

## Highways

- 8.9 As a largely rural district the highway network plays a key role in West Oxfordshire. The main routes include the A40 Cheltenham to Oxford, the A44 through Woodstock and Chipping Norton, the A361 Swindon to Banbury and the A4260 from Banbury through the eastern part of the District. These are shown on the Key Diagram (Figure 4.1). The provision of a good, reliable and congestion free highway network has a number of benefits including the provision of convenient access to jobs, services and facilities and the potential to unlock and support economic growth. Under the draft Local Plan, the importance of the highway network will continue to be recognised with necessary improvements to be sought where appropriate. This will include the delivery of strategic highway improvements necessary to support growth.
- 8.10 The A40 is the main east-west transport route with congestion on the section between Witney and Oxford being amongst the most severe transport problems in Oxfordshire and acting as a potential constraint to economic growth. One cause of the congestion is insufficient capacity at the Wolvercote and Cutteslowe roundabouts (outside the District) with the traffic lights and junctions at Eynsham and Cassington (inside the District) adding to the problem. Severe congestion is also experienced on the A44 at the Bladon roundabout, particularly during the morning peak. Further development in the District will put additional pressure on these highly trafficked routes.
- 8.11 In light of these problems, Oxfordshire County Council developed its 'Access to Oxford' project and although Government funding has been withdrawn, the County Council is continuing to seek alternative funding for schemes to improve the northern approaches to Oxford, including where appropriate from new development. Given the significance of this issue for the District we will continue to work in partnership with the County Council to deliver improvements to the A40 including where appropriate, seeking contributions from new development towards developing the Oxford northern approaches highway schemes.
- 8.12 At Witney, traffic congestion has long been a serious concern with an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) having been designated at Bridge Street. Other areas suffering from congestion include the Ducklington Lane junction with Station Lane and Thorney Leys and Witan Way.
- 8.13 Witney's traffic congestion problems are in large part due to there being only one crossing point across the River Windrush at Bridge Street which acts as a bottleneck to traffic travelling east – west across the town. For some time the proposed solution was the Cogges Link Road (CLR) which would have provided a new link road around the south-eastern edge of Witney and a second river crossing. However, in June 2012 the Compulsory Purchase Order needed for the scheme to go ahead, was rejected by the Secretary of State for Transport, meaning that the scheme is now unlikely to happen.
- 8.14 Since the CLR decision was received, the District Council has been working closely with the County Council to identify an appropriate alternative transport strategy for Witney and to assess the implications for future growth. Transport modelling has been undertaken the findings of which are available in a separate background paper.
- 8.15 The modelling work undertaken identifies the following key strategic transport measures at Witney as being necessary to support the level and location of growth identified in the draft Local Plan:
- Shore's Green Slip Roads (SGSR) – the provision of west facing slip roads at the Shore's Green junction onto the A40
  - Down's Road Junction – the provision of a new all movements, at grade junction on the A40 at Down's Road; and
  - Improvements to the Ducklington Lane/Station Lane area

## **Core Policy 24 – Transport and Movement**

Priority will be given to locating new development in areas with convenient access to a reasonable range of services and facilities and where the need to travel by private car can be minimised, particularly where this would help to reduce traffic congestion around Oxford and the Air Quality Management Areas at Witney and Chipping Norton.

All new development will be designed to maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport, ensure the safe movement of vehicles and minimise the impact of parked and moving vehicles on local residents, business and the environment.

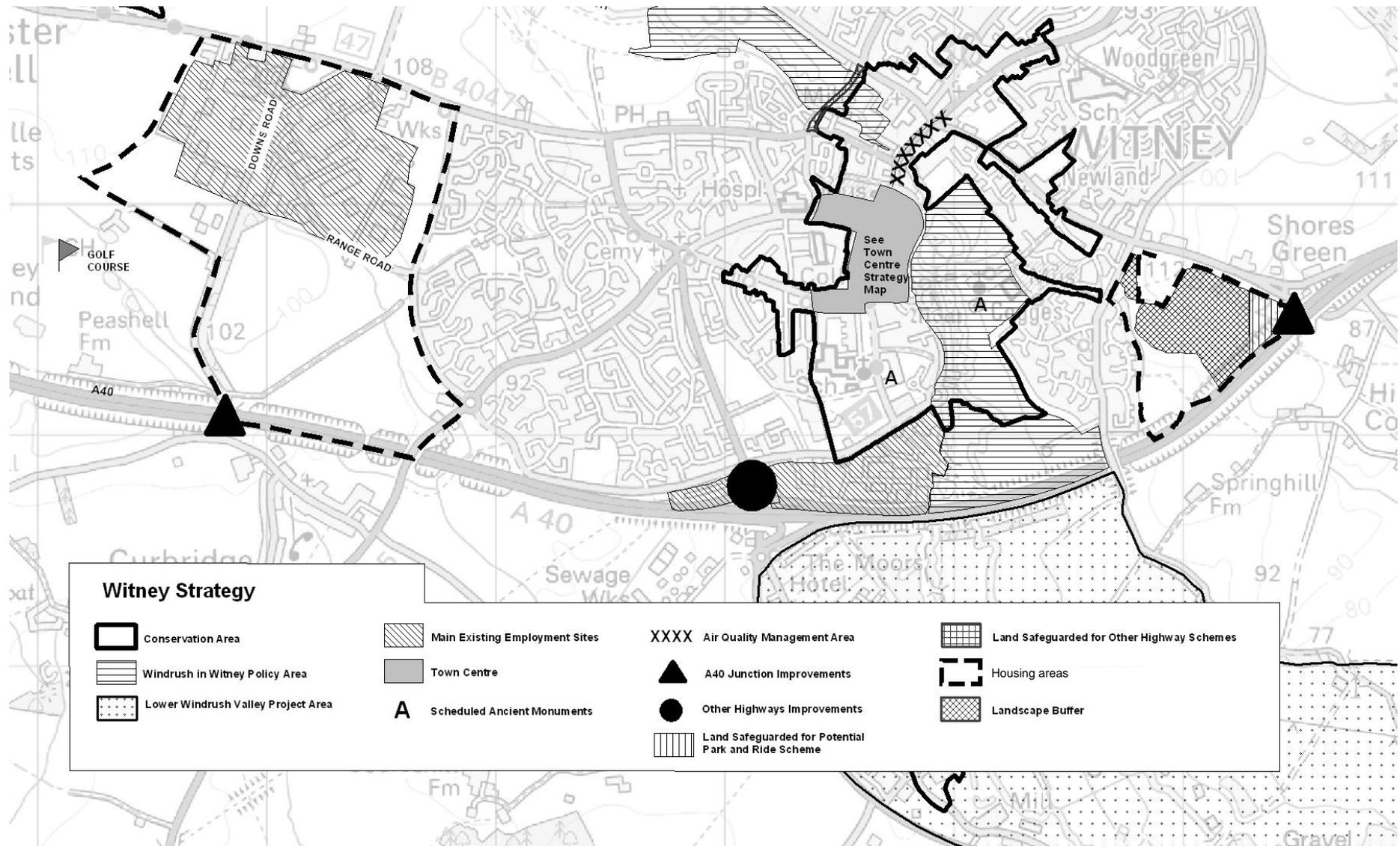
West Oxfordshire District Council will continue to work in partnership with the highway authority, developers, local councils and other organisations, including the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council, bus and rail operators, to:

- secure and safeguard appropriate improvements to the road network including specific schemes identified in LTP3 and the draft IDP in order to reduce congestion and accommodate the safe movement of people and goods whilst minimising adverse impacts on the environment.
- increase the use of bus, rail and community transport through the provision of improved services, facilities and information including specific schemes identified in LTP3, the draft IDP and the draft Rail Strategy for Oxfordshire;
- provide safe and convenient travel within and between the network of towns and villages in West Oxfordshire, particularly for pedestrians, cyclists and users of public and community transport including specific schemes identified in LTP3 and the draft IDP;
- secure traffic management and environmental improvement schemes to help improve the attractiveness of the area and quality of life, especially in terms of air quality and safety for all residents and visitors;
- promote improvement and extension of electronic communications (e.g. high-speed broadband) to support local businesses and services and help reduce the need to travel; and
- provide, maintain and manage an appropriate amount of off-street public car parking, particularly to support our town and village centres.

Proposals for new developments that have significant transport implications either in themselves or with other proposals will be required to include a transport assessment. In accordance with County Council requirements, travel plans will be required for development proposals that have the potential to attract significant numbers of traffic movements. Parking in new developments will be provided in accordance with the County Council's adopted parking standards.

- 9.31 Development to the east of the town will be close to the town centre, providing good opportunities for walking and cycling, has the potential to integrate well with existing residential development at Cogges and provided development is kept to below the 95m contour, is likely to have an acceptable degree of impact in landscape terms. There will be good highway connections with the construction of west facing slip roads at the Shore's Green junction onto the A40 being a prerequisite of strategic development in this area.

Figure 9.2 - Witney Strategy



### **Core Policy 28 – East Witney Strategic Development Area (SDA)**

Land to the east of Witney to accommodate a sustainable, integrated community that forms a positive addition to Witney, including:

- a) about 300 homes with a mix of residential accommodation to meet identified needs, including affordable housing and homes specifically for older people;
- b) development to be phased in accordance with the timing of provision of supporting infrastructure and facilities with the necessary improvements to the Shore's Green junction onto the A40 to be delivered prior to the completion of any housing on the site;
- c) the provision of other supporting transport infrastructure, including proposals to mitigate the impact of traffic associated with the development, and incorporating a comprehensive network for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport with links to adjoining areas, including a particular emphasis on improving the linkages across the Windrush Valley into the town centre;
- d) the provision of appropriate landscape improvements to mitigate the potential impact of development, with no built development to take place above the 95m AOD contour;
- e) land to be reserved for a potential park and ride scheme to allow Oxfordshire County Council the opportunity to consider the most appropriate location for a park and ride scheme serving Witney and Oxford;
- f) the provision of appropriate financial contributions towards primary and secondary education capacity enhancements;
- g) biodiversity enhancements including arrangements for future maintenance;
- h) provision of appropriate greenspace including allotments;
- i) appropriate measures to mitigate traffic noise
- j) demonstrate the use of renewable energy, sustainable design and construction methods, with a high level of energy efficiency in new buildings including the achievement of at least Code Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.