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1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This document represents the final stage in the development of the Thirsk Service Centre Transportation Strategy (SCTS) as prepared by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and their partner consultants Jacobs. The document summarises the key stages in the development of the Hawes SCTS and concludes with details of the findings and recommendations proposed by the Strategy.

The Thirsk SCTS is one of 28 transportation strategies to be developed across North Yorkshire during the Local Transport Plan for Period 2 (LTP2) which covers 2006 – 2011. The methodology focuses upon identifying the transport needs of ‘Service Centre’ market towns and their surrounding hinterlands and assisting in the creation of improvement schemes and initiatives aimed at providing safer, better connected and more accessible transport services linking people to key services, jobs, education and health facilities. This process builds upon the success of the Town Centre Traffic Management Studies (TMS) undertaken during the First Local Transport Plan (LTP1) Period, with the key additional focus of the SCTS being to deliver improvements within the surrounding hinterlands as well as within town centres.

The Thirsk SCTS Study Area focuses upon the market town of Thirsk, but also includes the nearby villages of Sowerby and Carlton Miniott, and extends to Skipton-on-Swale in the west, and Knayton in the north. To the east, the area includes Kilburn and Boltby and in the south it extends to the villages of Sessay and Topcliffe, as illustrated in Figure 1.1 on Page 2.
1.2 Delivering the Strategy

Within the Local Transport Plan for Period 2, NYCC has an allocated budget set aside for the development and delivery of the Thirsk SCTS. This budget covers the design and construction of improvement schemes put forward by the Strategy over a two year period. It will be used to deliver those schemes identified within the Strategy in order of priority. It should be noted that as this is a flexible but finite budget and that not all of the schemes put forward as a result of technical investigation, public and stakeholder consultation will be deliverable within the available funds. Those schemes which cannot be delivered within the available budget will join the NYCC Local Transport Plan Capital Reserve List of Schemes. This is discussed in more detail later in this document.
It should also be acknowledged that the SCTS process can identify large scale improvement schemes which exceed the scope of the SCTS allocated budget. In this instance these improvement schemes will still be included within the Strategy, but with an acknowledgement that they cannot be delivered within the limits of the SCTS budget. Such improvement schemes may however be progressed in line with alternative funding mechanisms available and where this is the case this has been identified within the Strategy. Alternative funding mechanisms include (but are not limited to) the following:

- NYCC Improvement Schemes already programmed for delivery within the Strategy period
- Wider Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport and Maintenance Budgets
  - Capital Reserve List
  - Public Transport Review Process
  - Kickstart Grants
- Developer Contributions (Section 106 Agreements)
- Highways Agency Trunk Road Improvements
- Regional Transport Board / Department for Transport LTP Major Schemes (capital cost > £5 million)

As the findings of this process are ‘strategic’ in nature all of the Improvement Schemes put forward by the Strategy will be subject to further analysis/feasibility testing and consultation as part of the NYCC scheme development process.

1.3 Report Structure

The following chapters provide details of the SCTS Process, the prioritised list of improvement schemes for delivery within the SCTS budget and identifies schemes identified within the Strategy for delivery subject to alternative funding mechanisms. The structure of the remainder of the document is as follows:

- Chapter 2 – Strategy Development
- Chapter 3 – Prioritised Improvement Schemes
- Chapter 4 – Improvements Subject to Alternative Funding/Delivery Mechanisms
- Chapter 5 – Monitoring and Evaluation
- Chapter 6 – Summary and Conclusions
- Appendix A – Prioritised Improvement Schemes
2 Strategy Development

2.1 Introduction

The key stages in the development of the Thirsk SCTS are illustrated in Figure 2.1 below along with the dates that each stage was completed. Full details of each of these key stages are provided in the remaining sections of this chapter.

Figure 2.1: Strategy Development – Key Stages
2.2 Data Collection

Data Collection formed the first stage in the development of the Thirsk SCTS. The process involved the collation of information and familiarisation of the Study Area and provided an important evidence base for the development and evaluation of the improvement schemes. Full details of the data collection exercise can be found within the following report: *Thirsk Service Centre Transportation Strategy: Base Data and Analysis Report*

2.3 First Stakeholder Workshop

The second stage in the development of the SCTS was the First Stakeholder Workshop held at East Thirsk Community Hall, Thirsk on the 18th September 2007. Key stakeholders ranging from Parish Councillors to Local Action Groups and emergency services were invited to attend the workshop and provide their insight into the current issues affecting transportation within the Study Area. Views expressed during the workshop were used as one of the key means of driving the SCTS process forward. Full details of the First Stakeholder Workshop can be found within the following report: *Thirsk Service Centre Transportation Strategy: Workshop 1 Summary Note.*

2.4 Sample Survey

Following the First Stakeholder Workshop, a Sample Survey Questionnaire was distributed to 1724 addresses within the Study Area. A total of 413 households (approximately 24%) responded. This survey gave a representative sample of the people living / working within the SCTS Study Area an opportunity to air their views and opinions on any local transportation issues.

2.5 Analysis and Development of Improvement Schemes

Information provided by key stakeholders and the responses received from members of the public by way of the Sample Survey, together with data analysis, was then used to develop a range of improvement schemes. Full details can be found within the following report: *Thirsk Service Centre Transportation Strategy: Options Report*

2.6 Scheme Assessment and Prioritisation

Since the SCTS process is driven by the LTP process, it is essential that the improvement schemes put forward by the Strategy are focused upon meeting the objectives of the Government’s Shared Priorities for Transport.

Each of the proposed improvement schemes have therefore been appraised using NYCC’s Scheme Prioritisation System which assesses each scheme against the Shared Priorities for Transport.

This appraisal determined an overall assessment score which has been used as one of the means of identifying the Improvement Schemes to be prioritised and delivered. It also ensures consistency within the decision making process across the County.

2.7 Second Stakeholder Workshop

The purpose of the Second Stakeholder Workshop was to report back to the key stakeholders on the improvement schemes which were developed following the issues
raised at the First Stakeholder Workshop and the Sample Survey. The local Stakeholders who were invited to the First Stakeholder Workshop were once again given the opportunity to provide comments and feedback on each of the improvement schemes before they were taken forward to the Public Consultation stage. The Second Stakeholder Workshop also gave NYCC the opportunity to report feedback on improvement schemes which were deemed to be unfeasible due to lack of justification, physical constraints or funding issues. A review of the 2nd Workshop is contained within: Thirsk Service Centre Transportation Strategy: Second Stakeholder Workshop Summary Note

2.8 Public Consultation

Following the Second Stakeholder Workshop, a full Public Consultation exercise was undertaken. This process consisted of two elements:

- Public Exhibitions
- Postal Survey of all addresses

The Public Exhibitions referenced above were held at the following locations within the Study Area:

- East Thirsk Primary School, Hambleton Place (Saturday 12th July 2008)
- Thirsk and Sowerby Town Hall, Westgate, (Wednesday 16th July 2008)

The Public Exhibitions were attended by a total of 17 people over the two days and provided details of the SCTS process to date and each of the proposed Improvement Schemes put forward. These exhibitions also provided an opportunity for the public and local stakeholders to give their views and discuss in detail, with a representative of NYCC, any of the schemes put forward.

In addition to the Public Exhibitions, a Postal Survey of all the households and businesses within the Thirsk SCTS Study Area was undertaken. This postal survey gave every household the opportunity to comment on the Improvement Schemes and yielded 1892 responses (approximately 24% of total households distributed to). Contained within the Postal Survey were details of the public exhibitions, which were open to everyone in the Study Area. Analysis of ward demographic data was used to ensure that the data captured as part of the consultation exercise was representative of those who live and work within the study area. Full details of the Public Consultation Exercise can be found in: Thirsk Service Centre Transportation Strategy: Consultation Results.

2.9 The Strategy

Analysis of the views expressed during the Public Consultation exercise have been used to assess the level of public desire / acceptance for each of the improvement schemes put forward. This analysis along with the assessment score produced using the NYCC Scheme Prioritisation System, has subsequently been used to inform the list of improvement schemes to be prioritised for delivery. The improvement schemes which have been prioritised for delivery as part of the SCTS are detailed within the following chapter.
3 Prioritised Improvement Schemes

3.1 Introduction

As outlined within the previous chapter, the SCTS process has resulted in the development of a range of improvement schemes and associated options aimed at resolving transportation issues currently affecting people living and working within the Study Area.

These proposals have been developed based upon the views expressed by local stakeholders and the public, technical justification for the scheme and technical/physical feasibility.

This chapter focuses on those Improvement Schemes to be taken forward using the reserved SCTS budget from the LTP as well as providing a justification for those discounted from the process. This is discussed in more detail below.

3.2 Methodology

Using the Scheme Assessment score determined by the NYCC Scheme Prioritisation System and the views expressed as part of the Public Consultation exercise, a prioritised list of 11 improvement schemes has been developed. These improvement schemes are detailed within Section 3.3 below and in more detail with illustrations in Appendix A.

The SCTS process has ensured that these prioritised improvement schemes are focused upon meeting the needs of the people living and working within the SCTS Study Area whilst ultimately assisting in the delivery of the LTP2 objectives, and demonstrating a positive contribution to the aspirations of the Shared Priorities for Transport.

3.3 Prioritised Improvement Schemes

Table 3.1 overleaf details the improvement schemes which have been prioritised for delivery as part of the available SCTS budget. These schemes are those which demonstrate a significant contribution to the Shared Priorities for Transport and demonstrate support from the people living and working within the Study Area.

The costs estimates included within the table are based upon the information available at the time of investigation and as such may be subject to change at later stages of scheme development.

It is acknowledged that the allocated budget is not sufficient to deliver all of the improvement schemes identified based upon their cost estimates. Therefore those schemes which are not delivered will join the NYCC Reserve List of Capital Schemes and will be instead delivered using the wider LTP Integrated Transport and Maintenance Budget subject to prioritisation against the existing schemes already on the list.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheme Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speed limit reduction from 40mph to 30mph along A61 (Station Road) between</td>
<td>£31,427</td>
<td>27.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Persimmons Housing development and the Train Station</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of a safe crossing point on the B1448 (Topcliffe Road) in the vicinity</td>
<td>£33,000</td>
<td>24.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of Matlings/Sowerby Road</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to bus infrastructure in Sandhutton</td>
<td>£11,000</td>
<td>20.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a new footway along Newsham Road between Station Road and</td>
<td>£21,773</td>
<td>19.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirsk Racecourse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to bus infrastructure in Carlton Miniott village</td>
<td>£11,000</td>
<td>18.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus infrastructure improvements within the Thirsk Market Place</td>
<td>£9,500</td>
<td>15.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Installation of an on/off road cycle route between Back Lane in Sowerby and</td>
<td>£130,000</td>
<td>14.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thirsk Industrial Estate on York Road</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Installation of an off road cycle route between Finkle Street in Thirsk Town</td>
<td>£85,000</td>
<td>14.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre and York Road adjacent to Thirsk Industrial Estate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>***Construction of a new footway and one way system (westbound / eastbound) along</td>
<td>£25,222</td>
<td>14.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gravel Hole Lane between Front Street and Back Lane</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed limit reduction along Oak Tree Bank, Knayton</td>
<td>£4,735</td>
<td>10.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of an on-road cycle route between Green Lane East / Croft Heads and</td>
<td>£5,000</td>
<td>10.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the existing shared use footpath/cycle path between Front Street and Thirsk Town</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those schemes shaded in grey above were approved by the Corporate Director: Business and Environmental Services as part of the Implementation Plan for the Strategy as far as the Integrated Transport Capital Programme will provide the funds for their implementation.

* As part of the development of the Thirsk, Sowerby and Carlton Miniott Cycle Plan the introduction of this cycle route was estimated at approximately £83,000, however recent site investigations have suggested that a higher cost estimate of £130,000 would be more appropriate due to the potential need for improvements to the 2 footbridges crossing Cod Beck. The exact nature of potential improvements to the footbridges would not be known until detailed investigations are carried out. This proposal will therefore be taken forward as part of the Strategy based upon its contribution to the Shared Priorities for Transport as illustrated by the NYCC Scheme Prioritisation score of 14.64.

**As part of the Public Exhibitions one of the local residents expressed concerns over the introduction of the proposed cycle route between Finkle Street and York Road, stating that the proposed route encroached on their land. Specifically the north-east / south-west section which leaves York Road and passes a Bungalow prior to joining the existing Public Right of Way over Sowerby Flatts. In this instance further localised consultation / investigation into
land ownership will be required as part of the detailed design process. Alternatively the opportunity may exist to link this proposal to York Road at an alternative location.

***It should be noted that consultation was undertaken for a proposed one-way system both eastbound and westbound along Gravel Hole Lane to gauge public opinion prior to further detailed assessments. Overall respondents were in favour of the introduction of a footpath along Gravel Hole Lane however the majority percentage was significantly lower than other schemes prioritised as part of the strategy. In addition a significant percentage of respondents either indicated that they had no opinion or did not provide a response thus demonstrating the need for further localised consultation as part of the detailed design stage in order to assess the ultimate deliverability of this proposal. Overall support was slightly in favour of a westbound one-way system.

It should also be noted that this proposal is subject to further detailed investigations into the impact this would have on the surrounding highway network as part of the detailed design process.

The improvement Schemes identified and prioritised within Table 3.1 are all subject to further detailed analysis as part of the future design / build process. This may necessitate further localised consultation and detailed physical / technical feasibility assessments undertaken by the NYCC Area Highway Teams to establish their ultimate deliverability.
4 Improvements Subject to Alternative Funding / Delivery Mechanisms

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides details of those Improvement Schemes identified as part of the SCTS development process which exceed the scope of the SCTS budget and are therefore subject to alternative delivery and funding mechanisms. These include both Capital and ‘Non’ Capital Improvement Schemes and Initiatives.

Although it is recognised that such Improvement Schemes cannot be progressed in line with the SCTS budget they have still been included within the Strategy to be progressed under alternative funding / delivery mechanisms. This is an acknowledgement that in order to solve a number of the problems and issues identified by the SCTS process, access to all available NYCC funding streams and departments is required.

Those ‘Capital’ Improvement Schemes which cannot be delivered within the SCTS budget and thus are subject to alternative funding are detailed within Section 4.2 of this chapter.

Section 4.3 of this chapter provides details of the issues raised as part of the development of the SCTS which are external to, or cannot be directly resolved by, the SCTS delivery process. These have however still been included within the Strategy as recognition of their importance and to ensure joined up thinking between other departments within North Yorkshire County Council. These are predominantly ‘Non’ Capital Improvement Schemes and Initiatives that will need to be taken forward and delivered by a number of NYCC departments.

4.2 Capital Improvement Schemes Subject to Alternative Funding

As detailed within the introduction there are a number of Capital Improvement Schemes and Initiatives which have been identified / developed as part of the SCTS process which cannot be progressed within the available SCTS budget. These include:

- Improvement Schemes with a High Capital Cost
- Maintenance Budget Improvements

Full details of these schemes are provided in Section 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 overleaf.

4.2.1 Improvement Schemes with a High Capital Cost

As detailed within Chapter 1, some Improvement Schemes developed as part of the SCTS process with a high estimated Capital Cost have been deemed to be beyond the scope of the SCTS budget and as such their delivery is dependent upon alternative funding mechanisms available. This is to ensure that the best use is made of the available budget for the delivery of schemes as part of the SCTS process.

Five such Improvement Schemes have been identified as part of the development of the Thirsk SCTS and are detailed in Table 4.2 overleaf.
Table 4.1: Improvement Schemes with a High Capital Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Scheme Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cycleway along A167 between Alanbrooke Barracks and Topcliffe</td>
<td>£250,000</td>
<td>30.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared use footway/cycleway along A167 between Alanbrooke Barracks and Topcliffe</td>
<td>£300,000</td>
<td>21.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycleway on A19 between Knayton and Thirsk</td>
<td>£880,000</td>
<td>17.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycleway on A170 Thirsk to Sutton-Under-Whitestonecliffe</td>
<td>£1,201,000</td>
<td>16.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared use cycleway/footway between Thornton-le-Street and South Kilvington</td>
<td>£422,000</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At this stage, the only funding mechanisms identified for the delivery of these schemes is the Main LTP Capital Pot. They will therefore join the County’s reserve list of capital schemes and be subject to prioritisation against those already included within the list. This incorporates Improvement Schemes from across the County.

It is however acknowledged that as part of the delivery of the SCTS that lower cost alternatives may be identified which may then have the potential to merit inclusion within the prioritised list of schemes.

4.2.2 Maintenance Budget Improvements

Although not yet developed as a specific Improvement Options, a number of issues have been raised as part of the development process which could potentially be taken forward in line with the NYCC Maintenance Budget. In this instance the NYCC Highways Area Manager will take ownership of these issues and consider their merits for possible inclusion within the forward programme of works for the area. As such there in no guarantee that these will be delivered within the available Maintenance Budget. The issues identified are detailed below:

**Pavement Surfacing:** As part of the SCTS consultation process, Stakeholders raised concerns over the quality of footpath surfacing at a number of locations. These include:

- Carlton Miniott from Thirsk Station to Carlton Miniott Community Primary School
- Cowesby
- Dalton

**Highway Signs:** In addition to the issue of footpath surfacing generic concerns were raised with regard to the visibility of Highway Signs being reduced / obstructed as a result of overgrown vegetation throughout the study area. It is however noted that the Area Highways Team would only seek to address such concerns when specific instances are identified.

4.3 ‘Non’ Capital Schemes and Initiatives

This section provides details of additional issues / concerns raised through engagement with stakeholders and the public which have not been investigated / developed as part of the SCTS. These issues are considered to be outside of the scope of the SCTS budget; however, their importance is recognised and as such they are included within the Strategy.
for further consideration under alternative funding / delivery mechanisms within the County Council.

These include issues relating to ‘Non’ Capital Schemes and Initiatives and are discussed under the following headings:

- Passenger Transport
- Parking
- Freight Issues

**4.3.1 Passenger Transport**

The development of the Thirsk SCTS has raised a number of issues with regard to Passenger Transport within the Study Area. In particular, stakeholders have expressed specific concerns relating to the existing bus services.

As identified within LTP2, such improvements are subject to cooperation between both the County Council and the Service Providers and thus deemed to be external to the SCTS process. The opportunity does however exist for these issues to be considered as part of the NYCC Passenger Transport Review process and ongoing investigations. As such key issues have been forwarded to the NYCC Integrated Passenger Transport Unit for further consideration.

The key concerns raised as part of the stakeholder / public consultation exercises are summarised below. The views expressed are those of the stakeholders and the public and have been included for further consideration / investigation by the NYCC Integrated Passenger Transport Team. As such they have not undergone detailed analysis as part of the SCTS process.

- Public transport services (including school bus services) in Sutton-under-Whitestonecliffe and White Horse are currently very limited
- Poor accessibility to public transport for those living in the rural villages on the outskirts of Thirsk where some services have been withdrawn
- Public Transport service needed from Sessay to Helmsley
- There is a need for a regular weekday and weekend bus service from Bagby to Thirsk. At present an infrequent and lightly used service only operates on Market Days and Fridays
- No buses are provided through Boltby at present other than dial a ride and school buses
- At present, an infrequent weekday bus service operates from Borrowby/Knayton to Thirsk/Northallerton. Young people have requested a regular weekday/weekend service along this route
- Lack of bus services from Dalton to Thirsk to transport people to and from work
- No frequent bus service at present from Sandhutton to Thirsk/Northallerton
• No frequent bus service at present from Sessay to Thirsk, with only 2 services per week each allowing just 2 hours in the town centre

• Lack of frequent bus services at present from Sowerby to desired locations i.e. to South Kilvington School and a regular bus service to the train station

• At present, despite having a bus shelter, there is a lack of public transport links or school bus services from Sutton-under-Whitestonecliffe to the surrounding area and schools

• No bus service at the present time from Thirsk to Boroughbridge

• Lack of bus services through Kirby Wiske at present

• The weekday bus service from Borrowby to Thirsk is very infrequent. This area requires a weekend service also, especially for young people who do not have access to other forms of transport.

• Lack of an early bus service from South Kilvington to Thirsk Train Station

With regard to requests for additional bus services and community transport services, NYCC undertake a review of contracted bus services every four years and are continually monitoring existing contracts.

It is important that the Council is able to strike an appropriate balance between the need to address social exclusion by improving access and the need to secure value for money overall.

All contracted services must meet the criteria of the Bus Strategy, which forms part of the Local Transport Plan, in that they should carry more than three passengers a journey on a regular basis and that the subsidy per passenger journey is less than £7.50.

Improvements to bus infrastructure is mainly undertaken on a corridor basis, within the study area the Ripon – Thirsk – Northallerton corridor is due to be addressed later this financial year.

This work includes marking stops with poles, flags and timetable cases and investigating shelters at main towns and villages.

Other requests for infrastructure can be considered subject to availability of funding and the contribution to LTP priorities.

The County Council is working to improve the standard of vehicles on contracted journeys through the contract renewal process. However many of the bus services within the study area are already provided with low floor vehicles. e.g. Northallerton – Thirsk – Ripon, Thirsk – South Ottering – Northallerton, Thirsk Town Services, Thirsk - Baldersby.

4.3.2 Parking

As part of the SCTS consultation process a number of issues were raised with regard to parking provision within the Study Area. Parking on the whole has not been investigated in detail as part of the SCTS process as it is largely dependent upon Revenue Funding and
responsibility is split between the County Council for on-street parking and Hambleton District Council for off-street parking.

Where specific concerns have been raised relating to the effects of on-street parking, these have been investigated as appropriate.

Specific issues raised as part of the Stakeholder consultation process have therefore been included within the strategy as an acknowledgement of public concerns to be considered as part of future studies / proposals. These are detailed below:

- There is no car parking facility provided at the World of James Herriot attraction, with visitors instead utilising the currently free parking facilities within Thirsk Town Centre (e.g. Millgate off-street car parks and Kirkgate on-street parking). From the summer of 2009 it is anticipated that Hambleton District Council will begin charging for off-street parking in Thirsk, at a rate of £0.40 per hour short stay, £1.50 per day long stay. Charging will apply 8am-6pm Monday-Saturday inclusive, though there will be some free limited stay High Street/Market Place parking available.

- At present there is no extra car parking provision laid on for visitors to the twice weekly (Monday and Saturday) Markets. This has been identified as a contributory factor to traffic congestion within Thirsk Town Centre.

- Thirsk Train Station is currently managed by First TransPennine Express. There are 46 off-street car parking spaces and eight cycle rack spaces at the train station. It is noted that the demand for car parking at the station, and the current charges, often results in motorists parking ‘on-street’ along the adjacent highway network.

- Increase enforcement at off-street car parks was noted as a desire

4.3.3 Freight Issues

As part of the development of the SCTS one of the key issues raised by local stakeholders and residents was the concern over Heavy Commercial Vehicles ignoring weight restrictions particularly within Brafferton and Sessay village. It was noted that this was in part due to a lack of enforcement.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has provided details of those Improvement Schemes and Issues which are considered to be external to the SCTS budget and as such are subject to alternative funding and/or delivery mechanisms.

The importance of these Improvement Schemes and Initiatives has been acknowledged and as such they are still included within the Strategy along with recommendations on how they may be taken forward.
5 Monitoring and Evaluation

5.1 Introduction

This chapter details the process to be adopted in order to monitor and evaluate the Improvement Schemes delivered as part of the Thirsk SCTS.

As stated within the LTP2 it is important to identify the local outcomes which can be effectively measured following the implementation of the Improvement Schemes contained within the Strategy. This approach enables their contribution, and ultimately the whole Strategy's contribution to the Shared Priorities to be effectively measured.

5.2 Monitoring Improvement Schemes

In this context, monitoring and evaluation is about objectively monitoring and assessing the impacts of implementing individual Improvement Schemes recommended within the Strategy. This will provide NYCC with valuable information to inform future decision making in the locality and also for Improvement Schemes throughout the County of similar scale and nature.

As part of the SCTS process, Improvement Schemes will be monitored pre and post construction to assess their impact on the problems which drove their development and their contribution to the Shared Priorities. This will be undertaken as part of the Local Transport Plan process with the level of assessment influenced by the size and scale of the Improvement Scheme in question. To assist in this process a set of local indicators have been derived to act as a means of measuring the performance of the individual Improvement Schemes which are implemented.

The local indicators which have been derived to measure the performance of each of the Improvement Schemes are detailed in Table 5.1 below with definitions provided within the following sections.

Table 5.1: Improvement Scheme Local Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Scheme</th>
<th>Local Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speed limit reduction from 40mph to 30mph along A61 (Station Road) between the Persimmons Housing development and the Train Station</td>
<td>Accident Reduction Speed Reduction Attitudinal Indicator Observational Surveys Traffic Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Installation of a safe crossing point on the B1448 (Topcliffe Road) in the vicinity of Maltings/Sowerby Road</td>
<td>Accident Reduction Increased Pedestrian Use Attitudinal Indicator Observational Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to bus infrastructure in Sandhutton</td>
<td>Attitudinal Indicator Observational Surveys Patronage Numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction of a new footway along Newsham Road between Station Road and Thirsk Racecourse</td>
<td>Accident Reduction Increased Pedestrian Use Attitudinal Indicator Observational Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement Scheme</td>
<td>Local Indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvements to bus infrastructure in Carlton Miniott village</td>
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**Wider Local Transport Plan and Maintenance Budget Improvement Schemes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Scheme</th>
<th>Local Indicators</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Cycleway along A167 between Alanbrooke Barracks and Topcliffe</td>
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<td>Cycleway on A170 Thirsk to Sutton-Under-Whitestonecliffe</td>
<td>Accident Reduction, Increased Bicycle Use, Attitudinal Indicator, Observational Surveys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shared use cycleway/footway between Thornton-le-Street and South Kilvington</td>
<td>Accident Reduction, Increased Pedestrian Use, Increased Bicycle Use, Attitudinal Indicator, Observational Surveys</td>
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</table>

Definitions of each of the Local Indicators are provided overleaf. It is however noted that these should only be treated as a guide and each case will be assessed in detail on a site by site basis by the NYCC Highways Area Manager in order to determine whether the local indicators will clearly demonstrate the contribution the Improvement Scheme has had towards the Shared Priorities. In accordance with the NYCC LTP2, monitoring of
performance against these Local Indicators and their contribution to the Shared Priorities will be a key part of the annual review process carried out by the Steering Group once the Strategy is adopted.

**Accident Reduction** – In order to assess the impact a particular Improvement Scheme has upon the accident numbers at a specific location, historical accident figures supplied by North Yorkshire Police from the ‘Stats 19’ database will be compared to those post implementation from the same source. It is however recognised that the implementation of some Improvement Schemes can be seen to only demonstrate accident savings over a limited period of time following their introduction. Accidents will therefore be monitored over a period of years to ensure that short term trends do not give a false representation of the situation.

**Increased Pedestrian Use** – Before and after footfall surveys will be used to assess whether the introduction of Improvement Schemes have assisted in encouraging Pedestrians use.

**Increased Bicycle Use** – Before and after cycle counts will be used to assess whether the introduction of Improvement Schemes have assisted in encouraging cycling.

**Speed Reduction** – Measurements of traffic speed will be recorded prior to and post implementation to assess the level of impact the Improvement Scheme has had on overall vehicle speeds. Again, as in the case of the Accident Reduction indicator detailed above, trends will be analysed over an extended period of time to ensure initial benefits do not fall away over time.

**Attitudinal Indicator** – As the SCTS process has been driven by the needs / desires of local stakeholders and the public, an indication of the success of individual Improvement Schemes can be measured through local attitudes. The methodology to be adopted and appropriateness of this indicator would be determined on a site by site basis by the NYCC Highways Area Manager. Possible methodologies include face-to-face interviews and leaflet / questionnaire drops.

**Observational Surveys** – The greatest understanding of a situation is often gained through observation. This is particularly true of instances where the problems to which an Improvement Scheme aims to address are those which are not easily measured and tend to be derived from local experience and perception.

**Patronage Numbers** – Any change in patronage numbers will be used to assess whether the introduction of a particular improvement scheme is having a positive contribution to encouraging people to move away from private transport towards public transport.

**Traffic Surveys** – Pre and post implementation traffic count surveys will be used in order to assess how the introduction of an improvement scheme has affected both traffic numbers and routeing in order to establish whether the desired objectives are being achieved.

### 5.3 Monitoring the Strategy

The implementation of the Improvement Schemes within the Strategy will be monitored over the next 2 years. This element of the monitoring process will be ‘owned’ by the NYCC Highways Area Manager who is responsible for the design and implementation of the
Improvement Schemes contained within the Strategy. As above, this will be reported through the NYCC Local Transport Plan process. An annual report will be produced by the Area Manager for the Service Centre for consideration by the County Council’s Area Committee. This will report progress on Improvement Scheme implementation, forthcoming projects and any new projects suggested for inclusion within the Strategy.

In addition the Strategy will be treated as a ‘live’ document which is flexible in nature and able to accommodate changes in local, regional and national policy as well as available funding and third party influences such as developer contributions. Significant changes in these areas may trigger the need to revisit the Strategy and update its findings to accommodate changes.

The Strategy will also be revisited in its entirety and updated as part of the Local Transport Plan for period 3 which covers 2012 to 2017.
6 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter of the document presents the Strategy for the Thirsk Service Centre Study Area, provides a qualitative comment on the perceived benefits of the Strategy in the context of the Governments Shared Priorities and finally outlines the next stages in the process and how the Strategy will be adopted and then delivered.

6.2 The Strategy

Table 6.1 overleaf outlines the Prioritised Improvement Schemes to be taken forward for delivery as part of the Thirsk SCTS. The Improvement Schemes have been categorised by the anticipated funding source which will be used to secure their delivery. As indicated within the introduction these include but are not limited to the following:

- SCTS budget
- NYCC Improvement Schemes already programmed for delivery within the Strategy period
- Wider Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport and Maintenance Budgets
  - Capital Reserve List
  - Public Transport Review Process
  - Kickstart Grants
- Developer Contributions (Section 106 Agreements)
- Highways Agency Trunk Road Improvements
- Regional Transport Board / Department for Transport LTP Major Schemes (capital cost > £5 million)

Again it should be noted that as there is a flexible but finite budget available for the delivery of the SCTS, not all of the Improvement Schemes put forward in the Table 6.1 overleaf will be deliverable within the available funds. In addition, as the Improvement Schemes are further developed / designed by NYCC it may be determined that some Improvement Schemes should be omitted from the process as they are not deemed to be technically feasible or have sufficient local public support.

In order to determine the anticipated benefits of the Strategy as a whole, the anticipated contribution of each of the Improvement Schemes to the Shared Priorities and hence the aspirations contained within the NYCC LTP2 has also been provided within Table 6.1 overleaf.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement Scheme</th>
<th>Contribution to Shared Priorities and LTP2</th>
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</table>
### 6.3 Anticipated Benefits of the Strategy

Reference to the above table reveals that the Strategy will, in accordance with the aims and aspirations contained within NYCC’s Local Transport Plan for period 2, deliver anticipated benefits for the Thirsk SCTS Study Area against the following Governments Shared Priorities for Transport. The Strategy can be viewed as:

- Helping to deliver **Safer Roads** within the Service Centre
- Improving **Accessibility** within the Service Centre
- Helping to avoid **Congestion** within the Service Centre
- Assisting in improving **Air Quality** within the Service Centre

The Strategy can also be seen as supporting the overarching aims of NYCC’s Local Transport Plan for period 2 of making North Yorkshire a better place by:

- Providing equality of opportunity for all
- Protecting and enhancing the environment
- Improving the safety and health of residents and visitors
- Increasing economic prosperity
- Building sustainable communities
- Reducing the need and demand for travel

### 6.4 Next Steps

The next stage in the process will be for the above Strategy to be submitted to the Area Committee for approval. Following its adoption the Improvement Schemes will be taken forward for implementation by the NYCC Highways Area Manager and the success of the Strategy monitored against the approach identified within **Chapter 5**.

For those Improvement Schemes which lie outside the remit of the NYCC Highways Area Manager, for example revenue dependent public transport improvements, these Improvement Schemes will be allocated to the relevant part of the County Council for further investigation and, as appropriate, delivery. These Improvement Schemes will also be monitored in line with the approach identified within **Chapter 5**.
Appendix A  Prioritised Improvement Schemes

Improvements to bus infrastructure in Sandhutton

As part of the SCTS process Stakeholders have identified the need for improvements to the existing bus infrastructure within Sandhutton particularly with regard to the provision of a bus shelter and appropriate standing area.

Improvements to bus infrastructure are mainly undertaken on a corridor basis by North Yorkshire County Council with the Ripon – Thirsk – Northallerton corridor due to be addressed within the 2008/2009 financial year.

There is however an opportunity, as part of the SCTS process, to take forward additional improvements not included within the Ripon – Thirsk – Northallerton Corridor.

This proposal therefore involves the introduction of an appropriate standing area and shelter at the existing bus stops within Sandhutton as illustrated in Figure A1 below. The exact nature of improvements however would be subject to further investigations by the North Yorkshire County Council Integrated Passenger Transport Unit / discussions with operators.

Figure A1: Approximate Location of existing bus stops in Sandhutton

![Figure A1: Approximate Location of existing bus stops in Sandhutton](image_url)
Installation of a safe crossing point on the B1448 (Topcliffe Road) in the vicinity of Maltings / Sowerby Road

This proposal would involve the introduction of a formalised pedestrian crossing (zebra/puffin) on Topcliffe Road between The Maltings and Sowerby Road as illustrated in Figure A2 below.

The introduction of a pedestrian crossing at this location would assist in improving pedestrian safety by providing a distinctive pedestrian route easily recognised by all road users, pedestrians and vehicles.

Initial site assessments have suggested that the introduction of a Zebra crossing utilising the existing speed table between The Maltings and Sowerby Road would be the most appropriate solution as it would enable pedestrians to cross safely and reduce possible delays associated with the introduction of a signalised crossing facility.

**Figure A2: Proposed Location of Pedestrian Crossing**
Construction of a new footway along Newsham Road between Station Road and Thirsk Racecourse

As part of the development of the Thirsk SCTS the need for a safer / formalised pedestrian route between Thirsk and the Racecourse / Leisure Facilities has been identified. This proposal has also been identified historically through the NYCC Thirsk Area Highways office however has not had the opportunity to be progressed as part of the programme of ongoing improvement works. In this instance this scheme has remained on the NYCC Reserve List of Capital Schemes to be progressed if and when money becomes available.

This scheme involves the construction of a new footway (approximately 360m in length) to provide a safer formalised pedestrian route along Newsham Road linking Station Road to the Racecourse and various leisure facilities.

The footway would run along the western side of Newsham Road from Thirsk Racecourse to Station Road and an additional footway would be provided on the eastern side of Newsham Road from Masonic Lane to Station Road to further improve pedestrian access as illustrated in Figure A3 below.

It should also be noted that due to the relatively narrow width of the carriageway along Newsham Road it may be necessary to acquire land at certain sections along the route to enable a footway of sufficient width / standard to be introduced.

Figure A3: Location of proposed new footways, Newsham Road
**Bus Infrastructure Improvements within Thirsk Market Place**

As part of the SCTS process Stakeholders have identified the need for improvements to the existing bus infrastructure within Thirsk Market Place particularly in terms of the lack of raised kerbs and the impact upon access on and off buses.

**Figure A4** below shows the approximate location of the existing bus stops within Thirsk Market Place.

Improvements to bus infrastructure are mainly undertaken on a corridor basis by North Yorkshire County Council with the Ripon – Thirsk – Northallerton corridor due to be addressed within the 2008/2009 financial year.

There is however an opportunity, as part of the SCTS process, to take forward additional improvements not included within the Ripon – Thirsk – Northallerton Corridor.

This proposal therefore involves updating the existing standing area to a raised kerb to allow easy access on and off buses. These works would necessitate the removal of the existing shelter whilst works are undertaken and the use of conservation paving to ensure the improvements are in keeping with the historic Market Place.

The exact nature of improvements however would be subject to further investigations by the North Yorkshire County Council Integrated Passenger Transport Unit / discussions with operators.

**Figure A4: Location of existing bus stop, Thirsk Market Place**
Improvements to bus infrastructure in Carlton Miniott Village

As part of the SCTS process Stakeholders have identified the need for improvements to the existing bus infrastructure (bus stops, flags, timetable cases, shelters etc) within Carlton Miniott. A particular concern raised was the lack of a bus shelter outside the Post Office.

Improvements to bus infrastructure are mainly undertaken on a corridor basis by North Yorkshire County Council with the Ripon – Thirsk – Northallerton corridor due to be addressed within the 2008/2009 financial year.

There is however an opportunity, as part of the SCTS process, to take forward additional improvements not included within the Ripon – Thirsk – Northallerton Corridor.

Improvements to the existing bus infrastructure in Carlton Miniott may involve marking out bus stops with poles and flags, the provision of new timetable cases, introduction of hard-standing areas, raised kerb stones at bus stops and introduction of shelters if appropriate, at the locations illustrated in Figure A5 below.

The exact nature of improvements would be subject to further investigations by the North Yorkshire County Council Integrated Passenger Transport Unit / discussions with operators.

Figure A5: Proposed Improvements to bus infrastructure in Carlton Miniott
**Speed limit reduction from 40mph to 30mph along A61 (Station Road) between the Persimmons Housing development and the Train Station**

The Carlton Miniott Primary School Travel Plan raises concerns over non-motorised user safety in Carlton Miniott and along the A61 between Carlton Miniott and Thirsk Town Centre.

There is currently a 30mph speed limit in Carlton Miniott village however Carlton Miniott Primary School considers non-motorised user safety to be compromised by this speed limit. Data from the school travel plan notes that 23.8% of respondents to the School Travel Plan survey stated that the speed of traffic near the school was their greatest concern.

As part of the School Travel Plan Survey only 0.6% of students said that they cycle to school, however 41.3% said that they would prefer to cycle.

This scheme would involve replacing a short section (approximately 600m) of 40mph speed limit between the Persimmon Housing development and the Train Station with a 30mph speed limit as illustrated in **Figure A6** below. This would create a continuous 30mph speed limit between Thirsk Town Centre and Carlton Miniott.

The existing red anti skid patches, 30/40 painted roundels and 40mph speed limit signs would be removed and the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders would be put in place.

**Figure A6: Proposed speed limit reduction A61**
Installation of an on/off road cycle route between Back Lane in Sowerby and Thirsk Industrial Estate on York Road

This cycle route was originally developed as part of the production of the Thirsk, Sowerby and Carlton Miniott Cycle Plan; however it has never been implemented as part of the ongoing programme of improvement works. The development of the SCTS is therefore being used as an opportunity to progress this scheme.

This cycle route would provide a key link between the Industrial Estate located on York Road and the residential properties in the vicinity of Sowerby Road and Topcliffe Road as illustrated in Figure A7 below.

The York Road section of the route will involve signing the route to promote use by cyclists, appropriate road markings, making drivers aware of cyclists in the road using warning signs, improvements to the road surface (removal of potholes, levelling of manhole covers / gully grates etc) thus improving overall safety for cyclists.

The off-road section of the route would follow the line of the existing Public Footpath which would require upgrading to Bridleway status. This would include signing the route, improvements to the two footbridges crossing Cod Beck and the introduction of an appropriate surface to allow use by cyclists.

Figure A7: On / off road cycle route, Sowerby – York Road Industrial Estate
Installation of an off road cycle route between Finkle Street in Thirsk Town Centre and York Road adjacent to Thirsk Industrial Estate

This cycle route would provide a key link between York Road and the centre of Thirsk via either Finkle Street or Chapel Street / the Leisure Centre as illustrated in Figure A7 below. This proposal will allow cyclists to travel between the York Road and the centre of Thirsk whilst avoiding White Mare Roundabout (at the junction of Barbeck, Ingramgate, Long Street and Sutton Road).

The cycle route would follow the line of the existing Public Footpath across Sowerby Flatts which would require upgrading to Bridleway status. This would include signing the route and the introduction of an appropriate surface to allow use by cyclists.

The original route proposed by the Cycle Plan followed a route over Cod Beck and linked into the Leisure Centre Car Park as illustrated in blue in Figure A8 below. This would however involve considerable costs in order to provide a bridge of sufficient standard for both pedestrians and cyclists. The alternative as highlighted in Red on Figure A8 below is to link the Cycle Route into Finkle Street to the east of Cod Beck via a private footpath.

This option would however involve negotiations with the current landowners as part of the detailed design process.

**Figure A8: Location of proposed cycle route**
Construction of a new footway and one way system (westbound / eastbound) along Gravel Hole Lane between Front Street and Back Lane

The introduction of a footway along Gravel Hole Lane is a historic proposal identified via the NYCC Thirsk Area Highways office prior to the start of the SCTS process.

As yet there has been no opportunity for this scheme to be progressed as part of the programme of ongoing improvement works. The development of the Thirsk SCTS is therefore being used as an opportunity to progress this scheme.

Gravel Hole Lane runs between Front Street to the east and Topcliffe Road to the west in the village of Sowerby, Thirsk. The road is mainly residential but has a public house on the south corner of the junction with Front Street and Thirsk High School at the junction with Topcliffe Road.

There are no existing footways on either side of the carriageway between Back Street and Front Street for approximately 100m. The footways leading from west to east up to this point terminate abruptly at a building wall on the north side and an obsolete end section of garden wall on the south side.

The average width of Gravel Hole Lane along this section is approximately 5.9m. In order to provide a footway of sufficient width the carriageway would require narrowing. The carriageway which remains would not be wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic flow thus resulting in the requirement of a one-way system either eastbound or westbound along Gravel Hole Lane.

Initial site investigations have revealed that it would be physically feasible to introduce a footpath of sufficient width on either the north side or the south side of the carriageway; however at this stage a detailed assessment of the potential traffic impacts on the surrounding junctions due to the implementation of a one-way system has not been undertaken.

If the footway were to be constructed on the south side of Gravel Hole Lane, the section of obsolete wall at the termination point of the existing footway would have to be dismantled to the back of the footway. It is proposed that the first 10m of footway be constructed on the grass verge bounding the Public House car park, the verge being re-graded to accommodate existing differences in level. A dropped crossing would be provided from the end of this section across the car park entrance.

From this point, the carriageway would be gradually narrowed to 4.3m width at the commencement of the building line. Along the building line to the mouth of the junction, the carriageway narrowing would be a constant 1.5 metres for accommodation of the footway.

If the footway were to be constructed on the north side of Gravel Hole Lane, the carriageway would gradually be narrowed from a point 30 metres west of the existing termination of the existing footway to commencement of the building line. Along the building line to the mouth of the junction, the carriageway narrowing would be a constant 1.5 metres for accommodation of the footway. Consideration would be given to accesses running from the north side of the carriageway.

Figure A9 overleaf shows the extent of the proposed footway.
Figure A9: Extent of proposed footway

- **Extent of Existing Footway**
- **Extent of Proposed Footway**
Speed Limit Reduction along Oak Tree Bank, Knayton

As part of the SCTS consultation process the issue of pedestrian safety along Oak Tree Bank, particularly in the vicinity of Knayton Primary School was identified.

Knayton Primary School perceives non-motorised user safety to be compromised in Borrowby, Knayton and along Oak Tree Bank.

The school considers current conditions in Borrowby, Knayton and along Oak Tree Bank to be unsuitable for non-motorised users. In respect of Oak Tree Bank the school attribute this to:

- Vehicles travelling at high speeds
- Faded road markings
- Lack of a safe crossing points
- Lack of cycle paths
- Unsuitable parking patterns

The speed limit along Oak Tree Bank which passes the front of the primary school and the entrance into Borrowby is 40mph. The speed limit north of the entrance into Borrowby which leads up to the A19 is the national speed limit.

It is felt that the national speed limit to the north of the entrance into Borrowby leading up to the A19 should remain as there are very few properties along this section. The speed limit could however be reduced to 30mph especially in the area in close proximity to the primary school. This would require the relevant Traffic Regulation Order’s to be put in place. New traffic signs would also need installing.

It is understood that there is some local support for the introduction of a variable speed limit sign in the local vicinity of the school however NYCC do not currently have a policy for the introduction of these. This is however something which could be reviewed in the future if relevant policies / criteria are introduced.

This proposal would therefore involve reducing the existing speed limit from 40mph to 30mph from just south of Allerton Wath Road / Oak tree Bank Junction to the entrance to Borrowby as illustrated in Figure A10 overleaf. This would assist in reducing pedestrian safety concerns within the vicinity of the Primary School and the footpaths which run adjacent to Oak Tree Bank and link to Borrowby and Knayton.
Figure A10: Extent of proposed speed limit reduction, Oak Tree Bank
Installation of an on-road cycle route between Green Lane East / Croft Heads and the existing shared use footpath/cycle path between Front Street and Thirsk Town Centre

This cycle route has originated from the East Thirsk to Sowerby cycle route which was developed as part of the Thirsk, Sowerby and Carlton Miniott cycle plan. It forms the western section of the route which would provide a key cycle route linking Green Lane East and Croft Heads in Sowerby and the central part of the route which has been implemented as a shared use footpath / cyclepath (pictured in Figure A11 below) which runs from Sowerby Road to Thirsk Market Place.

The introduction of this link would simply involve signing the route to promote use by cyclists, introduction of appropriate road markings, making drivers aware of cyclists in the road using warning signs, improvements to the road surface (removal of potholes, levelling of manhole covers / gully grates etc) thus improving overall safety for cyclists.

**Figure A11: On-road signed cycle route linking Green Lane East and Croft Heads with the existing shared use footpath / cyclepath**