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 5.9 The exact form of the traffic signalisation has yet to be determined as the assessment was undertaken at a high level using the SATURN based YTSR model. This provides robust forecasts that show that the junctions will benefit from signalisation but it not the appropriate tool for designing in detail the configuration of the junctions.
- 5.10 It is likely that full signalisation of all the junctions will not be required and in some instances the size of the roundabouts may restrict the extent of the signalisation works. The preliminary appraisal suggests that at all the roundabouts partial signalisation should be adequate. It is therefore recommended that further detailed assessment is made of the junctions to develop indicative engineering designs and undertake detailed TRANSYT modelling of the traffic signals to confirm that they will operate satisfactorily.
- 5.11 It is also recommended that the existing at-grade roundabout at the junction of the A30 Sherborne Road/Lyde Road is converted to traffic signals. Due to the small size of this roundabout this will mean changing the configuration to a three arm traffic signal controlled junction and removing the roundabout.
- 5.12 This will result in more capacity being provided for the movements along the A30 Sherburne Road which is a County Route and as such should have greater priority than traffic on Lyde Road. Again pedestrian and cyclist phases should be included in the design of this junction.
- 5.13 Complimentary to the work at this junction it is also recommended that the right turn into St.Michael's Avenue from the A30 Sherborne Road is banned. This will remove one of the stress points on Sherborne Road and will also stop traffic from blocking back across the Lyde Road junction.

North Yeovil Improvements

- 5.14 The YTSR recommends that improvements should be made to selected junctions along the northern edge of Yeovil to provide additional capacity along this important east-west route. It is not proposed to upgrade the whole route to a consistent standard but instead to target those areas where delays are forecast to occur. Improvements along this corridor will have the additional benefit of removing traffic from the only other main east-west route in Yeovil which is along the A30 Sherborne Road.
- 5.15 An assessment had been undertaken looking at improving the standard of Combe Street Lane to the equivalent of a modern 7.3m single carriageway. The results showed that there was little benefit from such a scheme as most of the delays along this route are attributable to the junctions at either end of the road.

- 5.16 The recommended improvements in North Yeovil are:
- ◆ Converting the A359 Mudford Road/Lyde Road junction to a roundabout;
 - ◆ Converting the A359 Mudford Road/Combe Street Lane junction to a roundabout;
 - ◆ Increasing the capacity on the west and east arms of A37 Ilchester Road/Combe Street Lane Roundabout; and
 - ◆ Reconfiguration of the double mini roundabouts at Brimsmore and its junction with the southern section of Tintinhull Road.
- 5.17 The proposed roundabout on the A359 will provide additional priority for traffic travelling between Lyde Road and Combe Street Lane. It is envisaged that these will be small or mini roundabouts and the associated traffic islands will provide additional pedestrian crossing facilities in an area where there are few existing facilities.

Market Street Junction

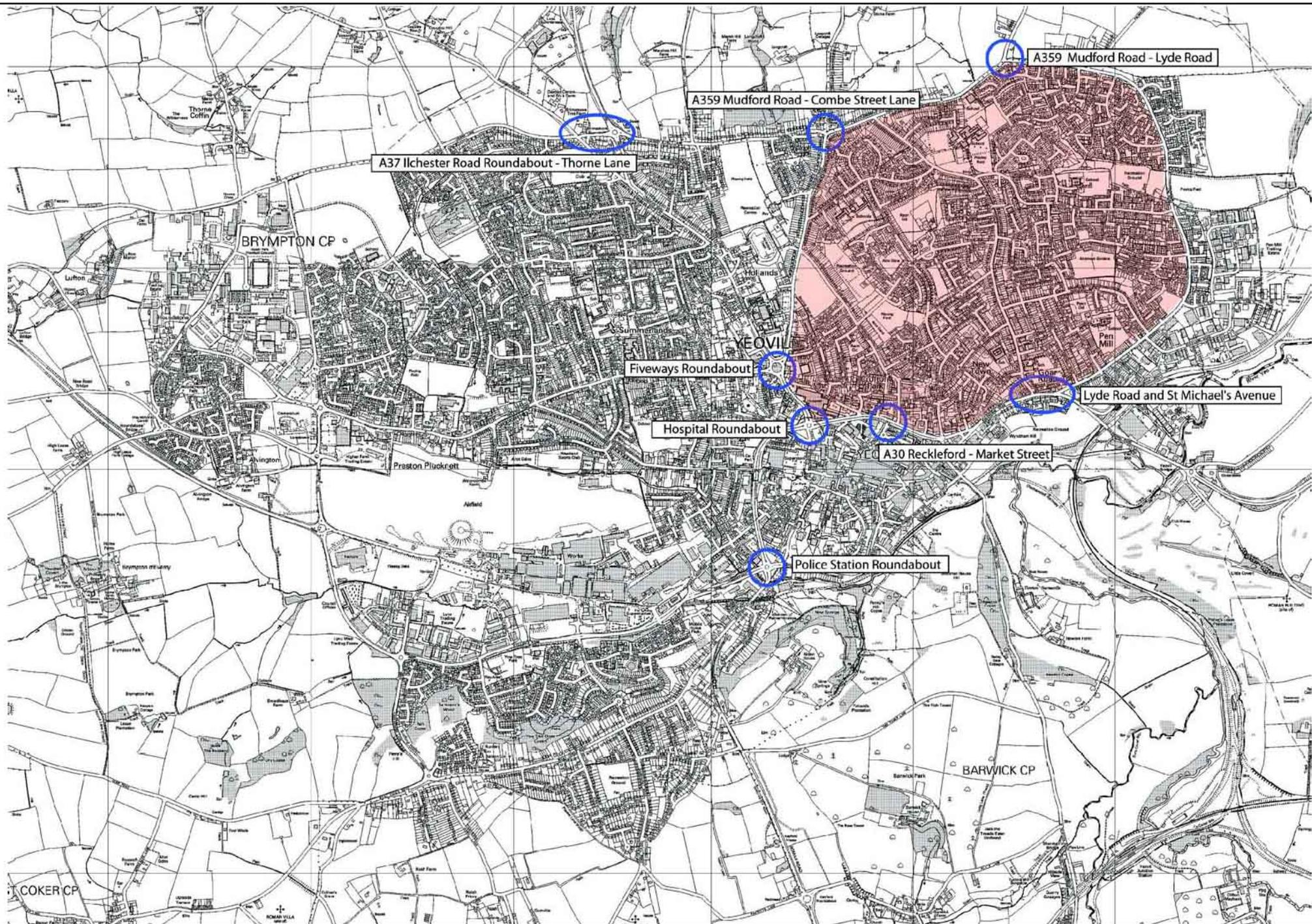
- 5.18 It is recommended that the junction of the A30 Reckleford and Market Street is converted to traffic signal control. It is envisaged that this would allow all movements to occur (right in and right out) and also provide the potential for bus priority measures to be incorporated into the junction.
- 5.19 Pedestrian and cycle phases should be included in this junction which will replace the existing pedestrian crossing between Market Street and Goldcroft.
- 5.20 The effect of the changes to this junction will be to provide an alternative access into and out of Yeovil town centre, thus taking pressure of the Reckleford Gyratory and Clarence Street/Park Road.

Traffic Management

- 5.21 Increased congestion on the main road network will result in traffic seeking alternative routes along unsuitable residential roads. As this is a particular problem in the North East of Yeovil it is recommended that existing 20mph zone in this area is extended to ensure that the whole area to the west of Lyde Road, east of A359 Muford Road and north of A30 Sherborne Road is included in a 20mph zone.

Road Hierarchy

- 5.22 The YTSR does not make any proposals to alter the existing road hierarchy in and around Yeovil. The A37 and the A3088 Cartgate Link are the principal roads in the study area and this is already reflected in their designation as National Primary Routes.
- 5.23 There is no case for upgrading the A30 from a County Route to a National Primary Route due to the poor quality and low capacity along this route in Yeovil and through the surrounding towns and villages. Similarly the A359 is a County Route and this has been reflected in the weight restrictions and traffic calming measures recently introduced along its length between Yeovil and the A303.



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Figure 5.1 - Locations of Proposed Highway Improvements

Major Schemes (including Stage IV)

- 5.24 The YTSR does not recommend the construction of any major schemes including the A30 Stage IV Scheme. The evaluation has shown that it has not been possible to develop a traffic or economic case for any of the major schemes apart from the Stage IV Link which shows some benefits in traffic and economic terms.
- 5.25 However, the traffic benefits are at best marginal and are outweighed by the environmental implications of constructing this road. It is also likely that there will be difficulties in obtaining funding for the scheme. The scheme is not recommended by the YTSR for inclusion in the Highway Strategy.

YCRT Recommendations

- 5.26 The YTSR Highway Strategy is consistent with nearly all the recommendations made by the YCRT. The key differences are that Recommendation 39 of the YCRT recommended the construction of the Stage IV Link road and Recommendation 41 suggested limited widening of the A3088 Lysander Road. The YTSR evaluated both these proposals and did not feel a sufficiently robust case could be made to recommend these two schemes.

THE CYCLING STRATEGY

- 5.27 The following recommendations are based on the key findings of the review of cycling in Yeovil. A number of specific recommendations are made for improving cycle facilities along key corridors and junctions.
- 5.28 In addition there is a particular need, especially in Yeovil, to carry out surveys among existing cyclists to determine exactly where new facilities are most urgently needed. The large cycle commuting population at Agusta Westland is likely to provide the most useful source of immediate information for influencing the location and type of new facilities which are most urgently needed.

Cycle routes

- 5.29 The following routes are likely to have a relatively high demand and consideration should be given to providing cycling facilities along these corridors:
- ◆ Connecting route from A3088 Lysander Road to the town centre (including a crossing of the A30 Hendford Hill);
 - ◆ Preston Grove. This road caters for movements identified in the evaluation exercise and follow relatively flat corridors. It could also provide a link with the planned cycle path along the north side of the airfield;
 - ◆ The southern part of Lyde Road (around the Vale Road area) into the town centre; and
 - ◆ A northern east-west route along the Glenthorne Avenue, Stiby Road corridor.

Cycle crossings and junction treatment

- 5.30 The following list comprises junctions and crossings where improved conditions are likely to encourage higher levels of cycling:

- ◆ Crossing of A30 Sherborne Road to provide a link between the Country Park and Pen Mill station (a current SCC LTP scheme);
- ◆ A30 Sherborne Road/Lyde Road roundabout;
- ◆ A37 Ilchester Road/A359 Mudford Road Fiveways roundabout. Large unsignalised roundabout likely to be acting as a considerable deterrent to east-west cycle journeys;
- ◆ Bunford Lane/Preston Road/Western Avenue (Asda) roundabout. Another junction likely to be acting as a deterrent in an area where the potential to increase cycling is considerable;
- ◆ South of the Bluebell Road/Bunford Lane roundabout connecting the cycleway being constructed along the north side of the airfield to existing cycle infrastructure along Alvington Lane and Bluebell Road;
- ◆ Western Avenue, north of the Stourton Way junction;
- ◆ A3088 Lysander Road. Giving the cycle route priority across the minor side roads to allow uninterrupted cycling; and
- ◆ Enhancements to the subways and footbridges across the A30 Queensway and Reckleford to provide a more cycle friendly environment.

New developments

- 5.31 All of the proposed new employment and residential developments (Thorne Lane, Lufton, Lyde Road and Bunford) should incorporate cycling facilities. This should be made a condition of the planning consent for each development.

Cycle routes to neighbouring settlements

- 5.32 Yeovil is unlikely to attract visitors by bicycle from most of the surrounding settlements due to the hilliness of the landscape. However, if Augusta Westland is considered to be the key trip attractor (rather than the town centre), then Montacute and Odcombe both score relatively highly for potential demand. It is recommended that further work is undertaken to assess likely demand for a cycle route to these locations.

Trip end cycle parking

- 5.33 From the review of the town centre, it appears as though adequate facilities are provided for the short-stay shopper. Longer stay cycle parking is likely to be a greater priority such as weather-protected facilities in the main multi-storey car park. Travel-plan activity can determine the extent of any shortfall in commuter cycle-parking among the major employers. This should be provided for with employer-based cycle parking if possible, or longer-stay public parking (e.g. lockers, a cycle centre, or a CCTV covered area in the multi-storey car park).

Residential cycle parking

- 5.34 Depending on the nature of the housing stock, a lack of residential cycle parking can severely constrain any attempts to generate an increase in cycling. However, such a shortage can be overcome through the provision of communal cycle-parking or advice on how individuals can provide their own residential parking (e.g. hooks, wall

clamps, bike boxes etc). This fundamentally important cycle-planning issue is frequently overlooked.

Promotion

- 5.35 A well designed and effectively promoted cycle-route map can represent excellent value for money in terms of stimulating higher levels of cycling. A high-quality cycle map for a town of 40,000 people can be produced and distributed for less than the cost of a Toucan crossing.
- 5.36 A cycle map for Yeovil should be provided to users free of charge, and should be imaginatively promoted (for example using billboards, leaflets, and the local press) and made widely available. The cycle map should include:
- ◆ Traffic calming;
 - ◆ One-way streets;
 - ◆ Bus lanes;
 - ◆ Cycle lanes, off-carriageway shared use paths and traffic free cycle paths (these three types of facility need to be clearly distinguished between);
 - ◆ Lightly trafficked roads where cycling could be encouraged even though they have no defined cycle lane/path;
 - ◆ Medium stay (or longer) cycle parking; and
 - ◆ Bicycle shops.
- 5.37 The map should also contain a scale, a 10 minute isochrone circle from the town centre, an indicator of topography/gradient, and the location of all major trip attractors. It should provide guidance on the different types of cycle facilities and, like the current Taunton map, should provide 'motivational panels' extolling the benefits of cycling with attractive photographs of local cycle facilities and places of interest.
- 5.38 In the recent 'Walking and Cycling Action Plan', the Government makes the case for a much wider use of targeted marketing techniques such as personalised travel planning. These should be carried out in areas currently served by good cycle facilities such as Lysander Road and Bluebell Road.
- 5.39 Schemes such as BOOOST could be considered where employers are allowed to provide employees with a maximum annual tax exemption of £500 to purchase bicycles to be used predominately for journeys to work.
- 5.40 SCC should consider the appointment of a 'Cycling Officer' whose role will be to coordinate cycle planning, including physical improvements, cycle promotion and the use of the planning system to encourage cycling.

Recommended surveys

- 5.41 A general cyclist survey is likely to be the most effective means of determining priorities for new cycle facilities. A self-completion questionnaire with a map attached can be distributed to cyclists, and used to establish conventional travel-survey data (origin/destination, journey purpose and length).

- 5.42 The map can be used to show where cyclists actually travel and the location of any 'hotspots' where cyclists perceive there to be a safety problem (which may not be apparent in conventional accident statistics). This could possibly be carried out in cooperation with the Augusta Westland Bicycle User Group.
- 5.43 A priority assessment can also be carried out to objectively assess a large number of proposed routes. The draft Somerset Cycling Strategy provides more information on the types of survey that can be employed.
- 5.44 More detailed analysis of accidents involving cyclists will enable a greater understanding of the underlying causes and help recommendations for appropriate remedial measures to be made (the analysis used for this report looked at the locations rather than the specific causes of accidents involving cyclists).
- 5.45 A survey of non-cyclists can be a useful means of selecting new facilities and estimating the likely impact of these facilities on travel behaviour. Issues to explore in this survey would be the obstacles or deterrents to non-cyclists switching mode to the bike.
- 5.46 It may be a lack of residential cycle parking, a shortage of commuter or medium stay cycle parking at the trip-end, the severance effect of the A30, or simply the sheer hilliness of Yeovil and the surrounding area. Other obstacles to cycle use may be an ignorance of existing facilities or the congestion-beating journey times which are achievable by bike. Such a survey could therefore help to identify the key issues and the degree to which any deterrents could be practically overcome.

Targets

- 5.47 The draft Somerset Cycling Strategy proposes that towns in Somerset aim to reverse the decline in cycling which took place between 1991 and 2001 (based on journey to work data from the National Census). For a small number of towns including Yeovil, where the level of cycling actually increased over that period, the target is simply to continue the increase.
- 5.48 Due to the topography of the town, Yeovil is unlikely ever to reach the high levels of cycling achieved in Taunton and Bridgwater. However, increases are possible, particularly if new facilities are energetically marketed to people who show an interest in switching modes, and are focused on the flatter areas of the town. Every effort must be made to maintain and increase, if possible, the current very high levels of cycling at Augusta Westland.

YCRT Recommendations

- 5.49 The YCRT recommendation number 8 has not been included in the YTSR cycling strategy as it is felt that investment in cycling facilities can provide equivalent modal shift to investment in pedestrian facilities. Recommendation 38 has some merit in that it will provide more protection for cyclists travelling along the A30. However, cyclists should not be encouraged to use such busy dual carriageways and instead should cycle on less busy parallel roads or dedicated cycle routes.

THE PEDESTRIAN STRATEGY

- 5.50 The Pedestrian Strategy aims to improve the facilities and environment for pedestrians and this section makes recommendations for the crossing on the A30 and at a Yeovil-wide level. Measures to encourage walking are contained in the Travel Awareness Strategy which is detailed in the sections after the Pedestrian Strategy.

A30 Crossings

- 5.51 The A30 severs the town centre from Yeovil and the existing crossings do little to encourage pedestrians. The subways at West Hendford and the Hospital Roundabout are uninviting to pedestrians and so it is recommended that these should be enhanced to provide an improved environment for pedestrians. Enhancements could include CCTV, improved lighting, resurfacing and regular cleaning and removal of graffiti.
- 5.52 It is recognised that the pedestrian flow using the West Hendford subway may decrease as a result of the pedestrian facilities proposed at the Police Station Roundabout although this should not stop improvements being made at West Hendford.
- 5.53 To deter uncontrolled crossing of the A30 Reckleford the YTSR recommends that improved barriers should be installed along this stretch of road from the Reckleford Gyratory to the Hospital Roundabout. As this means that there will still be just the one controlled crossing on the A30 Reckleford it is also recommended that the need for a second crossing should be monitored. It is noted that the existing crossing near the junctions with Goldcroft and Market Street will be replaced as part of the proposals to signalise the Market Street junction.

Yeovil-Wide

- 5.54 Across Yeovil it is recommended that the existing programme of dropped crossings and tactile paving should be extended to further enhance pedestrian facilities. It is also recommended that existing pedestrian facilities should be audited and pedestrian demand surveyed to ensure that supply and demand are in balance. There is little point in spending scarce resources on facilities that will not be used by pedestrians.
- 5.55 The YTSR Highway Strategy identifies a number of at-grade junctions which it proposes for conversion to traffic signal control. It is recommended that where traffic signals are introduced at junctions the signal phasing should include a pedestrian phase. The Pedestrian Strategy does not support the introduction of pedestrian phases at the proposed signals at the Hospital Roundabout as the refurbished subways provide an alternative route through this junction.
- 5.56 The YTSR supports the introduction of the Toucan crossing on the A30 Sherborne Road at Pen Mill and the new layout for the traffic signal controlled junction of Preston Road and Larkhill Road. It also recommends that appropriate pedestrian crossings should be considered on Bunford Lane north of the entrance to the Yeovil Crematorium and on Western Avenue north of Stourton Way. Additional locations