5. A Strategy for Southend-on-Sea

Taking Forward the Strategy

This Second LTP builds on the successes of LTP1 and proposes to take forward and develop the existing strategy to take advantage of the significant opportunities for providing for further improvements to traffic and transportation in Southend, as set out in Section 3. Such improvements will be critical to:

- achieving regeneration and growth in Thames Gateway South Essex as a national and regional priority;
- realising major development opportunities in the town at key locations to provide for additional jobs and housing in accordance with the Sustainable Communities Plan;
- improving accessibility within the town and along the London to Southend corridor, particularly to employment, commercial, retail, tourist and leisure sites;
- securing and maintaining sustainable patterns of movement; and
- ensuring the successful regeneration and renaissance of Southend.

On this basis the strategy has been refined for LTP2 to ensure that it:

- is set firmly within the wider context of the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan, Regional Planning Guidance and emerging Regional Transport Plan and sub-regional plans for TGSE;
- takes into full account the Government's shared priorities and the Southend Partnership's local priorities for transport;
- takes into account other corporate policy initiatives to ensure a 'joined up' approach to the delivery of key services such as education, health, leisure and community facilities, having particular regard to the Accessibility Strategy; and
- forms an integral part of the emerging Southend Local Development Framework (LDF) to ensure the effective integration of land use planning and transport policies and proposals.

The strategy seeks to make best use of existing resources to achieve best value for money solutions, and in doing so takes full advantage of:

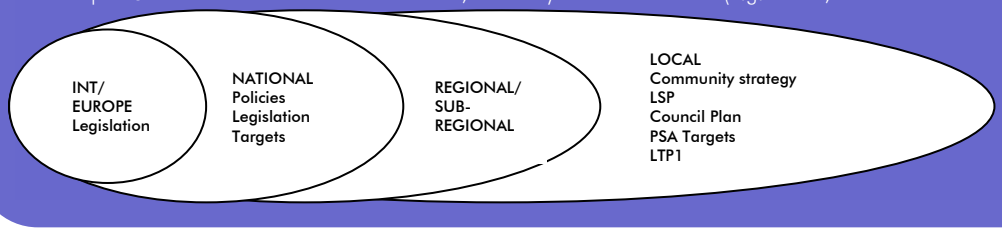
- Southend's high density of population, linear urban form, present modal pattern of movement and economic needs to provide for an integrated multi-modal rail, road and river policy and the potential of the regional London Southend Airport; and
- the significant transport improvements already achieved on the ground as part of the successful delivery of LTP1 schemes.
- Simple low cost measures that achieve real benefits as identified in the Network Management section;
- The identified benefits of “soft measures”, which has been taken forward in the Southend “Smarter Choices” strategy;
- Benefits of demand management focussing on areas such as the Town Centre; through streamlined parking arrangements, variable message signage and prioritising traffic movements in key areas eg. priority to public transport around the new Travel Centre.

There is a strong emphasis on measures to promote the use of more sustainable modes of travel, and to influence travel behaviour, which will play an important part in reducing congestion and enhancing road safety.

STRATEGY CONTEXT

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT/QUALITY OF LIFE

Transport & land use in relation to environment, economy and social factors (e.g. health, social inclusion etc)



TRANSPORT POLICY FRAMEWORK

TRANSPORT VISION

Reduce congestion and improve accessibility in Southend and it's hinterland by delivering a step-change in transport provision stimulating regeneration, economic improvement, environmental enhancement and community well- being ins sustainable manner

Transport Objectives

SHARED PRIORITIES:

- Tackling Congestion
- Delivering Accessibility
- Providing for safer Roads
- Achieving Better Air Quality
- Achieving better Quality of Life

OTHER LOCAL PRIORITIES:

- Regeneration of Southend by improving the economy
- Achieving an efficient transport system
- Raising Community awareness
- Improving the highway

TRANSPORT DELIVERY FRAMEWORK

CORE TRANSPORT PLAN COMPONENTS

Integrated Initiatives | Environmental Rooms | Major Scheme

STRATEGY ELEMENTS

- Highway Improvements
- Network Management (Asset Management, Route Hierarchy, Environmental Rooms and
- Distributors, and Traffic Management)
- Demand Management (including Travel Planning, Smarter Choices, and Parking Policy)
- Intelligent Transport Systems
- Passenger Transport (including Bus, Rail, Taxis, DRT, and Community Transport)
- Walking and Cycling (and Rights of Way Improvement Plan)
- Motorcycling
- School Travel Strategy
- Freight
- Management and Maintenance of Local Highway Infrastructure
- Traffic Management and Route Hierarchy
- Accident Investigation & Prevention
- Education and Promoting Safety Awareness
- Child Casualty Reduction Schemes

MONITORING - Key Performance Indicators and Targets

- **Tackling Congestion** - Reduce average vehicle delay on strategic roads (A127, A1159, A13) during the AM peak hour.
- **Delivering Accessiblity** – *Key outcome target will be identified in the March 2006 LTP2.*
- **Safer Roads** - A 40% reduction in the total number of killed and seriously injured casualties between 1994-98 and 2010, and a 50% reduction in the number of children killed and seriously injured.
- **Safer Roads** - Maintain the number of slight injuries, at or below the average number for 2001-04 (691 injuries), corresponding to a 12% reduction in casualties per 100 million veh-kms.
- **Better Air Quality** - Maintain levels of PM10 below 20 ug/m3 and levels of NO2 below 40 ug/m3 during LTP2.

The objectives, outlined below and explained in detail in Section 3, pick up the principles of the transport vision and act as a clear and concise indication of the priorities for the Plan.

Shared Priorities

- Tackling congestion;
- Delivering accessibility;
- Providing for safer roads;
- Achieving better air quality;
- Achieving a better quality of life.

Local Priorities

- Regeneration for Southend;
- Achieving an efficient transport system;
- Raising community awareness;
- Improving the highway.

The priorities ensure that the Plan focuses on the key issues and enables a strategy to be developed that supports the authorities and its partner's objectives whilst also delivering national objectives and priorities.
A summary of the overall Local Transport Plan framework for Southend is provided in **Figure 5.1** whilst the LTP strategy and related town centre strategy are shown in **Figures 5.2 & 5.3.**

The London Olympics 2012

The announcement by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) for London to host the Olympics in 2012 is news that will regenerate Stratford and the surrounding area. To contribute to this and add vale to the Olympics, adjacent Authorities will be developing ideas on how to capitalise on this tremendous opportunity. Southend has a part to play in not only the Olympic event but also in the Paralympics that follow.

Southend is geographically placed in an excellent location to the east of London, within comfortable distance of the main events. Access to the Olympic Village will generally avoid the congestion experienced by many other locations needing to traverse the capital. As a result of Southend's geography the Council will look into the potential of the Town and the ability it has to deliver a truly world class experience. This is particularly relevant in areas such as communication, culture and legacy, leisure and tourism, and business links.

In considering the offer that Southend can make, the broader context of Legacy must be put in perspective. Southend is already a key hub and zone of change within Thames Gateway that has a proven track record on delivery, whilst also being the Cultural Centre. The Borough will ensure that the full potential of the Olympic experience and legacy for the Town, as a major International tourist destination, is developed. Work will be commencing shortly on developing proposals and will link strongly with this Plan, in the same timeframe as LTP2. The strategy that has been developed will create stronger east-west links throughout the TGSE area and provide for more sustainable travel patterns. Particularly important is the ability to build capacity on the network, particularly in terms of public transport and an overall reduction in congestion. The development of key interchanges, especially in the Town Centre is vital to ensure seamless and comfortable journeys, both to and from the Olympic site.

Components of the Strategy

Southend's LTP2 strategy consists of three core components:

- Integrated transport initiatives;
- Environmental rooms and distributors; and
- Delivering the outstanding elements of the Approved Major Scheme.
- In addition, proposals for further funding opportunities such as the Transport Innovation Funding (TIF) opportunities are discussed further in Section 10

Integrated Transport Initiatives

The LTP2 strategy is built around the following elements:

- Network management (including transport asset management, route hierarchy, environmental rooms and distributors, and traffic management);
- Demand management (including travel planning, Smarter Choices and parking policy);
- Management and maintenance of local highway infrastructure;
- Intelligent transport systems (ITS);
- Passenger transport (including bus, rail, taxis, DRT, and community transport);
- Motorcycling;
- Freight;
- Walking and cycling (and a Rights of Way Improvement Plan);
- School travel strategy;
- Traffic management and route hierarchy;
- Road safety engineering - accident investigation and prevention;
- Education and promoting safety awareness; and,
- Child casualty reduction schemes.

Table 5.1 illustrates how each of these delivery themes contributes to the LTP2 objectives, and **Table 5.2** summarises in a little more detail the different measures and policies contained in the strategy by delivery theme. These delivery themes are discussed further in Sections 6 to 9, which describe how the transport strategy and its constituent elements contribute to the delivery of each of the Shared Priorities.

Table 5.1 - Transport Policy Framework

	LTP2 Objectives	Integrated Transport Initiatives – Strategy Elements														
		Highway Improvements	Network Management	Demand Management and Parking	Intelligent Transport Systems	Passenger Transport	Walking and Cycling	Motorcycling	School Travel Strategy	Freight	Management and Maintenance of Local Highway Infrastructure	Traffic Management and Route Hierarchy	Accident Investigation and Prevention	Education and Promoting Safety Awareness	Child Casualty Reduction Schemes	**Major Scheme**
Shared priorities	**Taking Congestion** - more efficient use of road capacity; providing for quality public transport; placing greater emphasis on travel plans and 'smarter choices' of travel; and improving conditions for cyclists and pedestrians. (Chapter 6)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Delivering Accessibility by improving and encouraging access to places of work, learning, health care, shopping and leisure services; and using sustainable modes of transport, especially for people from disadvantaged groups and areas. (Chapter 7)	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓		✓
	Providing for Safer Roads by improved road and bridge maintenance; slower speeds within Environmental Rooms and near schools; road safety measures; improved safety for cyclists and pedestrians; and safety awareness, particularly amongst children. (Chapter 8)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Achieving Better Air Quality by reducing congestion, driver distances travelled and number of vehicle trips made. (Chapter 9)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
	Achieving a Better Quality of Life by addressing wider quality of life issues including quality public spaces, landscape, safe communities, health and reduction in traffic noise. (Chapters 6-9)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Local Priorities	***Regeneration of Southend by Improving the Economy*** by promoting and supporting sustainable economic growth in appropriate locations. (Chapters 6-9)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				✓
	Achieving an Efficient Transport System by ensuring that land use and transport (all modes) planning are integrated. (Chapters 6-9)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Raising Community Awareness by publicising the effects of continuing traffic growth and the benefits and availability of alternative transport modes. (Chapters 6-9)						✓	✓	✓					✓		
	Improving the Highway by pursuing effective maintenance procedures that achieve value for money solutions whilst keeping the quality of life and urban renaissance objectives by improving the street scene. (Chapters 6-9)	✓	✓		✓						✓	✓				

Table 5.2 – Summary of Strategy Elements

LTP2 Measures	Integrated Transport Initiatives – Strategy Elements														Environmental Room	Major Scheme
	Highway Improvements	Network Management	Demand Management and Parking	Intelligent Transport Systems	Passenger Transport	Walking and Cycling	Motorcycling	School Travel Strategy	Freight	Management and Maintenance of Local Highway Infrastructure	Traffic Management and Route Hierarchy	Accident Investigation and Prevention	Education and Promoting Safety Awareness	Child Casualty Reduction Schemes		
Building new roads,	✓								✓							✓
Improved accessibility on transportation corridor	✓				✓			✓	✓	✓	✓					
Define route hierarchy; review and update route signage	✓	✓			✓				✓							
Traffic asset management plans		✓														
Highway, bridge and footway maintenance							✓		✓	✓		✓				
Workplace travel plans			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓								
Marketing (personalised travel planning); promoting awareness; regular multi-media campaigns			✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			
Training for drivers, motorcycling, pedestrians, cyclist and children							✓	✓				✓		✓		
Car Clubs; Car sharing schemes				✓				✓								
School travel plans and Safe journeys to school (including "walking buses" and school crossing			✓		✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓		
Cycling improvements and connections (on and off road), including cycle parking			✓			✓		✓				✓				
Pedestrian improvements and connections (controlled crossings, guardrailing, etc.)			✓			✓		✓				✓		✓		
Environment enhancement for pedestrian and passengers (CCTV, lighting, etc.)					✓	✓		✓								
"Greenways" Network as part of TGSE "Green Grid"						✓		✓								
Parking policy; controlled parking restrictions; effective enforcement; Traffic regulation orders.		✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				
Urban traffic control; enhancing & extending VMS; Mobicentre				✓	✓											
Improving integration at key interchange sites; integrated ticketing/multi journey ticketing				✓	✓	✓										
Quality bus and rail partnerships (QBP & QRPs)				✓	✓											
Bus infrastructure improvements; accessible bus stops;				✓	✓	✓		✓								
Improved passenger information – RTPI; improved access to quality timetables and route maps				✓	✓			✓								✓
Community bus services and DRT					✓											
Upgrade passenger transport linkages; pedestrian signage					✓			✓								
Improving accessibility for all to town centre/stations (including measures for mobility impaired)					✓	✓										
Remedial measures at accident locations							✓	✓		✓		✓		✓		
Local traffic management: 20 mph zones; speed management measures; road markings								✓			✓	✓		✓		
Highway landscaping and habitat creation as part of Biodiversity Action Plan										✓						
Implementation of Local Development Framework (LDF)			✓													

A "Multi-Modal" Strategy

In developing a strategy to address current and future problems the Council has adopted a multi-modal approach which embraces all modes. A holistic approach needs to be adopted in developing the strategy, including reducing the need to travel and the further development of public transport, cycling and walking. Table 5.3 summarises how each of the strategy elements delivers improvements across the full range of travel modes.

Table 5.3 - LTP2: Delivering the Needs of All

Strategy Elements	Car	Taxi	Bus	Rail	Motorcycle	Cycle	Walk	Mobility impaired	Equestrian
Network management	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Demand management	✓	✓	✓			✓			
Smarter Choices	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	
Intelligent transport systems	✓	✓	✓	✓					
Environmental rooms & distributors			✓			✓	✓	✓	
Road safety	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
Passenger transport			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Walking & cycling						✓	✓	✓	✓
Major Scheme	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Environmental Rooms & Distributors

A series of environmental rooms and distributors were identified by the Integrated Transport Partnership during the development of LTP1 see Figure 5.4. Distributors are the main roads in the town whose principal function is to distribute traffic. Accessibility is a priority on these routes and the aim is to keep obstructions on these routes to a minimum.

Environmental rooms are the areas bounded by these distributor roads, within which the quality of the local environment has priority. On this basis, the concept provides a rationale across the Borough for the movement of traffic and for the provision of road safety measures, together with the establishment of priorities for highway and footway maintenance and bridge strengthening, and in doing so making the best use of existing resources.

The concept has been well received by the local community and has resulted in key improvements to managing traffic, speed reduction, road safety and the quality of residential environments. In particular it has been successful in prioritising road safety expenditure, with schemes and initiatives being focused on those 'rooms' where greatest benefit in terms of casualty reduction is expected. In addition, regeneration initiatives have been focussed mainly in the more deprived wards in the Borough, where it has influenced directly the desire to improve accessibility and road safety in 'environmental rooms' where greater numbers of residents do not have access to a car.
Environmental rooms and distributors remain key elements of the LTP2 strategy.

Route and Mode Hierarchy

The concept of distributors has been developed further in LTP2 and forms the basis for the route and mode hierarchy which underpins the strategy. The distributors defined for LTP1 have been categorised as strategic primary routes, primary distributor routes, secondary distributor routes, local distributor routes, and roads within environmental rooms, in accordance with their function and importance to the local economy (see Figure 5.5 and Table 5.4). This hierarchy has been used to identify modal networks which make best use of the existing infrastructure. It also provides the framework for improving traffic signage to reflect the distributors' role and function; to define appropriate local freight movement corridors; and redefine priorities for highway and footway maintenance.

A core and secondary bus network (see Figure 5.6) focusing primarily on strategic primary, primary and secondary distributor routes, has been identified in response to work undertaken for the Framework Accessibility Strategy (FAS). The network builds on the showcase bus corridor developed on the A13 as part of the existing Major Scheme and improvements made to the bus infrastructure on other important routes. It seeks to integrate all major commercial/business areas, community services and transport interchanges to deliver improved accessibility across the Borough and to its hinterland.

The cycle network (see Figure 5.7) walking corridors and greenways take advantage of 'quiet areas' created by the environmental rooms to provide safe and enhanced routes. The successful safer journeys to school programme will continue to take advantage of these 'quiet' areas in defining 'safer routes to school' in liaison with the local community. Improved cycle and pedestrian crossing facilities will be prioritised to ensure that safe links are provided between rooms to provide for completed safe corridors. These provisions have also been embraced corporately to provide for co-ordinated programmes of works such as enhanced tree planting on defined corridors. In addition they have been integrated within the Local Development Framework (LDF) to provide for complimentary environmental improvements. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides for the preparation of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to compliment the Greenways and cycle strategy. A consultation draft is programmed to be published in November 2006.

Quality of Life

The concept of environmental rooms and distributors will also help ensure delivery of Quality of Life priorities in Southend. By focusing on specific 'distributors' and 'rooms' the concept is cross cutting and picks up issues outside the direct influence of transport such as improvements to public spaces, crime and community safety. The concept has also been incorporated into the emerging LDF to ensure that the quality of life in environmental rooms is protected from inappropriate development and enhanced.

Table 5.4 - Proposed Hierarchy Definitions (See also Figure 5.4)

Proposed Category of Route Hierarchy	Predominant Activities	Mode Priority	General Characteristics	Traffic Flows (Annual Average Daily Traffic Flows)
Strategic Primary Routes (A127/A1159) *Map Key: Orange Routes* Strategic routes with primary destinations	• Strategic traffic • All goods vehicles • Long-distance coaches • Main inter-urban scheduled bus services (some town routes)	• HGV • Bus • Car • Cycle • Walk	• National destination signing • Priority to route traffic • Controlled junctions or roundabouts • Essential accesses only • Few/No bus stops • Restricted access to pedestrians and cyclists (but safe and adequate crossing points) • Clearway restrictions apply to carriageway • Environmental and streetscape improvements, particularly in shopping and commercial sections and other areas of high pedestrian usage	Greater than 20,000 vehicles per day
Primary Distributor Routes *Map Key: Blue Routes* Main Links to Strategic Primary Routes Principal Public Transport Routes	• General traffic access to Strategic Primary Routes • Main scheduled bus services and coaches • All goods vehicles	• Bus • HGV • Car • Cycle • Walk	• National destination signing • Access to major developments • Bus priority measures/Bus stops • Delivery bays • Parking/waiting restrictions • Positive pedestrian/cyclist safety measures • Environmental and streetscape improvements, particularly in shopping and commercial sections and other areas of high pedestrian usage	15,000-19,999 vehicles per day
Secondary Distributor Routes *Map Key: Green Routes* Routes linking the primary network to local areas **Note**: Central Seafront Corridor has special characteristics related to its leisure and special events	• Scheduled bus services • Local traffic • Goods access to individual premises • Local centre access traffic and pedestrians/cyclists	• Bus • Car • OGV • Cycle • Walk	• Local destination signing • Bus priority measures/Bus stops • Some on street parking, loading and waiting restrictions • Some frontage access to individual premises and sites • Signed cycle routes • 30mph limits • Environmental and streetscape improvements, particularly in shopping and	10,000-14,999 vehicles per day

Proposed Category of *Route Hierarchy*	Predominant Activities	Mode Priority	General Characteristics	Traffic Flows (Annual Average Daily Traffic Flows)
function which will affect mode priority and traffic flows			commercial sections and other areas of high pedestrian usage	
Local Distributor Routes *Map Key: Yellow Routes* Links Between Secondary Distributors and Environmental Rooms	• Scheduled bus services • Local traffic • Local centre access for pedestrians and cyclists • Goods access to individual premises	• Bus • Car • Cycle • Walk • OGV	• Local destination signing • Bus stops • On street parking • Frontage access • Signed cycle routes • 30mph limits • Environmental and streetscape improvements, particularly in shopping and commercial sections and other areas of high pedestrian usage	5,000-9,999 vehicles per day
Roads within Environmental Rooms ***Map Key: Black Routes*** Access Routes Only	• Pedestrian priority in some areas • Pedestrian links to public transport • Cycling • Some local bus services • Limited access traffic	• Walk • Cycle • Bus • Car	• Traffic calming (speed humps, cushions, chicanes) • Home Zones and 20mph limits • Signed cycle routes in carriageway • Entry treatment/Junction treatments • Environmental and streetscape imp.	Less than 5,000 vehicles per day

During the LTP1 plan period the following works have been undertaken as part of the Environmental Rooms & Distributors programme:

Core Room (Milton area)

- Installation of speed reduction and traffic calming measures including extension of a 20mph zone.
- **New puffin crossing facility** outside Westcliff Station.
- Completion of the **Park Street Bridge to Pier Hill Cycle Route** providing an essential link in the Pier Hill to Southend Airport section of the Southend Cycle Network.
- The **Hamlet Court Road improvement and bridge strengthening** scheme has improved both road safety and enhanced the streetscape of a specialised shopping area to ensure its continued vitality.
- Traffic calming measures such as **kerb build outs and white lining at key accident sites** in Station Road on the approach to Westcliff Station.
- Improved **interchange at Westcliff Station** to create better linkage with buses and taxi's

Westborough Room

- A pilot **20 mph zone featuring speed cushions and speed** tables have been implemented near the local school and surrounding roads.
- In Phase 2, the traffic calmed area will be extended, within the remaining **two way roads to be made one way.**

Victoria Room

- As part of earlier works within the Victoria Room area and in collaboration with the Safer Journeys to School strategy, a localised 20 mph zone has been installed in Boston Avenue (St Mary C of E Primary). **The scheme includes road humps, cushions and entry tables.**
- An initial meeting with Councillors has taken place and a "Planning for Real" style consultation carried out with local people.

Blenhiem Room

- An initial meeting with Councillors has taken place with a "Planning for Real" style consultation carried out with local people.

Leigh Room

- An initial meeting with Councillors has taken place.

Major Scheme

A key element of the LTP Strategy is the improvement of the only strategic road corridor serving Southend, namely the A127/A1159. This is a dual carriageway route providing access to central and east Southend directly from the national motorway network (via M25).(see **Figure 5.8)**

The exception is an 800 metre length of single carriageway at Priory Crescent which, with its associated junction at Cuckoo Corner, is a major bottleneck in the system and a source of major congestion at peak periods.

Located at the heart of the strategic network in Southend it provides direct access to major employment areas, London Southend Airport, the town centre and central seafront culture/leisure

facilities, and significant development opportunities. Cuckoo Corner junction also forms part of the proposed Passenger Transport Corridor linking central Southend to the Airport and will be key to improved surface access and regeneration of the Airport.

Improving this strategic corridor is vital to unlocking major regeneration opportunity sites in central and east Southend, particularly on the New Ranges former MOD site at Shoeburyness. It will also be vital to realising the growth aspirations set out in the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan.

Improving Priory Crescent/Cuckoo Corner forms part of the Major Scheme approved by Government in December 2000 as part of the submission of LTP 1. The scheme proposes the dualling of Priory Crescent to a comparable standard to that adjoining the eastern and western sections of the carriageway and junction/signal improvements at Cuckoo Corner. Significant work on taking the scheme forward has taken place in the interim, including:

- extensive consultations with landowners, agencies and the local resident and business community;
- detailed design and proposals for service diversions;
- advanced archaeological investigation;
- advanced landscaping works; and
- initial contract documentation.

Following detailed consultation and continuing dialogue with partners on the design of the scheme, the Borough Council resolved to select a route which did not take any land from the adjacent Priory Park in order to achieve a route which had the minimum impact on the local environment.

These design changes together with detailed survey work revealed that scheme costs were higher than the basic outline estimates submitted to Government in July and October 2000, upon which the Major Scheme allocation of £3.5million was based. Utility relocation costs, Railtrack costs, land and noise compensation costs in particular were not specifically considered in the make up of the initial submitted estimate, which only included an overview basis for the preliminary submission.

Whilst developing the preferred scheme has resulted in an increase in estimated scheme costs, it continues to be the best option and to achieve the minimum impact on the environment. This is reinforced by numerous re-runs of the cost benefit analysis (COBA - first submitted to Government in October 2000) which all reveal that the preferred route alignment shows a positive economic return reflecting the importance of the route. These additional costings were first highlighted to Government in the Southend LTP 2nd Annual Progress Report in July 2002 and further submissions made in February and March 2003.

In order to hear outstanding objections to statutory notices in relation to Side Road Orders and Compulsory Purchase Orders, a Public Inquiry was held before an independent Inspector in March 2004. The Inspector's Report and Decision was published in February 2005 when the Inspector recommended approval of the scheme. The Secretary of State accepted the Inspectors' conclusions and recommendations and was satisfied that:

"even with a cost increase as suggested in post enquiry correspondence, the economically strong case for the Council's scheme, as concluded by the Inspector, would not be significantly undermined that it would bring into question the economics of the scheme….".

Since this date further correspondence and dialogue has taken place between the Borough Council, Government Office and Department for Transport on seeking approval to additional

funding to complete the scheme. In addition, as part of the preparation of the Regional Transport Strategy, the Draft East of England Plan (RSS14) has identified the Priory Crescent/Cuckoo Corner Scheme as a regional priority. Indeed it is identified as a 'Regional Priority 1A' scheme in EERA's advice to Government on Regional Funding Allocations (see Section 3).

This LTP reinforces the importance of the Priory Crescent/Cuckoo Corner scheme that lies at the heart of the LTP and wider TGSE strategy. Without its completion key development sites and major regeneration opportunities will be lost to the severe detriment of the Government's objectives for sustainable growth as contained in the Sustainable Communities Plan.

Accordingly this LTP seeks to secure further funding to compile the Approved Major Scheme as a Regional Priority and key element in the Government's objectives to achieve sustainable regeneration and growth in Southend and wider Thames Gateway.