

**HART DISTRICT**

**TRANSPORT STATEMENT**

**Adopted September 2012**

<b>CONTENTS</b>		<b>page no.</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Policy Context</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Transport Context and Issues in Hart</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Transport Objectives and Delivery Priorities</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Implementation &amp; Funding</b>	<b>9</b>

**FIGURE**

<b>Figure 1: Transport Issues &amp; Proposals Diagram</b>	<b>12</b>
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**APPENDIX**

<b>Table 1: Schedule of Transport Improvements</b>	<b>13</b>
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## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the transport objectives and delivery priorities for the Hart District Council (HDC) area. The Transport Statement aims to provide the following:

- a local transport strategy framework for the District;
- a framework to assist with the prioritisation of transport improvements;
- a basis for land use and development planning;
- assistance to the local planning authority with infrastructure planning in support of the Core Strategies, the preparation of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule and the application of the Transport Contributions Policy in the interim period until the CIL Charging Schedule is adopted.

1.2 The Statement is a Hampshire County Council document and has been developed in consultation with Hart District Council. The Statement covers the period up to 2028, which conforms with the timeframes of planned development, as outlined in the emerging Hart LDF / Local Plan. It will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis, particularly as proposals are completed or modified. It will also be updated from the Local Plan and detailed Transport Assessment which are currently being progressed.

1.3 The Transport Statement links to the economic priorities being developed by the M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). It also builds on existing transport related documents covering the District, notably the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP), the Fleet Town Access Plan (TAP) and the Local Development Framework (LDF) Documents. The area is subject to some planned growth which will lead to additional travel demands that will need to be managed in a sustainable manner.

1.4 Within this context, the transport vision for the District Transport Statement is to help deliver 'safe, efficient and reliable ways to get around, helping to promote a prospering and sustainable area'. The priorities and proposals outlined in this Transport Statement look to facilitate the following objectives:

- 1) Promote economic growth by providing a well-maintained, safe and efficient highway network;
- 2) Improve access to jobs, facilities and services by all types of transport;
- 3) Facilitate and enable new development to come forward;
- 4) Reduce carbon emissions and minimise the impacts of transport on the environment.

## 2. Policy Context

2.1 Nationally, the White Paper published in January 2011 named 'Creating Growth, Cutting Carbon, Making Sustainable Local Transport Happen', sets out the Government's policy towards transport and its links to economic prosperity, climate change and local transport. This Statement aims to reflect and address these national priorities at the local level. The proposals contribute to creating growth through reducing congestion, providing greater accessibility for all and regenerating the area. Carbon emissions will be reduced by encouraging greater use of walking, cycling and public transport.

2.2 Central government has recently published the National Planning Policy Framework, which provides national strategy and guidance for land-use planning policy and practice. It identifies how planning can achieve sustainable development and includes a section on promoting sustainable transport. This supersedes the national guidance and statements used in developing planning policy, and assessing the impact of developments. Manual for Streets 1 and 2 places an emphasis on better design in public spaces, and provides best practice in the design of the urban environment.

2.3 At a sub-regional level, the M3 LEP is driving forward economic growth within North and Central Hampshire and West Surrey. Encompassing a population of 1.6 million, an above average skilled workforce, and the home for a number of international businesses, the M3 LEP is an important economic area for the UK economy. Under its main board, the M3 LEP brings together business and the public sector, and will prioritise key strategic infrastructure investment priorities, including for transport, over the next few years. Hart is close to the centre of the LEP area, and is anticipated to benefit from strategic transport improvements planned and delivered through the LEP.

2.4 The key transport policy document produced by Hampshire County Council is the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3), [www3.hants.gov.uk/transport/local-transport-plan.htm](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/transport/local-transport-plan.htm). It is in two parts with Part A containing the Long Term Strategy between 2011 and 2031 and Part B the Implementation Plan for the next three years of 2012-2015. The section most relevant to this Transport Statement is Chapter 5 which identifies the Transport Strategy for North Hampshire. Specific reference is made to the built up areas of Fleet, Yateley and Blackwater, the smaller settlements of Hook, Odiham and Hartney Wintney and the rural area. The LTP identifies a series of measures for the area which are included in the transport proposals in Section 4 and Table 1.

2.5 The County Council has produced the Fleet Town Access Plan (TAP) in partnership with HDC and this was adopted in 2010. It contains a list of specific schemes aimed at improving access in and around the Fleet Town Centre and Church Crookham. It includes proposals to improve highway capacity, ease congestion, public transport improvements and provide an extensive network of cycle and pedestrian routes.

2.6 There are a number of local planning documents developed by HDC which have had a significant input to this Transport Statement and these are listed below:

- *Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy Preferred Approach Consultation (July 2011)*. This outlines the approach that identifies development proposals for Hart District until 2028, and includes a transport section setting out the main transport policies in CP5;
- *A Vision for Fleet Town Centre 2011-2028 Consultation Draft (October 2011)*. This sets out the vision for the environmental and physical improvement of Fleet town centre for the next 15 years, providing a framework with policies to promote and manage the future of Fleet town centre, including consideration of transport and access associated with development proposals;
- *LDF Transport Assessment, (April 2010)*. This was a preliminary assessment of the potential development sites. It reviewed the sites in terms of their transport sustainability and forecast transport impacts;
- *Transport Assessment for the M3 Corridor J3-4A Joint LDF Study (May 2011)*. A joint study for Hart, Rushmoor and Surrey Heath Councils to assess the combined impacts of planned LDF developments between junctions 3 and 4A;
- *Local Plan Public Transport Assessment (June 2012)*. This reviews existing public transport provision and identifies the potential impact of planned development on the public transport network;
- *Yateley Village Design Statement Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (July 2009)*. This emphasises the need to enhance the village centre and addresses a number of transport issues mainly arising from the traffic flows on Reading Road.

2.7 It is acknowledged that both the Transport Statement Table 1 and the LDF Infrastructure Development Plan will require revision and update to reflect the outcomes of work to be undertaken on the Core Strategy / Local Plan. This Statement will also need to reflect the findings in the Core Strategy / Local Plans for neighbouring councils including Basingstoke & Deane, Bracknell Forest, East Hampshire, Rushmoor, Waveley and Wokingham.

### **3. Transport Context and Issues in Hart District**

3.1 Hart District is largely rural in character with four main built up areas comprising Fleet, Hook, Blackwater and Yateley. To the south east is Fleet and Church Crookham, which is the largest of these, with a population of 32,000. In the north east of the district, are the mainly residential areas of Yateley, Blackwater and Hawley, where the A30 joins the A331. Together these eastern towns are part of the Blackwater Valley, an urbanised sub region extending into Surrey with complex settlement and travel patterns. The west of the District is more rural with the larger villages of Hook, Odiham and Hartley Wintney.

3.2 The strategic transport network has a number of key east-west links. These include the M3, the A30 and the rail line between Waterloo to Southampton. Other significant links include the A287 across the south of the district between Farnham and M3 junction 5, the A327 connecting the M3 junction 4A southwards towards Fleet and northwards to Reading and the A323 through Fleet. Congestion occurs, notably during peak hours, on all these key routes. In the future this congestion is forecast to worsen with growth in travel from existing and new development. About 60% of the resident workforce commute out of the District to work, mostly to Rushmoor, Surrey Heath and London which places pressure on the road and rail network at peak times.

3.3 Fleet has evolved from its main street and railway in the late 19th century to include large residential areas on all sides, most of which have been built in the last 50 years. To the south is Church Crookham and a recent addition is Elvetham Heath to the north. Fleet also has some important open spaces including the Basingstoke Canal and Fleet Pond.

3.4 Yateley, Blackwater and Hawley have also expanded and are more dispersed, being typified by a scattered range of neighbourhood retail centres and public buildings or facilities, residential estates and large open spaces. Movement and access is heavily car-dependent, although Blackwater station is nearby. Hook, Hartley Wintney and Odiham are also sizeable villages which feature attractive, historic cores. Hook, in the west of the district, which includes a rail station is the largest of these and has grown significantly with residential and employment development.

3.5 The rural areas include an extensive highway network connecting the different communities where households depend on car access for many trips. Here traffic can cause difficulties for local residents with excess speeding and road safety can be a significant

problem. A further issue in these areas is access to the countryside and the needs associated with footpaths, bridleways and byways. The Hampshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) sets out how improvements for walkers, cyclists, equestrians and people with mobility problems will be carried out.

3.6 Walking and cycling offer opportunities in the District especially in the more built up east part of the District where the key trip attractors are in close proximity to housing, such as schools, shops, employment and rail stations. However, several missing links in these networks have been identified, and severance continues to be an issue in part due to the canal at Fleet. Improving transport accessibility by all modes of transport would help enable residents and visitors to the District to better access services and facilities. It would also help promote lower-carbon transport choices.

3.7 Public transport accessibility varies throughout the District. Other than near to Fleet station public transport accessibility is generally low. Bus services tend to struggle with viability in part due to high car ownership and low density of the suburban and rural areas. The main rail station is at Fleet, located to the north of the town and is expected to be improved in the near future. The other stations in the District are Hook, Winchfield and Blackwater with Hook and Winchfield on the Southampton to London line. Blackwater station is just within the District boundary and provides access to Reading and Gatwick services.

3.8 The recent harsh winters have caused considerable disruption during severe weather conditions, and resulted in significant damage to the highway network. This, combined with the forecast effect of climate change, has highlighted the importance of maintaining and keeping highways open, facilitating safe movement of people and goods. In this context, it is recognised that Highway maintenance will continue to be a high priority for the County Council. Key transport issues and outline proposals are shown on Figure 1.

3.9 In summary, the main transport challenges facing the District can be seen as:

- Managing existing and forecast road congestion especially on the main A road routes and accessing the M3 J4A particularly during peak periods;
- Planning for, and mitigation of travel impacts arising from new developments;
- Continuing to provide for transport access in the rural areas;
- Improving transport accessibility to the town centres, and local services and facilities;
- Helping to facilitate lower-carbon transport choices.

#### **4. Transport Objectives and Delivery Priorities**

4.1 In consideration of the policy context and transport issues outlined above, a number of Objectives and Delivery Priorities have been identified for the District. To facilitate these, an extensive list of proposals are presented in Table 1. Refer also to Figure 1 which shows some of the key transport issues and proposals.

#### **4.2 Objective 1: Promote economic growth by providing a well-maintained, safe and efficient highway network.**

##### **Delivery Priorities:**

- 1a) Maintain the road network for all users to ensure a resilient, long-term and efficient network;
- 1b) Develop targeted measures to improve capacity at congestion bottlenecks and optimise traffic management on the A30, A327 & east of Fleet corridors;
- 1c) In partnership with the Highway's Agency, look at capacity improvements for links to M3 junction 4a, notably on the A327;
- 1d) Reduce road casualties, through a pro-active approach to accident reduction;
- 1e) Review and where feasible deliver measures that help meet community aspirations to manage the speed and volume of traffic at a local level.

#### **4.3 Objective 2: Improve access to jobs, facilities and services for all types of transport.**

##### **Delivery Priorities:**

- 2a) Ensure that high quality transport access to the main employment areas is maintained and improved, including into Rushmoor where much of the local employment is located;
- 2b) Provide accessibility improvements as outlined in the Town Access Plan for Fleet and the transport proposals in the other main settlements of Yateley, Hook, Blackwater and Hawley;
- 2c) Enhance the existing bus routes, including improving bus stop waiting facilities and provision of better information;
- 2d) In partnership with transport operators and community transport groups provide essential transport accessibility in rural and suburban areas across the District;
- 2e) Improve interchange facilities at Fleet rail station;

- 2f) Promote work place travel planning, such as flexible working initiatives, to help tackle peak period congestion;
- 2g) Improve and deliver the cycle and pedestrian network across the District, including better links to business locations, town centres, schools and rail stations;
- 2h) Provide better information and advice on transport choices.

**4.4 Objective 3: Facilitate and enable new developments to come forward.**

**Delivery priorities:**

- 3a) Enable improved highway access to the major development areas, including new or improved junctions and capacity improvements on the A327, A30, access to the M3 and east of Fleet;
- 3b) Promote improved transport access to employment developments such as Hartlands Park, with enhanced access to the M3 junctions, the A327 and better pedestrian and cycle links from surrounding areas;
- 3c) Mitigate the impact of forecast congestion on the highway network through reducing the need to travel and providing good quality walk, cycle and public transport links from new developments.

**4.5 Objective 4: Reduce carbon emissions and minimise the impacts of transport on the environment.**

**Delivery priorities:**

- 4a) Promote low carbon emitting modes of transport, including supporting the necessary infrastructure for low emission vehicles, and encouraging walking, cycling and public transport;
- 4b) Help reduce the need to travel, such as through supporting the development of high quality telecommunications, Broadband infrastructure and teleconferencing.

## 5. Implementation & Funding

5.1 The proposals identified in Section 4 and Table 1 are at various stages of progress, ranging from concept to implementation. Stages of transport scheme development typically include preliminary design, consultation, detailed design, tendering and construction. The delivery of schemes is largely undertaken within the integrated capital programme by Hampshire County Council. Close co-operation, partnership and assistance is a vital component in delivering these transport improvements. There are a wide variety of key stakeholders which include Hart District Council, the Highways Agency, the Local Enterprise Partnership (Enterprise M3), businesses, neighbouring councils, transport operators, developers and the local community.

5.2 The delivery, phasing and prioritisation of the proposals will depend on funding available from a range of different sources. These sources are briefly summarised below in five main groups:

*i) Funds from Department for Transport:* There are currently four funding streams available from the Department for Transport (DfT) that can be expected to help fund transport schemes in Hart:

- **Integrated Transport and Maintenance Capital Grants:** This is block funding from central government for transport. It includes funds for highways maintenance schemes, and funding for smaller-scale transport improvements, including highway improvements, traffic management schemes, and accessibility schemes. HCC decides how to spend these funds, including some in Hart;
- **Major Schemes Funding:** This is capital funding for transport schemes over £5 million in value. Until recently this has been administered as a competitive process from the DfT. However, central government has recently set out consultation on devolving prioritisation and funding for these schemes to a more local level, with a new role proposed for Local Transport Bodies and LEPs in this process;
- **The Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF),** which is in the form of capital and revenue expenditure. Funding of £4.1m has been secured by the County Council for the Hampshire Sustainable Travel Towns initiative, which will be allocated over a four year period of 2011-2015 towards sustainable transport improvements in six Hampshire towns including Fleet;

- Pinch-point Fund: This is funding that has been identified by central government for highway improvements on the strategic road network. Approximately £220 million has been identified for growth related schemes which cost under £10 million and which help ease local bottlenecks and improve safety and road layout. The fund, administered by the Highway's Agency, is anticipated to fund improvements over the next 3 years.

*ii) Funds from local resources:* These are funds that have been allocated at a local level from Hampshire County Council to support delivery of the highway maintenance programme. These funds complement the capital grant funds allocated for maintenance from the Department for Transport.

*iii) Funds from land-use development:* One of the main sources of funding for transport improvements is from developments in the District. Currently transport contributions are secured in accordance with the County Council's Transport Contributions Policy, which is adopted within the District's 'Community Infrastructure Policy' Supplementary Planning Document.

Hart District Council are looking to introduce a CIL Charging Schedule soon after the adoption of the Core Strategy / Local Plan. Once the CIL Schedule is adopted then this will replace the Transport Contributions Policy. It is expected that a number of transport infrastructure projects will be taken into account in producing the Charging Schedule and maybe funded by CIL receipts. This Transport Statement is intended to provide additional information to assist the District Council in preparing the CIL Charging Schedule and to ensure that transport infrastructure is included.

It may be that in some cases, particularly with major developments, some specific transport infrastructure or strategic improvements will need to be secured through Section 106 or Section 278 agreements in order that they can be delivered by the developer to meet the needs of the development alone. Alternatively, funding of these schemes may be provided by CIL contributions including the opportunity to pool resources with neighbouring councils where appropriate. Section 278 will not be restricted by the CIL Regulations and so it will be possible to fund transport schemes through both CIL and Section 278.

*iv) LEP Funding:* As Hart is part of the M3 LEP area significant opportunities are emerging for funding of transport schemes. The Growing Places Fund has been set up to help unlock and support economic growth and job creation, through funding transport schemes that help open up business and development opportunities. Up to £14 million has indicatively been allocated towards infrastructure improvements in the LEP area. Part of this fund could be used to help implement a number of strategic transport schemes within Hart, such as highway improvements accessing M3 Junction 4A. However, the Growing Places Fund must be recycled, so a mechanism to pay back any funding from this source in whole or part has to be established.

*v) Other Funding:* There are also other emerging sources of funding, which will involve joint working between authorities and business, and have the potential to assist with delivery of the proposals in the District. Of particular potential is the Tax Increment Funding and the New Homes Bonus, which aim to gain benefit from new development coming forward, although the funding received from the latter is not ring fenced. Other funding opportunities for improvements arise via public transport operators, such as from the National Station Improvement Programme, (NSIP) or for vehicle improvements from the bus operators or from groups such as Sustrans.

5.3 The proposed schemes listed in Table 1 include an indication of the likely funding source, where this has been able to be identified. However, for several of the sources the level of funds available and the criteria for their application has not yet been confirmed.

5.4 Whilst the Transport Statement timeframe is to 2028, it is not expected that all of the schemes listed in Table 1 will be deliverable within this time period. Future funding is uncertain, particularly in the current economic climate and the global sum likely to be available for transport in the next 15-20 years is unknown. The identification of schemes for progression will take place in conjunction with key partners and will be informed by a range of factors currently unconfirmed, including economic pressures, finalised development allocations and availability of funding. Therefore, many of the schemes listed represent longer term policy aspirations of HCC. Delivery will be subject to future prioritisation and the development of robust business cases to justify delivery.

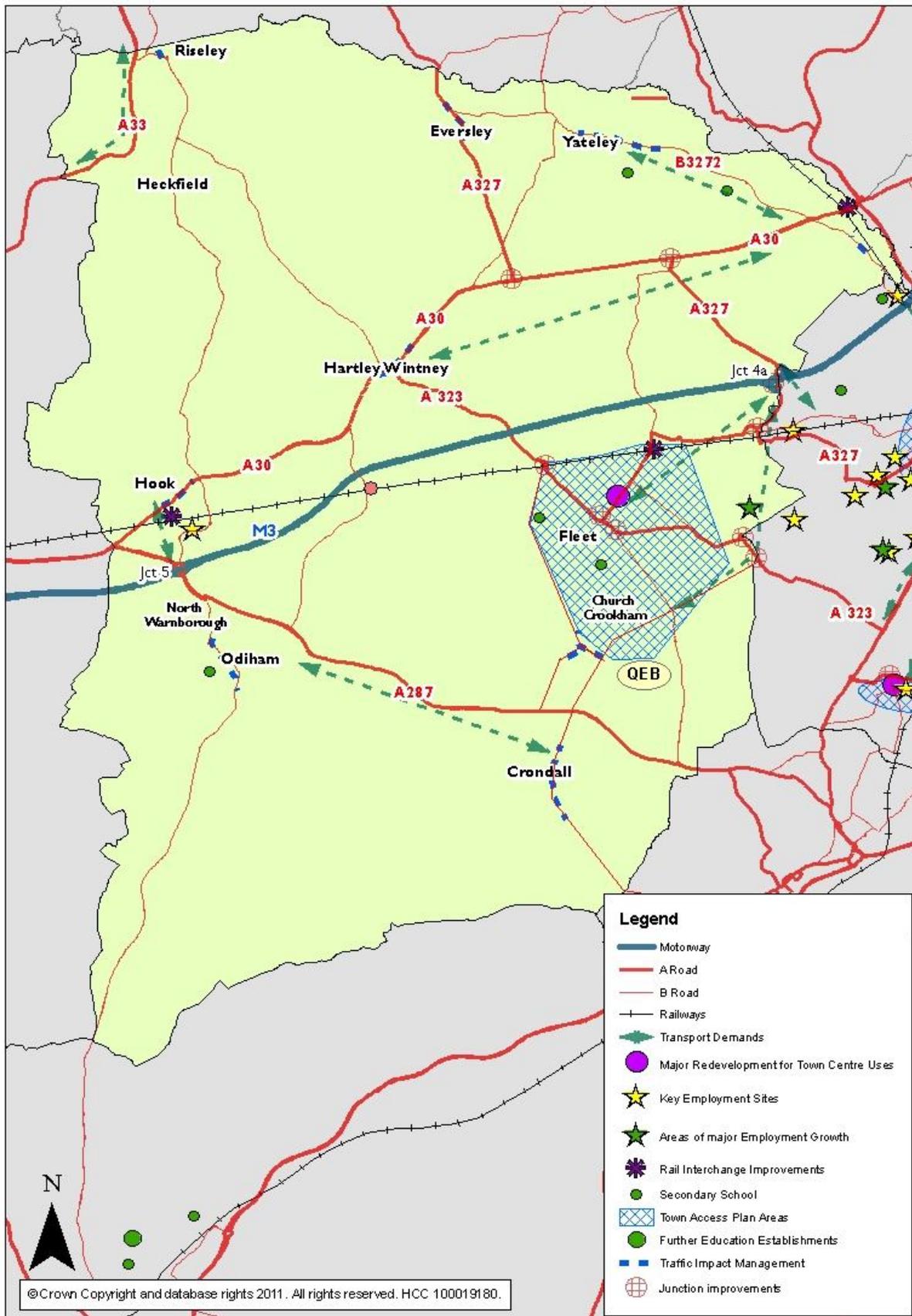


Figure 1: Key Transport Issues & Proposals Diagram

## **Table 1**

### **Schedule of Transport Improvements**

**(See separate sheets)**

**Note that the schemes are not listed in order of priority**