

WITNEY INTEGRATED TRANSPORT PACKAGE BID

1998/99



Draft text prepared for Oxfordshire County Council
by Llewelyn Davies (as amended) August 1997

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(Cover illustration: Sketch of pedestrianisation scheme at Buttercross)

Witney High Street

Traffic and parking conflict with its role as the main shopping area, and restrict the space available for walking and enjoyment of the historic setting.



Witney West End

Cycling is still quite popular in the town, but its potential is constrained by lack of safe and pleasant facilities. Motor traffic is particularly intrusive on the historic roads leading to the river crossing in Bridge Street, as shown here.



Witney town centre access

New routes and road crossings for pedestrians and cyclists will help overcome barriers to movement between residential areas and the town centre. A new foot and cycle crossing will be provided at the location shown.



Witney main roads:

There is a need to reallocate road space to benefit pedestrians, cyclists and buses. This part of Newland is an important access route to the A40 Trunk Road, and will be redesigned to provide combined bus stop and foot/cycle crossing facilities.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Witney Integrated Transport Package Bid has been prepared following the Integrated Transport and Land Use Study commissioned jointly by Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, and Witney Town Council. This study involved public consultation, a range of original surveys, traffic modelling, and other work to produce and evaluate alternative options for meeting a defined set of objectives.

The Package Bid covers Witney and the immediately surrounding rural area, and the measures included are based on four key conclusions from the Witney Integrated Transport and Land Use Study:

- traffic and environmental conditions will deteriorate in future unless counter action is taken, especially in the light of further population growth;
- the building of new roads currently proposed (serving new development), will not in itself bring about substantial or lasting improvements, and their ability alone to divert substantial traffic volumes away from sensitive locations is valuable, but limited;
- lasting improvements in both access and environmental conditions requires a breach of the trend of traffic growth, and this can be achieved only if people make less use of cars, and make a larger proportion of their journeys by alternative modes; and
- major improvements to the town centre and areas west of the centre can be implemented in advance of any further road building, providing that appropriate adjustments are made to transport infrastructure.

Objectives

The key issue which the Package Bid proposals seek to address is the avoidance of adverse effects of present and future levels of motorised traffic, while accommodating population and employment growth, improving environmental conditions throughout the town, and enhancing the vitality and economic viability of the town centre. Securing a switch of mode from private car to alternative modes is seen as the only way of achieving the desired outcomes.

The vision for Witney is for a more attractive town centre with greater diversity and vitality, and for safer and more appealing conditions for travel by non-car modes in Witney and to neighbouring areas, including Oxford city. Objectives have been identified which cover road safety, environmental quality, accessibility for all road users, including those whose mobility is impaired, and town centre viability. A range of targets has also been identified, against which progress of the Witney strategy will be measured over the coming years.

Demand management

Achieving mode switch away from the car for a proportion of journeys is necessary for the achievement of the objectives and related targets, and avoiding the adverse traffic impacts which further growth would otherwise bring. The Package Bid therefore emphasises several measures which together are expected to promote more sparing use of the car. These include: a parking management strategy for central parts of the town which introduces controls and charges for the first time; preferential routes for the non-car modes; improved safety and attractiveness of foot and cycle routes, priority for buses on the main routes; and an innovative "Mobility Centre" (believed to be the first in Britain) to work with people and organisations locally to encourage less use of cars.

The overall strategy

The Package Bid includes a range of integrated schemes, including infrastructure improvements for all modes (especially for walking, cycling and for bus users), major enhancements to a traffic-reduced town centre, new roads in conjunction with expansion of the town, and the demand management measures described above.

Costs and funding

The Witney strategy involves expenditure over a period of 10 years of around £11.5 million, of which about £2 million is presented for support through TPP package funding, spread over a period of 5-6 years. The first year package bid is for capital expenditure of £ ** million. The first year expenditure on parking management will bring in substantial further funding potential for complementary measures not eligible for TPP funding. This will support the demand management aims of the strategy, since parking revenues will be used to fund enhancement of the traffic-reduced town centre, and also the Mobility Centre's efforts to encourage alternatives to the car. Other funding will come from local sources, including developer contributions.

Phasing

Expenditure is phased for a lower requirement in the first year, and for higher levels in subsequent years when other local funding will be coming on-stream. Completion of the main projects is expected by the year 2005, but certain measures, particularly the incremental achievement of the target foot and cycle networks, and the traffic calming (speed management) strategy, will take up to 10 years to complete, albeit at lower levels of funding.

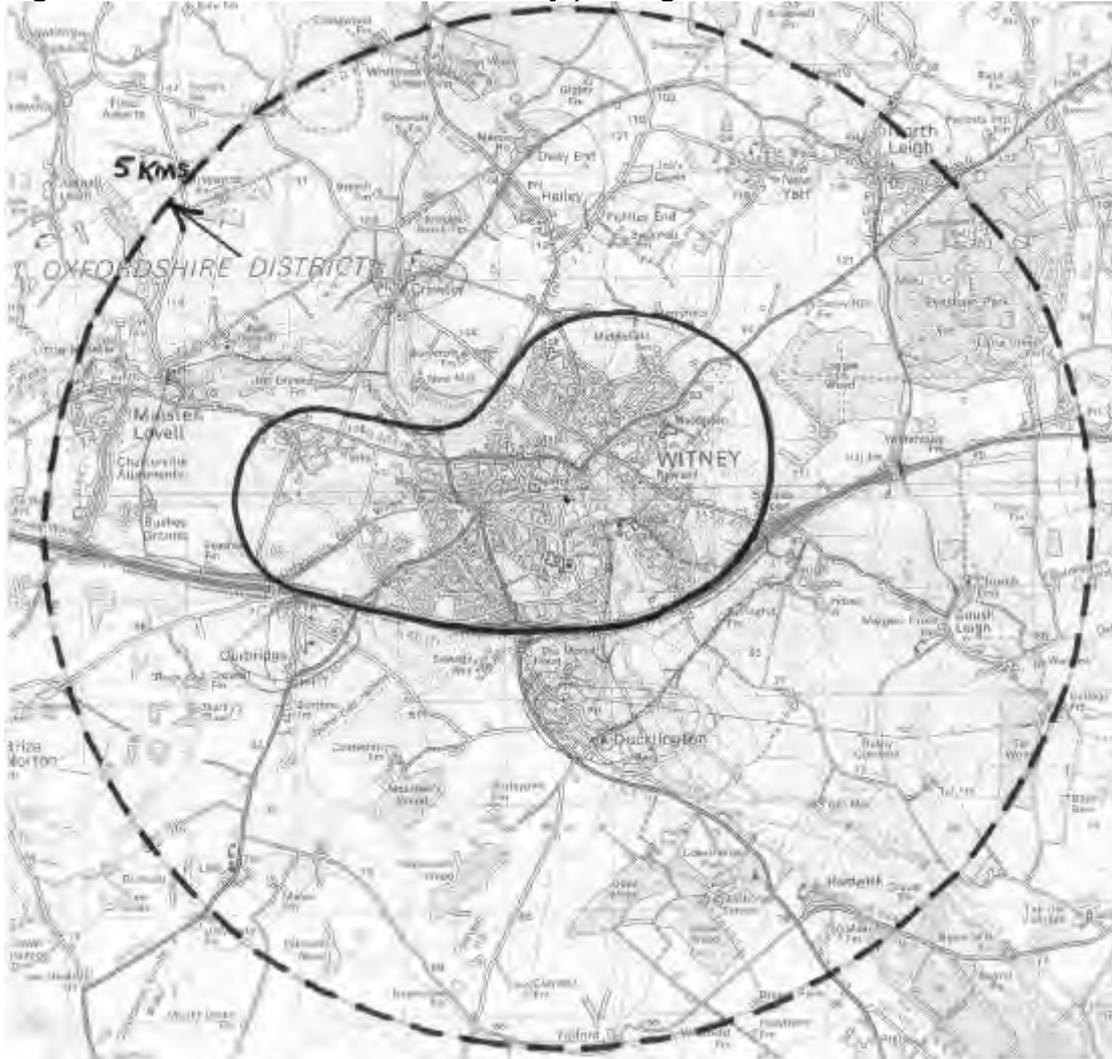
1. THE PACKAGE AREA

Witney is an historic but growing market town with a population of over 21,000, and employment for over 7,500 people. It is the main retail and employment centre in West Oxfordshire District, and is situated within a predominantly rural area about 10 miles west of Oxford, adjacent to the A40 Trunk road.

The Package Bid area includes the town itself, and the surrounding rural area including several villages within a radius of 3 miles from Witney town centre (see Figure 1).

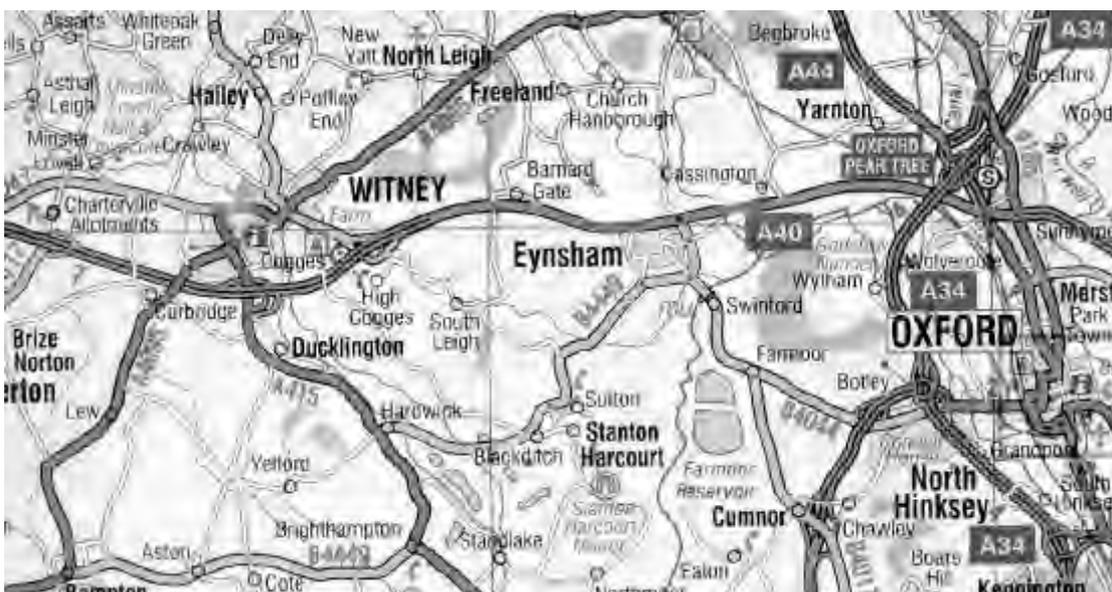
The main focus of the Package Bid is on the town itself, but measures are included to reduce traffic impacts in nearby villages, and to influence travel demand in Witney's hinterland, and to Oxford.

Figure 1 Location and extent of Witney package area



Solid line = main package area

Broken line = area included for "near village" proposals



Witney in relation to Oxford

2. THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Assets

Witney is a town with considerable assets, both in terms of its historic and beautiful town centre buildings and townscape, and in terms of the general layout of activities, and patterns of travel. The level of car use in the town is average, despite higher than average car ownership, thanks to a culture of cycling (three times higher than the national average), a frequent bus service to Oxford, and a town layout which avoids the need to travel long distances. The town centre is considered to be economically successful, and this has continued since the opening of an edge-of-centre superstore in 1995, and there is a widespread desire to protect the town's retail competitiveness.

Potential for improvement

Nevertheless, the full potential quality of Witney as a place to live, work and visit is unrealised because of the deleterious effects of motor traffic, especially in the town centre. Visitors tend to use the centre only for shopping, however, and there is potential for diversifying activity and thus generating a more lively centre which acts as the social "heart" of Witney and the surrounding areas.

A by-pass for the A40 Trunk Road was built in the late 1970s to take heavy east-west traffic out of the town, but traffic flows on the old route across the River Windrush (via Bridge Street) are now back to the levels experienced before the by-pass was opened. A local by-pass for the town centre was also built during the 1980s, but again no measures so far have been taken to reap the potential benefits of traffic reduction in the historic centre. A key aim is therefore to secure the environmental benefits made possible by earlier road investment.

A further problem, solutions to which can only indirectly be applied, is the high level of commuting into and out of the town, despite a rough numerical balance between jobs and employed residents in the town. About 1,800 people (23% of employed residents) travel to Oxford to work, and three out of four do so by car.

Future challenge

The town is one of four country towns in Oxfordshire designated for population and employment growth to take pressure from Oxford. This growth, together with the general trend of increasing motorised travel, means that the quality of Witney is further threatened by the adverse impact of motor traffic. The County Council as well as West Oxfordshire District Council and Witney Town Council are concerned about these trends, and are agreed on the need for action to avert worsening conditions, and on the need to create better economic and environmental conditions in the town.

A new road river crossing is planned in conjunction with new housing areas, and a key issue concerns the best way of using this to secure traffic relief on Bridge Street and the historic routes leading to it.

The need for mode switch away from the car

In resolving the issue of future growth and better environmental conditions and access for all groups of people, the need to secure a switch of mode from private car to alternative modes is regarded as paramount.

About 62% of all trips by Witney residents in 1990 were made by car. Applying trends in car use and population growth, by the year 2011 it is expected that the number of car trips by residents could increase by about 50%. Traffic volumes would be likely to increase to an even greater extent due to increases in journey lengths associated with higher levels of car use. An attempt was made to predict the effects of traffic growth in the year 2011 using the Witney traffic model, but at this point the road network became so saturated with traffic that the model was unable to provide a reliable simulation of traffic effects. This suggests that Witney would experience persistent and extensive peak hour congestion, and spreading of peak conditions to longer periods of the day. Traffic in the wider area would divert through village and rural roads seeking to avoid this congestion. Conditions for bus users, cyclists and pedestrians (whose share of total trips could decline from 38% to 25%) would inevitably deteriorate substantially. Levels of road safety would also be likely to deteriorate.

A sample survey has been undertaken in Witney to determine the scope for mode switch away from the car, to breach the trends identified and to bring about a better resolution to the issues identified. This found that one in four car trips made at present could be transferred to other modes, without any change in trip characteristics or destination, but with infrastructure improvements to remove impediments to walking and cycling.

A further survey found that three quarters of visitors to the town centre come from within three miles (which is a suitable distance for cycling), and half came from within the town itself, most of which lies within a reasonable walking distance of the town centre. Half of the journeys to work in Witney are less than 2 miles long, yet 40% of these are made by car. Half of all car journeys by Witney residents are less than two miles long.

All of these factors indicate substantial potential for mode switch away from the car, especially to walk and cycle. The strategy for Witney therefore emphasises ways of increasing the safety and attractiveness of these modes. An increased role for the bus, especially for the link to Oxford, is also an important component to secure travel patterns that are environmentally sustainable (defined here as a reversal of adverse environmental trends).

Public consultation

During the preparation of the Witney Integrated Transport and Land Use Study (by consultants Llewelyn Davies with Gibb Ltd., 1996-97), the opportunity was taken to assess public opinion about the areas of change considered most important in the town. Consultation workshops were held with local interest groups, traders, schools and the emergency services, at which a variety of issues were aired.

A sample survey of residents revealed considerable support for the building of a new road river crossing (the Cogges Link), and equal support for reducing traffic in, or pedestrianising, the town centre. When people were asked about improvements to the town centre they would like to see, the most popular response was “less traffic”, followed by “better shops”, “safe cycle routes and cycle parking”, and “more space to walk in and enjoy”.

The strategy is consistent with these views, but also takes into account future conditions in the town, especially the adverse impacts of traffic growth trends, upon which it is difficult to obtain useful public opinion data.

Specific local consultations have been undertaken in relation to the town centre proposals and other specific schemes in the first year funding bid.

The key issue

Overall, the issue which the Package Bid proposals seek to address is the avoidance of adverse effects of present and future levels of motorised traffic, while accommodating population and employment growth, improving environmental conditions throughout the town, and enhancing the vitality and economic viability of the town centre. Securing a switch of mode from private car to alternative modes is seen as the only way of achieving the desired outcome.

3. PLANNING CONTEXT AND OBJECTIVES

Policy framework

The policy framework for the Package Bid is established at County and District level, although the latest Structure and District plans are not yet formally adopted. The Witney Package Bid is based on these plans, and on the Witney Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy; the second integrated strategy to be completed in the County.

The transport strategy of the Oxfordshire Structure Plan complements its land use policies. The transport objective of the approved plan is as follows:

“The fundamental aim in formulating an overall transport strategy for Oxfordshire is to secure, within the resources available, safe and convenient access for people and goods, giving priority to travel by public transport and reducing the need for private vehicle use in ways that are compatible with protecting the environment and the achievement of convenient and prosperous conditions for all in the county.”

The West Oxfordshire District Plan includes the aim of managing traffic

“so that all movement, particularly by pedestrians and cyclists, can be undertaken safely and satisfactorily without undue harm to the environment,”

and the aim of guiding new development

“to locations where there will be an overall benefit to the transport infrastructure and where the need to travel, particularly by private car, would be minimised so that more energy-efficient means of transport can become a real alternative to the motor car.”

This latter aim results in new housing and employment being focused in Witney rather than being dispersed throughout the surrounding rural areas.

At the national level the policy framework is being strengthened and developed in ways that are broadly consistent with County and District intentions. Significant developments in the context of the Package Bid are the new generation of Planning Policy Guidance notes (especially PPG1, PPG6 and PPG13), the UK Sustainable Development Strategy, the Transport Green Paper (April 1996) and the evolving rules concerning central government approvals of local transport expenditure. In addition, sector or mode-specific policies are beginning to emerge, with the first national cycle strategy published in July 1996, and a national walking strategy expected later. The Package Bid also anticipates action to implement the Road Traffic Reduction Act 1997, by including targets for traffic reduction and actions to meet them.

Certain over-arching and clear policy objectives can be drawn from the various national, county and local policy documents. These include:

- the need to travel, especially by car, should be reduced;
- the use of public transport, bicycle and walking should be increased; and
- transport measures should be related to land use development.

Vision

The vision for Witney includes a more attractive town centre with less motor traffic, greater diversity of activities and social vitality, together with safer and more appealing options for travel by non-car modes throughout the town and the surrounding area. This vision, should result in a town in which:

- *no resident is dependent on the car to reach destinations in Witney;*
- *no resident is dependent on travel to other towns for basic facilities or non-specialist employment opportunities;*
- *everyone feels free to travel by car, bus, bicycle or on foot in Witney without fear or risk from whatever source;*
- *recreational opportunities in the surrounding countryside can easily be reached on foot and by bicycle;*
- *all people living in the town's residential areas have an environment free from traffic danger, noise and fumes;*
- *people and activities located on Witney's main roads are not impeded or impaired by excessive traffic danger, noise or fumes;*
- *it is possible to talk and to socialise in the town centre without interruption or disturbance from motor traffic;*
- *travel to Oxford by bus should involve no more than a single change of mode at the Witney end, for example walk or cycle to the nearest bus stop.*

Objectives

The Witney Integrated Transport and Land Use Study (1996-97) included the following broad objectives for the town:

- reduce the adverse impact of motorised traffic within the town as a whole, especially the most sensitive parts including the Conservation Area;
- protect and enhance the vitality and attractiveness of the town centre;
- improve accessibility to facilities within the town, especially those within the town centre, for all people including those whose mobility is limited;
- create a better environment for people on foot and good conditions for people whose mobility is limited;
- promote safer, more pleasant and more convenient conditions for cycle traffic and for bus passengers;
- improve accessibility to Oxford;
- improve accessibility between Witney and the surrounding countryside for recreational purposes;
- promote the efficient operation of all types of traffic and related activity, including parking;
- reduce road danger throughout the town, and reduce the number and severity of road casualties.

Targets

The vision and objectives for Witney are translated into specific targets which will be used to measure progress as implementation of the strategy progresses. The key target is a so-called “50/50 target”, in which the share of trips by residents made by car is to be reduced to 50% by the year 2005, while the share by other modes is to increase to 50% by 2005. (The respective figures in 1990 were 62% and 38%.) Other targets relate to reduced use of the car for work and for the journey to Oxford, increased pedestrian intensity in the town centre, efficient parking, casualty reduction, speed reduction, removal of impediments to users of wheelchairs and other mobility aids, and protection from delays of buses, cyclists and pedestrians. These targets and their relationship to the Package Bid measures are shown in Table 2.

4. STRATEGY

Guiding principles

The strategy has been based on four key conclusions from the Witney Integrated Transport and Land Use Study:

- traffic and environmental conditions will deteriorate in future unless counter action is taken, especially in the light of further population growth in Witney and elsewhere in West Oxfordshire;
- the building of new roads currently proposed (in connection with new development), will not in itself bring about substantial or lasting improvements, and their ability alone to divert substantial traffic volumes away from sensitive locations is valuable, but limited;
- lasting improvements in both access and environmental conditions requires a breach of the trend of traffic growth, and this can be achieved only by people making less use of the car, and making a larger proportion of their journeys by alternative modes; and
- major improvements to the town centre and areas west of the centre can be implemented in advance of any further road building, providing that appropriate adjustments are made to transport infrastructure.

Achievement of the objectives for Witney will therefore require measures to reduce the demand for car travel, aided and counterbalanced by measures to improve travel by the “environment combination” modes, which in Witney are walking, cycling and the bus. Major benefits are also to be offered in the town centre from which general motor traffic will be removed. This is seen as the appropriate use of “sticks and carrots” in reducing reliance on the private car in Witney.

The strategy builds on existing strengths and opportunities in the town, for example:

- a high level of cycling (three times the national average for small towns);
- traffic calming and safety-oriented residential street layouts;
- frequent bus services on the Oxford corridor, with potential for major enhancement of reliability with the proposed A40 bus lane;
- most buses serving Witney are already, or are soon to be, fitted with transponders, making call-ahead facilities at traffic signals economically feasible in the town;
- a compact urban structure, limiting the need for long journeys;
- major retail confined to the town centre, with local facilities in residential estates, also limiting the need for car-based shopping;
- industrial activity generating heavy goods vehicle traffic located mostly on the edge of the town with good access to the A40 Trunk road.

The main strategy elements

The town centre is to be made more attractive as a trading and social environment by closing the main shopping area to general motor traffic, and investing in environmental enhancements including re-paving. Traffic will be reduced by a combination of a “drive to, not through” concept (drivers park at the nearest off-street car park, and return without driving through the centre) and “preferential routing” through the centre for bus, cycle and pedestrian traffic.

Parking will be managed more effectively at a lower level of demand by the introduction of controls and charges within a town centre controlled parking zone.

Outside the town centre, improvements will be made to the network of routes for both walking and cycling, including routes which link nearby villages. Over a period of years, traffic calming measures will be used to improve safety throughout the town, guided by an overall speed management strategy.

New housing in the north east of the town will provide the opportunity for a new road and river crossing (the Cogges Link and the North East Distributor Road), and the strategy includes traffic management measures to secure potential benefits of traffic relief on the existing Bridge Street approach routes. These are shown on Figure 3.

The infrastructure aspects of the strategy will be supported by so-called “soft measures” designed to influence people’s travel decisions, and land use planning policies to ensure that new developments are consistent with the demand management approach.

Demand management

The strategy includes measures to reduce the need for travel by car, with the following categories of trip considered most suitable for encouraging conversion to other modes:

- trips by residents of Witney within the town (switch mainly to walk and cycle);
- trips by residents to Oxford (switch mainly to bus);
- trips by residents of surrounding villages to work in Witney (switch to car pool, as well as walk, cycle and bus);
- local trips to/from surrounding area (mainly to walk and cycle);
- trips to Witney by residents of nearby villages (mainly to walk and cycle).

The strategy aims to maintain ease of access to Witney by car for people living outside the town whose alternative means of access are limited, and where improvements sufficient to compete with the car are unlikely to be achieved in the near future. Policies in the District Plan are designed to limit population growth in the rural areas which are inevitably more car-dependent.

The following measures are included in the strategy to achieve mode switch away from the car:

- parking controls and charges in the town centre;
- preferential (more direct/convenient) routing to and through the town centre for buses, pedestrians and cyclists;
- improvements to infrastructure for walking and cycling, both within the town and to nearby villages;
- bus priority measures on the Carterton-Witney-Oxford corridor;
- “soft measures” to raise awareness of sustainable transport issues, and to help residents and visitors to choose alternatives to the car (various initiatives are included, see section on the proposed Mobility Centre below).

Integrated approach

The strategy is presented as a set of measures, whose various elements work towards the consistent achievement of the agreed objectives and integrates the following dimensions:

- measures with different sources of funding;
- parking revenues with mode switch incentives;
- measures to assist different modes of travel;
- environmental, safety, economic and access objectives;
- land use and transport measures and policies;
- physical, fiscal, policy and other measures;
- short and longer term measures; and
- comprehensiveness of approach to benefit all user groups.

The contribution of different elements of the package to the defined objectives is shown in Table 1. (See also Table 2 for intended outcomes.)

Table 1: Contribution to objectives of package elements

| OBJECTIVE (summary) | STRATEGY ELEMENT | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Reduce adverse traffic impact in town | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Enhance town centre vitality and viability | | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Improve access for all | | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ | | ✓ |
| Better conditions for people on foot, and for those whose mobility is limited | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Safer, better, more convenient conditions for cyclists and bus passengers | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Better accessibility to Oxford | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Better access between Witney and countryside for recreation purposes | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Efficient operation of all types of traffic and parking | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Reduce road danger, and reduced number and severity of road accidents. | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | |

Strategy Elements:

- 1 Town Centre pedestrianisation
- 2 Traffic management support measures
- 3 Parking management strategy
- 4 Witney Mobility Centre
- 5 Cycle infrastructure
- 6 Footpath and footway infrastructure
- 7 Bus priority

- 8 Residential area traffic calming
- 9 Near-village foot and cycle links
- 10 Park and Ride to Oxford (possible)
- 11 New road link (Cogges Link and North East Distributor Road)
- 12 Traffic management on Bridge Street route
- 13 Planning policies for reducing need to travel by car

5. SCHEMES AND MEASURES

The Witney Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy involves a programme of infrastructure and other measures costing an estimated £11.5 million overall, spread over a period of 10 years. £6.5 million is accounted for by new roads to be built in conjunction with, and mostly funded by, new housing development in the north east of the town. Of the remaining £5 million, about 60% is expected to be funded from local sources including revenues from the proposed parking management scheme. Around £2 million is for projects requiring TPP package funding support, spread over a period of 5-6 years, and these are detailed in this section.

The schemes are set out under the headings of “short term” (further divided into measures in the town centre, and the rest of the package area), “medium term”, and “part of the strategy but not eligible for package funding”. The Item numbers refer to the strategy elements shown on Table 1.

Short term measures

The short term programme will give priority to town centre pedestrianisation and enhancement (Item 1 on Table 1), together with traffic and parking management measures which are necessary for the overall efficiency of the project (Items 2 and 3). Also in the short term it is planned to initiate the proposed Witney Mobility Centre (believed to be the first of its kind in Britain)(Item 4), and to make a start with the programme of improvements to infrastructure for cyclists (Item 5), pedestrians (Item 6) and buses (Item 7).

Figure 2 shows the location of schemes in years 1-3 of the programme.

The town centre

Pedestrianisation (Item 1)

Description: Closure to general traffic of town centre roads, and associated traffic management and calming to prevent diversion of vehicle traffic onto unsuitable routes. Buses, cycles and vehicles of the emergency services will be exempt from the town centre closures. Two entry points will be available for taxis, while goods delivery vehicles will also be able to use these access points before 10.00am. New crossing and junction controls are proposed on routes likely to become busier following the town centre closures.

Estimated costs

| | |
|--|----------|
| First phase road closures (Item 1) | £ 40,000 |
| Second phase road closures (Item 1) | £ 40,000 |
| Traffic management and calming (Item 2) | £143,000 |
| Signalised traffic junction Burford Road/Tower Hill (Item 2) | £ 40,000 |
| Three signal controlled crossings (Item 2) | £ 90,000 |
| Signing associated with traffic network changes (Item 2) | £ 35,000 |

Parking management (Item 3)

Description: There is currently little control over parking in Witney. It is proposed to implement comprehensive management of both on-street and public off-street parking within the town centre and adjacent areas (shown in Figure 4). In the public car parks, charges will be introduced for the first time, both to influence the type of user, and to maintain operational efficiency at a reduced level of supply. While no reduction is planned in off-street capacity, on-street parking will be reduced in the pedestrianised areas (High Street), and on the historic Church Green. A buffer zone of residents-only parking will be created on streets adjacent to the town centre. Free parking will be made available to Orange Badge holders at both on-street and off-street locations nearest to the main town centre shopping and other facilities. Certain other provisions will be made on street, for example for market traders' vehicles on market days only.

Expected surplus parking revenues will be available in subsequent years to fund environmental enhancement works in the pedestrianised areas, and to run the Witney Mobility Centre, neither of which are eligible for Package funding. Use of parking revenues in this way to fund positive benefits of reduced car use are thought to be important in gaining acceptance for parking charges in the town.

Estimated costs

| | |
|--|---------|
| Equipment of public car parks for charges and time controls | £50,000 |
| On-street parking controls including: small pay-and-display area, signing and special bays | £60,000 |

The rest of the package area

Bus priority and foot/cycle network schemes (Items 5, 6, 7)

Description: Various schemes are intended for short term implementation, all of which will contribute towards achievement of the longer term target cycle, foot and bus networks shown in Figures 5, 6 and 7 respectively.

The signalised crossing facilities (above) coincide with important foot and cycle access points to the town centre across busy roads. In addition, three further crossing facilities are proposed on the main approach route to Bridge Street from the A40. These will be located within a divided carriageway alongside bus stops, which will also enable buses to retain their position in the traffic stream.

Signals at the northern approach to the pedestrianised area will be re-timed to handle altered traffic flows and to provide a call-ahead facility for approaching buses (most buses on this route will already be fitted with transponders in connection with the Botley Road priority scheme in Oxford).

The main approach route to the town centre from the west (Curbridge Road) will be traffic calmed in a way which is compatible with the operation of

standard chassis buses. Two roads connect Curbridge Road to the pedestrianised town centre, Welch Way and Corn Street. Improved access on these routes for those on foot and cycle will be created by reduced traffic volumes and by proposed reallocation of carriageway space for cycles on Welch Way, and comprehensive treatment of side roads and crossovers to create a level route for pedestrians and people using mobility aids on Welch Way, Tower Hill and Corn Street.

Bus shelters with facilities will be provided on the main Oxford bus routes (those within the town centre will be funded and designed as part of the enhancement works).

Estimated costs

| | |
|---|----------|
| Cycle and pedestrian measures (Items 5 and 6): | |
| Redesign of Welch Way (pedestrian and cycle provision) | £200,000 |
| Redesign of Corn Street (kerb realignment, parking bays, and side entry treatments) | £150,000 |
| Tower Hill Side entry treatments | £ 60,000 |

| | |
|---|----------|
| Bus priority measures (Item 7): | |
| Bus priority bus stops with foot/cycle crossing facilities (three in all) (Newland/Oxford Hill) | £150,000 |
| Re-timing of signals with call-ahead for buses (High Street) | £ 20,000 |
| Bus shelters with information, seating, other facilities | £ 30,000 |
| Bus-friendly traffic calming, Curbridge Road (1km approx.) | £200,000 |

Additions and upgrades to cycle and foot path networks (Items 5, 6, 9)

Description: Both new and upgraded foot and cycle paths are needed in conjunction with new developments in the north east of the town, and also between Witney and the nearby villages. Schemes within the new development itself will be developer-funded. Parts of the networks which serve a wider population are included in the package bid.

Estimated costs

| | |
|---|----------|
| New routes tied in with Cogges Link road scheme (2-3kms) | £200,000 |
| Cycle-friendly traffic calming on Church Lane (0.5km) | £ 30,000 |
| Trial schemes on routes to near villages (Item 9) (initially Crawley, Ducklington and Minster Lovell) | £100,000 |

Park and Ride (Item 10)

Description: On the assumption that a segregated bus lane can be provided on the A40 Trunk road towards Oxford, bus journey times between Witney and Oxford can be reduced by as much as 50%, an improvement likely to lead to a significant increase in passenger demand at the expense of the car. For residents of West Oxfordshire a Park and Ride facility serving direct services

to Oxford via the A40 may have considerable potential. It is therefore proposed to undertake a feasibility study of such a facility once the A40 bus lane is confirmed.

Estimated cost

Feasibility study of Oxford Park and Ride near Witney £10,000

Medium term measures

Measures to be implemented in Years 4-5 of the programme are shown in Figure 3.

Control of traffic flows on Bridge Street (Item 12)

Description: Following construction of the new road river crossing (see below), traffic management measures will be taken to secure traffic relief on the Bridge Street route. These are designed to control the rate of flow towards Bridge Street, to relocate queues away from the most sensitive areas (conservation areas), and away from the junction approaches used by the main bus routes. Full closure of Bridge Street is not considered to be desirable due to the risk of traffic diversion through nearby village routes, and the extra distance involved for traffic between north Witney and the town centre.

Estimated costs

| | |
|--|---------|
| Bus lane with advance signal, Oxford Hill at Cogges Link | £50,000 |
| New signals at High Street/Mill Street | £80,000 |
| New signals at Hailey Road/Crawley Road | £60,000 |

Further cycle and pedestrian network schemes (Item 5, 6)

Description: Further schemes towards the target network of foot and cycle paths.

Estimated costs

| | |
|--|----------|
| Completion of routes associated with Cogges Link | £100,000 |
| New foot and cycle path between West End and Mill Street | £100,000 |
| Associated new “Toucan” crossing at Mill Street | £ 20,000 |
| Development and upgrading of routes elsewhere in Witney | £150,000 |

(This will complete a 5 year programme; additional schemes will be required in the longer term, provisionally estimated at £100,000)

Traffic calming schemes (Item 8)

Description: Further physical traffic calming measures on residential distributor roads, towards target speed management framework (20mph zones covering all residential areas). Many of the more recent housing areas

are developed with short loops and culs-de-sac which already meet the 20mph zone criteria. Physical measures are therefore focused on distributor roads. Schemes will also be implemented in nearby villages in order to avoid new rat-run traffic following restrictions on the Bridge Street route.

Estimated costs

| | |
|--|----------|
| Various schemes on residential roads, not yet identified (this will complete a 5 year programme, further provision in late years will be required, provisionally estimated at a further £100,000) | £150,000 |
| Calming (or closure) of Woodstock and New Yatt Roads | £ 40,000 |
| Traffic calming in Poffley End and New Yatt villages | £100,000 |

Measures part of the strategy but not submitted for package funding

Mobility Centre (Item 4)

Description: The proposed Witney Mobility Centre will be a local office established to raise public awareness of the environmental, health and safety issues of motorised transport, and to encourage more sparing use of private cars. The Centre will have an important role in publicising the new and more environmentally-friendly travel opportunities that will be opened up, following implementation of the infrastructure measures included in the strategy.

The precise range of functions is yet to be determined, but is expected to develop the County’s Travelwise initiatives at the local level. It will therefore include:

- coordinate Safe Routes to School projects with local schools;
- promote green commuter plans with local employers;
- coordinate Travelwise schemes in Witney;
- develop personal mobility plans for less car use;
- encourage home deliveries by local shops;
- promote non-car activities such as recreational walks and cycle rides; and
- establish an information service, including posters, leaflets.

The Centre is expected to be funded from parking revenues, and will therefore be implemented in the second year of the package programme.

New roads and housing development (Item 11)

Description: Further expansion of the town is planned over the next ten years, and the Local Plan provides for new roads associated with this development, as shown on Figure 8. The opportunity will be taken to provide a new link road across the River Windrush, and to implement traffic management measures to provide traffic relief on the Bridge Street route (see medium term measures above).

Estimated costs

| | | |
|---|------------|--------|
| Cogges Link and North East Distributor Road | Total cost | £6.5 m |
|---|------------|--------|

of which: developer funding (payback if not built by 2004) £2.5 m, and provisional offer of further £3.3 m developer funding. Possible shortfall to be met from other sources, including possible TPP funding in future years £0.7 m.

Environmental enhancement of the pedestrianised areas (Item 1, part)

Description: Removal of general motor traffic from a substantial part of the town centre will enable major re-paving and other environmental improvements to take place. These are estimated to cost in the region of £1.5 million, excluding provision for services works, legal and other costs. All costs will be met from local sources, including parking revenues.

Planning policies (Item 13)

Description: Various policies relating to the compact development of the town, the exploitation of commercial and other development in providing improved pedestrian and cycle links in the northern part of the town centre, and a review of parking standards in new developments to minimise provision. There are no cost implications of these measures.

6. MONITORING AND INTENDED OUTCOME OF PACKAGE

The intended outcome of the package of schemes and policies has been compared to a “do minimum” scenario for Witney in the year 2005, the year to which key defined targets apply, and by which time the main elements of the package will have been implemented. The contribution of each element of the package to the defined objectives is summarised in Table 1, while Table 2 summarises the expected outcomes for different parts of the package area.

The procedures for monitoring are designed to answer the following questions:

- Are the schemes working efficiently as intended?
- Are the schemes being implemented according to the programme?
- Is progress towards the defined targets satisfactory?

The logic of how measures cause the objectives to be achieved is summarised in diagrammatic form in Figures 9 and 10 for short-term and medium-term measures respectively. For clarity these “causal chain” diagrams show only the main links, and some measures and objectives are combined or omitted. (A diagram showing all 13 measures and all 9 objectives would be excessively complex.) They do, however, highlight the main monitoring points. The monitoring exercises themselves are set out in Table 3.

As shown in the causal chain diagrams, monitoring of the Witney Package will concentrate on the transport impacts; for example, “more people in the town centre” will be monitored, rather than “enhanced town centre viability”. Some points in the causal chains ideally would be monitored, but are excluded because of resource or other constraints. An example is the intended increase in bus use, where private ownership of services makes direct monitoring of ridership difficult; but the general trend will show in the mode switch monitoring. Also the hoped-for increase in bus service frequency following on from better operating conditions and increased patronage, leading to still further increases in patronage, are links omitted from the diagram. A further example of links excluded is the intention to attract more town centre living with a better environment and provision of free residents’ parking.

Although somewhat complex, the diagram does show the integrated and synergistic nature of the package measures.

Table 2: Outcomes in target years with and without Witney Package compared to today

| Area of impact | Expected without package Year 2005 | Target outcome with Package Year 2005 * |
|---|---|--|
| TOWN CENTRE | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> pedestrian conditions access by bus, cycle, foot | Conditions worsen | Conditions improve substantially (no target) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> parking availability | Demand exceeds supply peak times | Spaces always available (10% spaces free at peak) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> economic viability social vitality (pedestrian intensity) | Likely decline | Improvement with pedestrian intensity increasing by 10% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access for people with impaired mobility | Conditions worsen | By 2001 remove all impediments |
| TOWN AS A WHOLE | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Road safety Safety of journey to school (foot/cycle) | Safety worsens due to traffic increase | Reduce annual average KSI rate by 50% by 2006-2011 |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All trips by residents Car Environment combination modes | 65 - 70% | (2005 target) 50% |
| | 30 - 35% | 50% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journey to work in Witney Car Environment combination modes | 60 - 65% | (2011 target) 46% |
| | 35 - 40% | 54% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environmental conditions | Conditions worsen due to traffic increase | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% of vehicles travel within (lower) speed limits Roads with frontage development (not through roads) carry <5,000vpd |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays to buses | Increase due to congestion | Delays at any point <45 seconds |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delays to other motor vehicles | Increase due to congestion | No target |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> access for people with impaired mobility | Conditions worsen | Remove physical impediments on targeted routes |
| OXFORD | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access by car | Journey times increase | Reduce car share (work trips) from 76% to 38% |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access by bus | Journey times increase | Journey times cut; Work trip share up from 21% to 59% |
| NEAR VILLAGES | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access by car | Conditions worsen | Parking improves (see above) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access by foot, cycle | Conditions worsen | Improvements (no target) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic impact in villages | Conditions worsen | Improvements (no target) |

* Target year 2005 except where otherwise indicated

Note 1: Population growth and associated and committed road schemes, including new river crossing, are included in both scenarios.

Note 2: Targets are to help measure progress, using the surveys shown in Table 3.

Table 3 Monitoring procedures

| Survey | Period | Associated target | Measures implemented (confirm efficacy) (see note) |
|---|-----------------------|--|---|
| Auto traffic counters | Ongoing | Environmental traffic capacity | Mode switch measures, Environmental traffic management |
| Parking surveys | Ongoing/ Annual | Parking efficiency | Charges, time controls and permits, Parking supply. |
| Accident statistics | Ongoing annual audit | Accident reduction | Traffic calming, Scheme design, including lessons from trial schemes. |
| Speed counts (before and after) | Ad hoc | Calm driving, speed enforcement | Traffic calming (physical/educational measures) |
| Physical survey of foot/cycle provision | 2 years | Access for people with mobility impairment | Maintenance programme/priorities Scheme design. |
| On-street stopwatch surveys | 2 years | Minimum delay to "environment combination" modes | Traffic management (e.g. signal timings, crossing provisions, priority provisions) |
| Household travel survey | 5 years | Mode split | Mobility Centre projects, provision for non-car modes, parking management. |
| Town centre surveys (interview and observation) | 5 years | Pedestrian intensity | Planning initiatives/decisions to increase land use diversity, tourist and other publicity, town centre management. |
| National Census | 10 years (2001, 2011) | Journey to work | Mobility Centre projects, bus priority, networks serving employment areas, parking regime (cycle and car). |

Note: The overall strategy is expected to deliver the desired outcomes, but the right hand column indicates where tactical changes in the implementation programme might be prompted.

7. Phased implementation

The main package programme is spread over a period of five years, with certain measures needed beyond that date to complete the target foot and cycle networks and traffic calming in residential areas. The schemes (and costs) are spread so that there is a lower expenditure requirement in the first year, to allow planning and consultation work to be undertaken, and higher levels for the following 4-5 years. The phasing of expenditure is shown in Table 4.

The location of schemes to be implemented in Years 1-3 is shown in Figure 2; schemes for implementation in Years 4-5 are shown in Figure 3.

Here will be standard Table (numbered here Table 4), with itemised schemes with costs and year of implementation.

8. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Department of the Environment (1997) "Planning Policy Guidance Note 1: General policy and principles", HMSO.

Department of the Environment (1996) "PPG6: Retailing", HMSO.

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Department of the Environment and Department of Transport (1995) "PPG13: a guide to better practice", HMSO.

Department of Transport (May 1996) "Transport policies and programme submissions for 1997-98" Local authority Circular 2/96, also revised draft issued in March 1997.

Department of Transport (1996) "Transport: the way forward", HMSO.

Department of Transport (1996) "The national cycling strategy", DoT.

Department of Transport (1996) "Developing a strategy for walking", DOT.

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HM Government (1997) "Road Traffic Reduction Act", HMSO.

Llewelyn Davies with Gibb Ltd. "Witney Integrated Transport and land Use Study" Reports on Stage 1, Stage 2 (1996) and Stage 3 (1997) for Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire District Council and Witney Town Council.

Oxfordshire County Council (November 1996), "Deposit Draft Structure Plan".

UK Round Table on Sustainable Development (June 1996), "Defining a sustainable transport sector", DoE.

West Oxfordshire District Council (October 1993), "Deposit Draft Local Plan".

Here follow Figures

(Figure numbers in brackets refer to WITLUS Stage 3 report)

Figure 2 Location of infrastructure schemes programmed for years 1-3

Figure 3 Location of infrastructure schemes programmed for years 4-5

Figure 4 Parking management (controlled parking zone) [Fig 4.2]

Figure 5 Target cycle network [Fig 4.3]

Figure 6 Target footpath network [Fig 4.4]

Figure 7 Public transport measures and opportunities [Fig 4.5]

*Figure 8 New roads and other measures affecting private motorised transport
[Fig 6.1]*

Figure 9 Causal chain diagram, short term measures

Figure 10 Causal chain diagram, medium term measures

Figure 2 Location of infrastructure schemes programmed for years 1-3

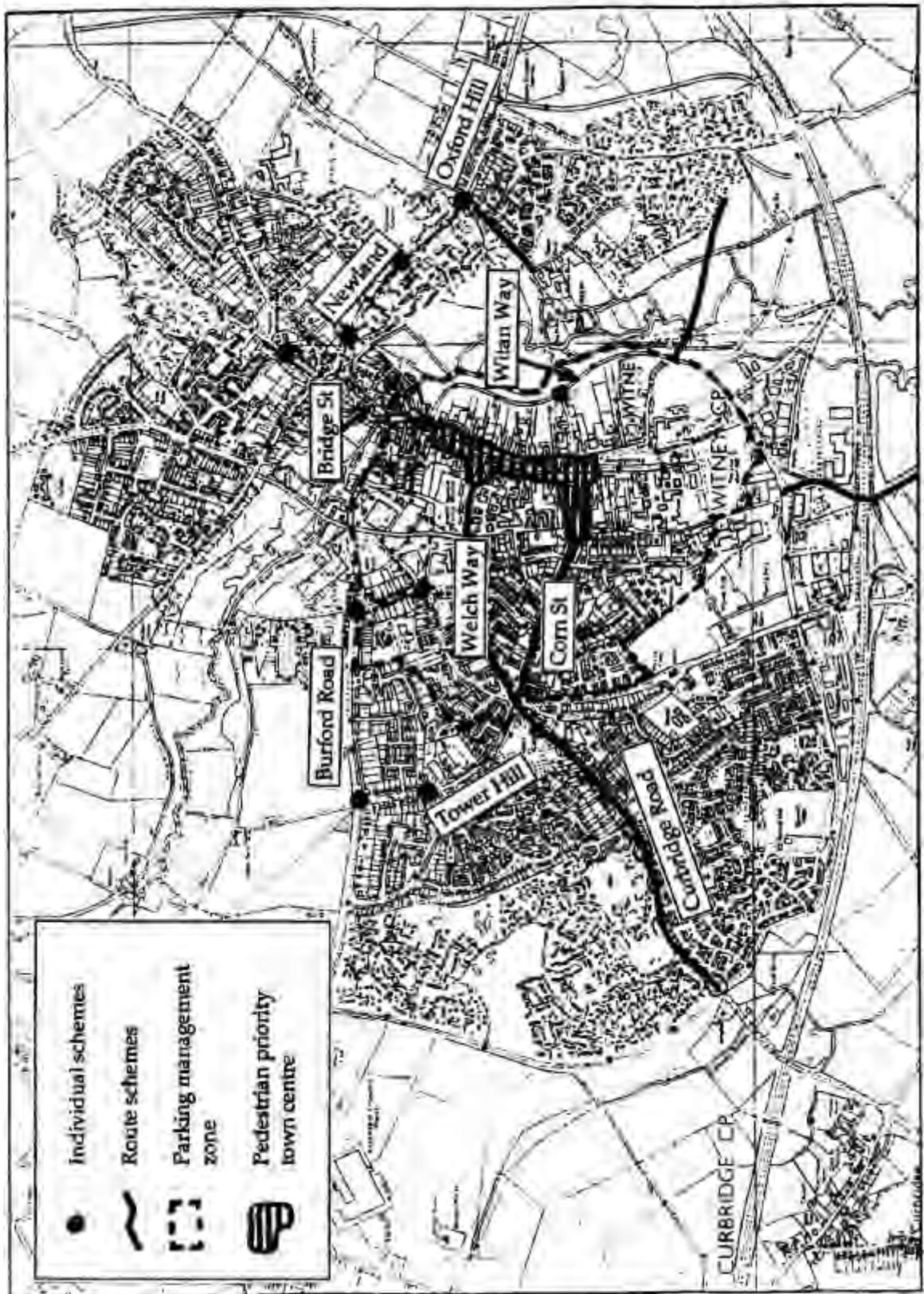


Figure 4 Parking management (controlled parking zone)

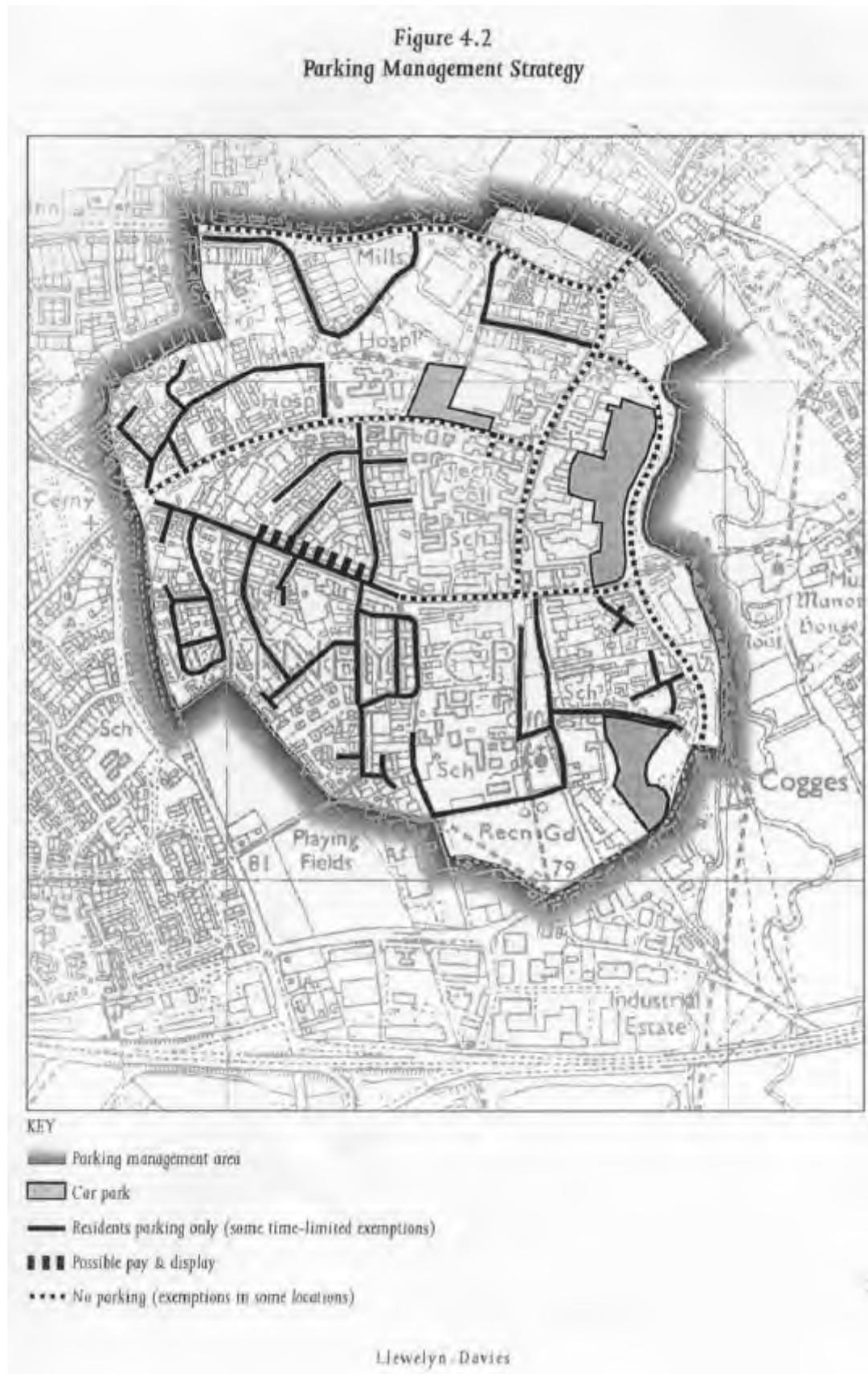


Figure 5 Target cycle network

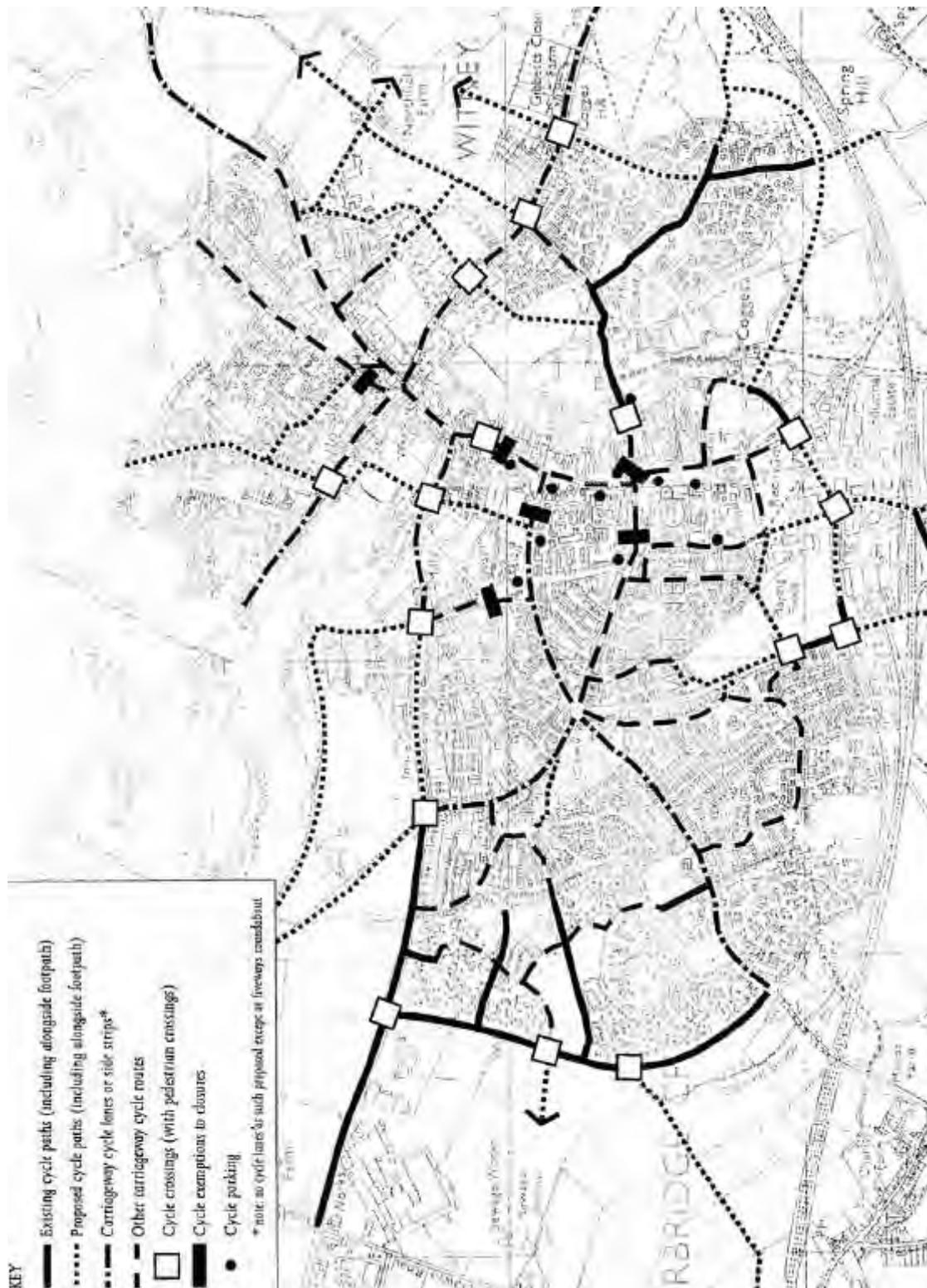


Figure 6 Target footpath network

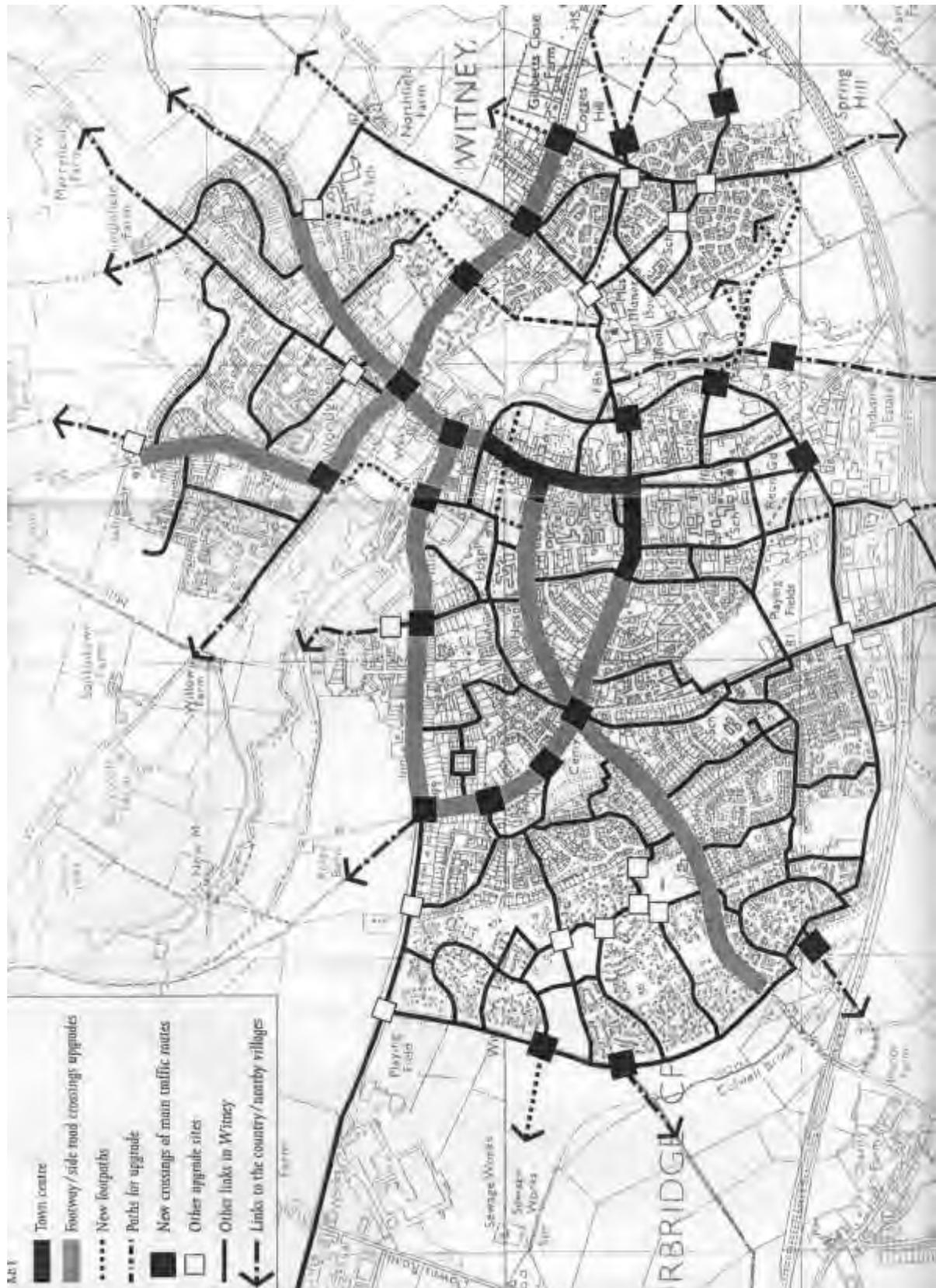


Figure 7 Public transport measures and opportunities

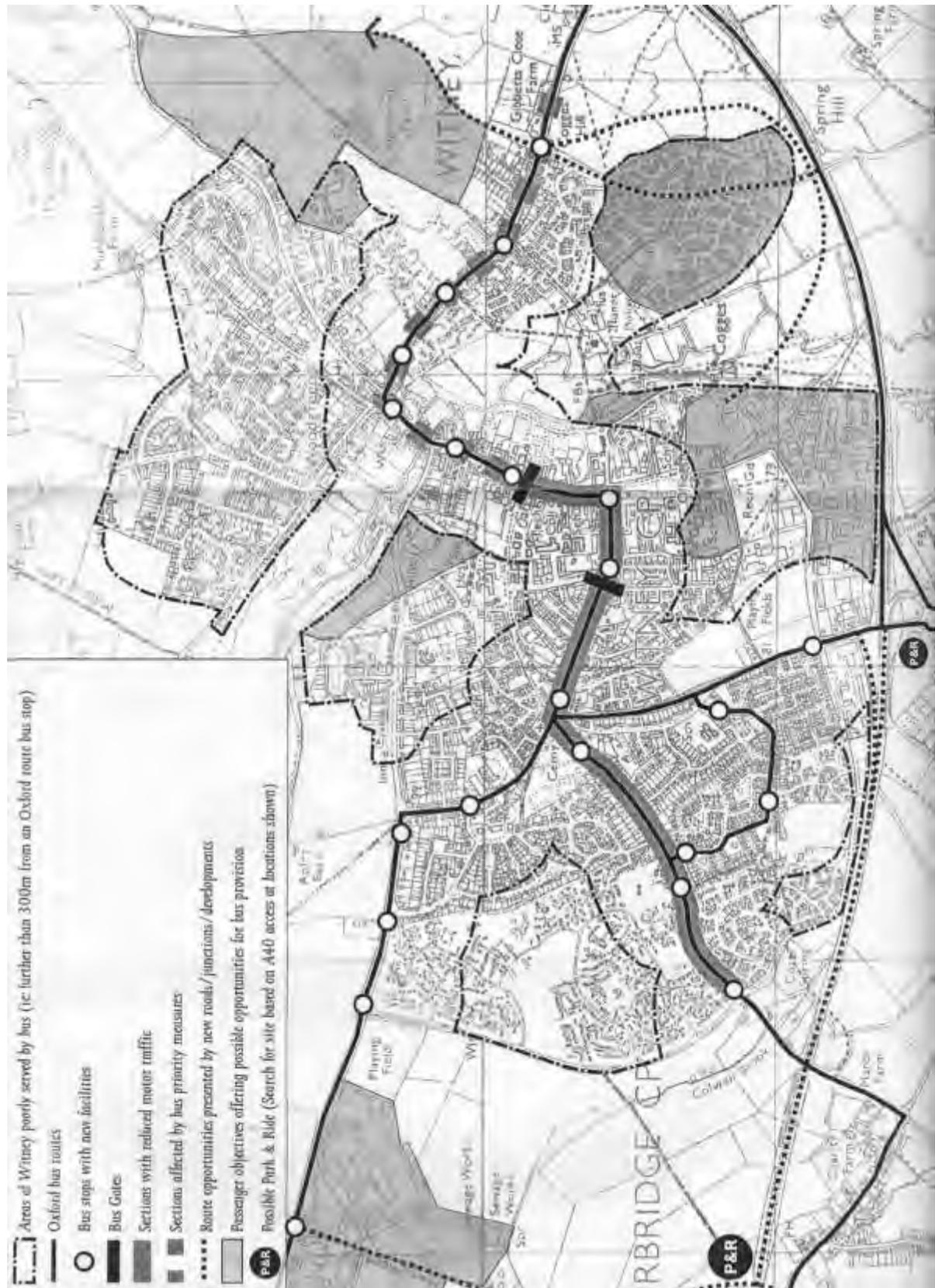
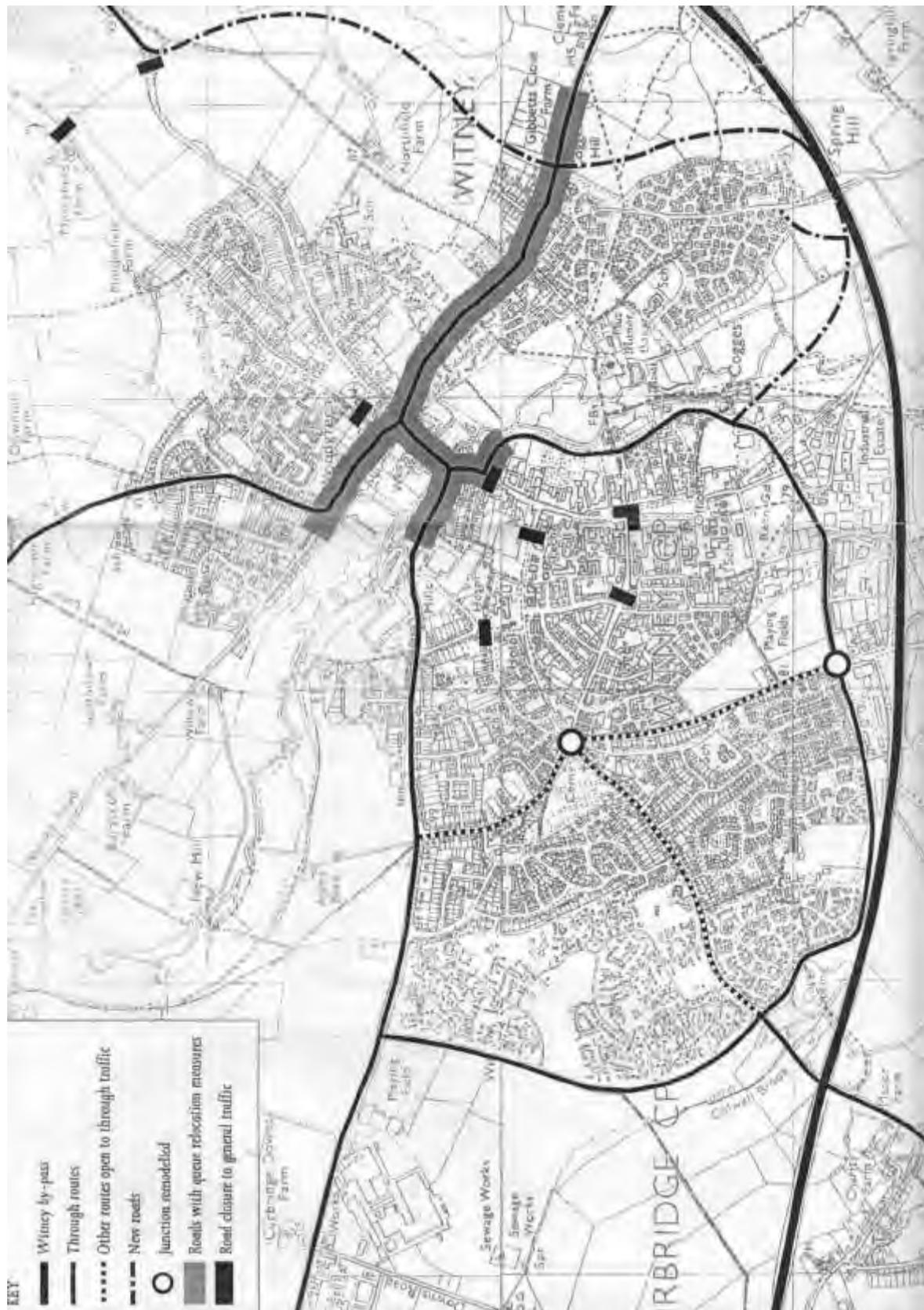


Figure 8 New roads and other measures affecting private motorised transport



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Fig 9 Causal chain diagram: short term measures

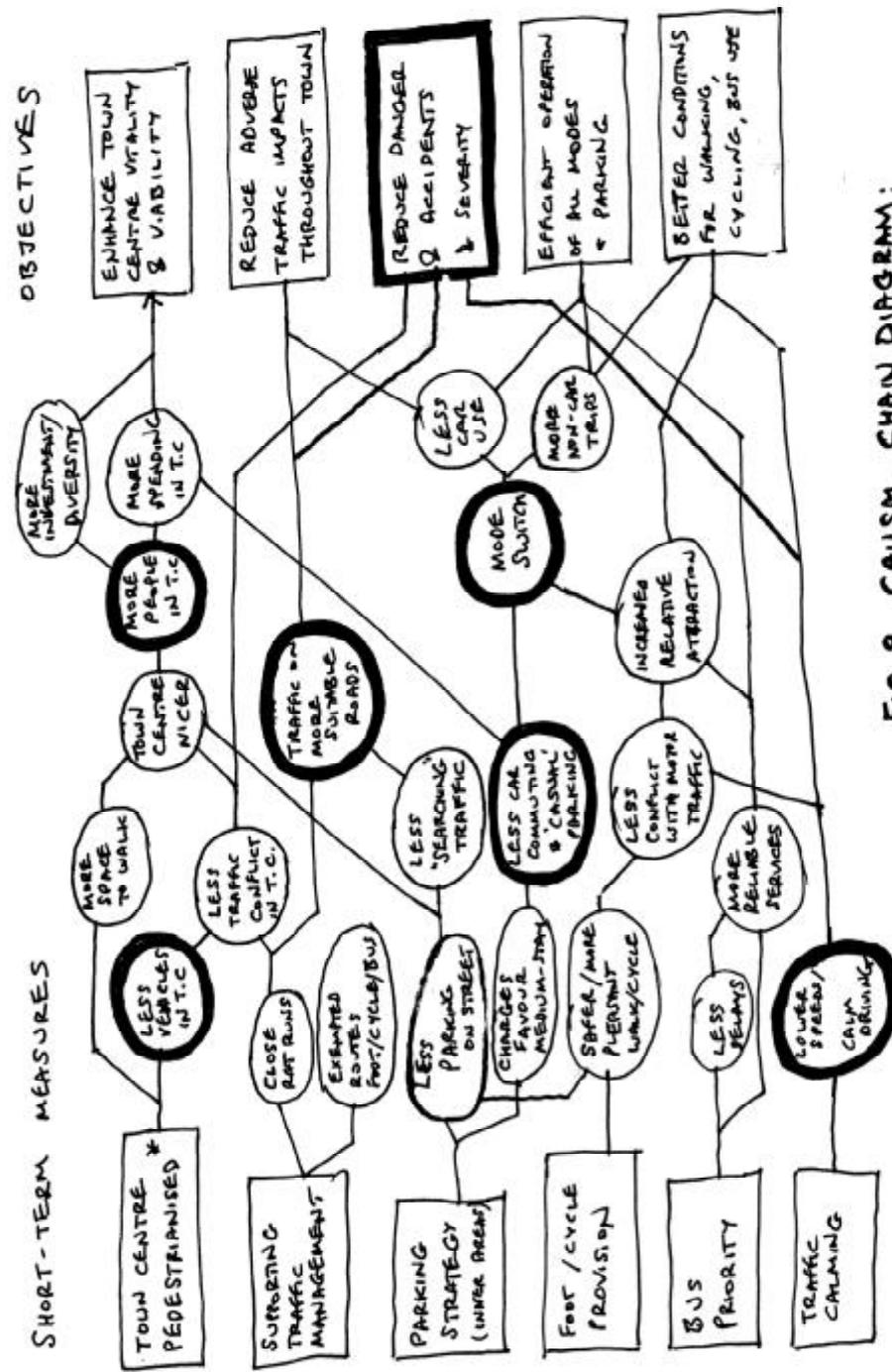


FIG 9 CAUSAL CHAIN DIAGRAM: SHORT TERM MEASURES

○ MAIN MONITORING POINTS.

* BUSES, CYCLES, EMERGENCY VEHICLES, LOADING AT CERTAIN TIMES, ALLOWED.

