

Midlothian

Midlothian
Transport Strategy
2007-2010

Prepared for Midlothian Council by



Midlothian



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Summary

Introduction

1 This is the second Local Transport Strategy (LTS) for Midlothian, covering the period 2007 to 2010. It sets out the framework by which Midlothian Council will direct future investment in order to meet its objectives and maintain and improve transport provision in the area. It also demonstrates how the Council has applied national and regional transport policy locally and therefore supports the co-ordination and implementation of transport policy throughout Scotland and beyond. The LTS has been developed in accordance with the Scottish Executive document "Scotland's Transport Future: Guidance on Local Transport Strategies" and the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG).

2 Much has been achieved since the publication of the first LTS in 2001. This has included, among other things, the introduction of new and improved bus services, consent for the construction of the A68 bypass, implementation of a wide range of road safety measures around schools and Royal Assent for the re-introduction of the Waverley rail line from the Borders to Edinburgh via Midlothian. Despite these areas of success however, there is still much work that needs to be done and many elements of the first LTS that require to be taken forward into the second strategy period.

3 The development of this LTS has involved an extensive consultation process with both the public, key stakeholders and other Council departments in order to gain a full understanding of the key issues, problems and opportunities in Midlothian that improved transport provision could help address. This consultation has taken a variety of forms and the findings fed back into the development of this strategy.

National, regional and local policies

4 The LTS has been developed in the context of a wide range of national, regional and local policy. Of most importance to the LTS has been the publication of a National Transport Strategy (NTS) for Scotland and the Draft Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the SEStran region in December 2006. The LTS has been developed to be consistent with these higher level strategies and their objectives. The LTS is also consistent with planning policy at both a regional and local level, as set out in the Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan and the adopted and emerging Midlothian Local Plans.

Midlothian in context

5 Midlothian is a small local authority of 355km² adjoining Edinburgh's southern and eastern boundary. Edinburgh and the Lothians is one of the fastest growing economies of the United Kingdom and this growth is forecast to continue in the future. Occupying a key location in Scotland's central belt and as a result of its location adjacent to the capital city, the Midlothian area is subject to huge growth pressures. This is reflected in the land allocations made in the Structure and Local Plans.

6 From the strategic allocations in the Local Plan alone, there is provision for a growth of almost 11,000 houses, nearly 100 hectares of economic land and a further 40 hectares for the biotechnology industry. In total, taking account of windfall housing development and other contributions to the base housing land supply, there are 12,000 houses coming through over the period to 2015. Two new settlements (Shawfair and Redheugh) are a fundamental part of this development strategy.

7 One of the key issues that emerged through the consultation process was congestion on routes between Midlothian and the City of Edinburgh. Many people living in Midlothian have to travel outside the area for work, primarily to Edinburgh. While public transport services from the key Midlothian towns to Edinburgh city centre are generally good, other employment areas in the city, such as the west of Edinburgh, are less accessible by public transport from Midlothian. East – West public transport links across Midlothian are also relatively poor, compared to travel by private car and this is reflected in the high proportion of people who travel by car to work in Midlothian.

8 There are growing traffic congestion problems in Midlothian and there is potential for this to ultimately damage the local economy and the environment. The significant volume of planned new development outlined above will only add to this problem in the future if steps are not taken to encourage travel by other sustainable forms of transport. Use of town centre car parks as informal long stay park and ride facilities for the journey to work also causes a problem and is resulting in a shortage of short term parking spaces. This is resulting in a lack of parking spaces for local shoppers who are travelling elsewhere to shop and is in turn having a detrimental effect on town centre economies.

A vision and objectives for Midlothian

9. As well as supporting national and regional objectives, the LTS also supports wider council policies, including those contained within the Corporate and Community Plans and the adopted and emerging Local Plans. The vision of this LTS supports these Council plans and is:



Transport Objectives

10 Midlothian's transport objectives relate closely to this vision and sit within a set of broader planning objectives and national priorities for transport (see Chapter 4). Midlothian's transport objectives are:

Transport Objectives

1	To widen travel choices and make travel by more sustainable modes of transport more attractive than the private car, particularly at peak times.
2	To protect the health of the population.
3	To reduce , and where possible, mitigate the effects of the transport system on the built and natural environment .
4	To reduce the number of casualties involving death and serious injury and ensure that the design of the transport system improves personal safety and minimises crime .
5	To stabilise traffic growth in line with national targets and secure more reliable journey times by all modes.
6	To ensure that transport networks are managed, maintained and improved so as to provide the quality of infrastructure that will meet the needs of all users.
7	To improve integration between all modes of transport.
8	To enhance connections between areas within Midlothian and provide improved links to the rest of Scotland and beyond.
9	To reduce social exclusion by improving accessibility to jobs, education and services for all, and by all modes of transport.

The transport strategy

11 The transport strategy describes how the Council will work towards meeting the transport objectives. The strategy is made up of a series of sub-strategies covering the different modes of travel and some issues relevant to all modes. These are:

- Walking;
- Cycling;
- Public transport;
- Community transport;
- Smarter choices;
- Information provision;
- Powered two wheelers (motorcycles and scooters);
- Car travel, traffic and parking;
- Freight;
- Equestrians;
- Road safety;
- Maintenance; and
- Land use planning.

The Policy Toolbox on the following page illustrates that a balanced package of measures contained within each of the above sub-strategies is required to deliver each of the transport objectives and each sub-strategy has a role in achieving more than one objective.

Policy toolbox

Strategy	Transport Objectives								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	Widen travel choices	Protect health	Reduce effects on environment	Reduce casualties and minimise crime	Stabilise traffic growth	Manage, maintain and improve transport network	Improve integration	Enhance connection	Reduce social exclusion
Walking	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	□	□
Cycling	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	□
Public transport	■	■	□	□	■	□	■	■	■
Voluntary & community transport		■			■		■	■	■
Smarter choices	■	■	■		■		□	□	□
Information provision	■	□	□	□	■		■	■	■
Powered two wheelers	□	□	□	■	■		■	□	□
Car travel, traffic and parking	■	□	□		■	□	■	□	■
Freight transport		■	■	■		■	■	□	
Equestrians		□		■					
Road safety	□	■		■		□	□		□
Network management & maintenance	■	■	■	■	■	■	□	□	□
Land use planning	■	■	■	■	■	□	■	■	■

■ = strong contribution to objective □ = partial contribution to objective

Four year implementation plan

13 The Implementation Plan in Chapter 6 provides the details on how this strategy will be implemented over the next four years. An Implementation Plan has been prepared for each of the sub-strategies outlined above. A number of actions are applicable to more than one strategy and are therefore detailed in each of the relevant implementation plans.

14 The measures detailed in the Implementation Plan encompass capital projects, revenue spending and initiatives to be delivered in partnership with other bodies. For each measure that has been identified some key information is provided

- estimated timescales for delivery;
- outline estimated cost;
- where the funding will be sourced from;
- who is responsible for delivery, any delivery partners and any further appraisal work that needs to be undertaken; and

- a link to the policies and objectives that each measure contributes to.

15 A significant number of the measures and activities set out in the Implementation Plan will be funded from Midlothian Council's Capital and Revenue budgets. However, in order to deliver the range of actions identified in the strategy and to achieve the objectives, a significant amount of external funding will also be required. The Implementation Plan identifies a wide range of measures and activities to be funded by external bodies, primarily:

- SEStran – the Regional Transport Partnership for the South East of Scotland;
- The Scottish Executive; and
- Private developers.

16 In some instances funding for certain activities has already been allocated (SEStran have identified a number of regional schemes that they will fund in 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09 onwards) however in other cases funding submissions will have to be made to relevant bodies during the strategy period.

Monitoring process

17 A robust monitoring programme has been established to review progress of the strategy towards achieving the objectives. A range of performance indicators have been formulated to measure progress against each of the transport objectives. For each the current baseline is identified and a relevant target set.

18 Monitoring of the strategy will be carried out on an annual basis using a combination of existing national data sets, information already collected by Midlothian Council, and some additional data collection methods (e.g. at stop passenger surveys).



1 • Background

Introduction

1.1 Following the Scottish Executive's 2004 White Paper on transport, Scotland's Transport Future, all local transport authorities in Scotland are requested to prepare a Local Transport Strategy (LTS) covering a three year period. This is Midlothian's second Local Transport Strategy, the first was prepared in 2001.

1.2 This document sets out the framework by which Midlothian Council will direct future investment in order to maintain and improve all of its transport networks. It also demonstrates how the Council has applied national and regional transport policy locally and therefore supports the co-ordination and implementation of transport policy throughout Scotland and beyond.

1.3 The Council has made some real progress since the first LTS was published in 2001 and have implemented a number of key transport schemes. However, it is accepted that there is still some way to go to achieve the Council's vision for transport for the next four years and beyond, which is:

1.4 The concept of sustainable development lies at the heart of this new LTS, as it did in the first. If sustainable development can be achieved, Midlothian can benefit from economic growth whilst protecting, and ideally enhancing, the environment. Better transport provision can play a key role in delivering sustainable development by improving accessibility to jobs and services. In broader terms, an effective LTS is key to the successful delivery of all of the Council's services in the fields of education, social services, housing and economic development.

1.5 Achieving this cannot be done in isolation. Departments from across the Council must be involved as well as other public sector organisations, businesses, stakeholders and the general public. Indeed, the LTS itself has been developed not just by those responsible for transport, but by officers from across a range of Council departments.

VISION

To promote the economic growth and prosperity of Midlothian in a way that respects the environment and allows all members of the community to safely access the services they require, both within Midlothian and further afield.

Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)

1.6 This document has been prepared in accordance with Scottish Executive guidance on developing LTS's and also the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG). The principles within STAG have assisted in making informed choices between possible alternative strategies by appraising alternatives against five criteria: environment, safety, economy, integration and accessibility. The strategy has been developed to address current problems facing Midlothian both today and in the future as well as to achieve the Council's broader objectives and transport vision.

1.7 The STAG Appraisal Summary Table (AST) provided in Appendix B sets out a summary appraisal of the package of measures contained within this LTS. It provides an appraisal of the preferred strategy against the transport objectives and the Government's five criteria as stated above. The AST also appraises the partners' ability to implement the strategy as a whole.

1.8 Consultation is a key element of the STAG process and the policies and actions contained within the strategy have been developed in response to a detailed consultation programme and to address the specific issues that face Midlothian.

Consultation and engagement

1.9 During our daily lives, we all have need to travel; be it to work, school, to go shopping or to visit friends. The Council therefore considered it very important that the public and key stakeholders were consulted during the preparation of the LTS:

- to keep the public informed about the process of preparing the new LTS;
- to allow the Council to gain a proper understanding of the needs and issues most important to the people in Midlothian;
- to allow the Council to respond to and reflect these needs and issues in the later stages of the strategy development; and
- to seek approval of the completed strategy.

1.10 This consultation has taken various forms over the period November 2005 to April 2006. What was learned from these events has been fed back into the development of this strategy. A summary of the consultation process are provided in figure 1.1 and included:

- a stakeholder questionnaire distributed in November 2005 to 400 stakeholders through libraries, community councils, interest groups, businesses and transport operators;
- invitation for comments from the business community through the Midlothian Business News publication;
- attendance of the LTS team at a Youth Council meeting in March 2006 to discuss the transport issues important to young people in Midlothian;
- a Community Council workshop held on 18th April 2006 to which representatives of all Midlothian community councils were invited;
- a workshop for non-transport service providers on 21st April 2006¹;
- meetings with representatives of the freight and road haulage industry in February / March 2006; and
- meetings with the main transport operators in April 2006.

1.11 Following development of the policies and actions to be included in the strategy, the Draft Local Transport Strategy was made available for public consultation for a period of six weeks in October / November 2006. A copy of the document was made available in all public libraries, on the Council's website and at the Council's offices at Fairfield House. The opportunity to comment on the strategy was advertised through the local press. The comments received during this period, from both the public and stakeholders, were considered and fed into the development of the final strategy.

¹ Invited to this workshop were representatives from: Scottish Enterprise Edinburgh and Lothian; Midlothian Chamber of Commerce; Edinburgh Science Park Triangle; Visit Scotland; Midlothian Tourism Forum; Jewel and Esk Valley College; Newbattle College; Scottish Agricultural College; Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary studies; Lothian and Borders Police; Lothian and Borders Fire Brigade; Scottish Ambulance Service and Lothian Health Board.

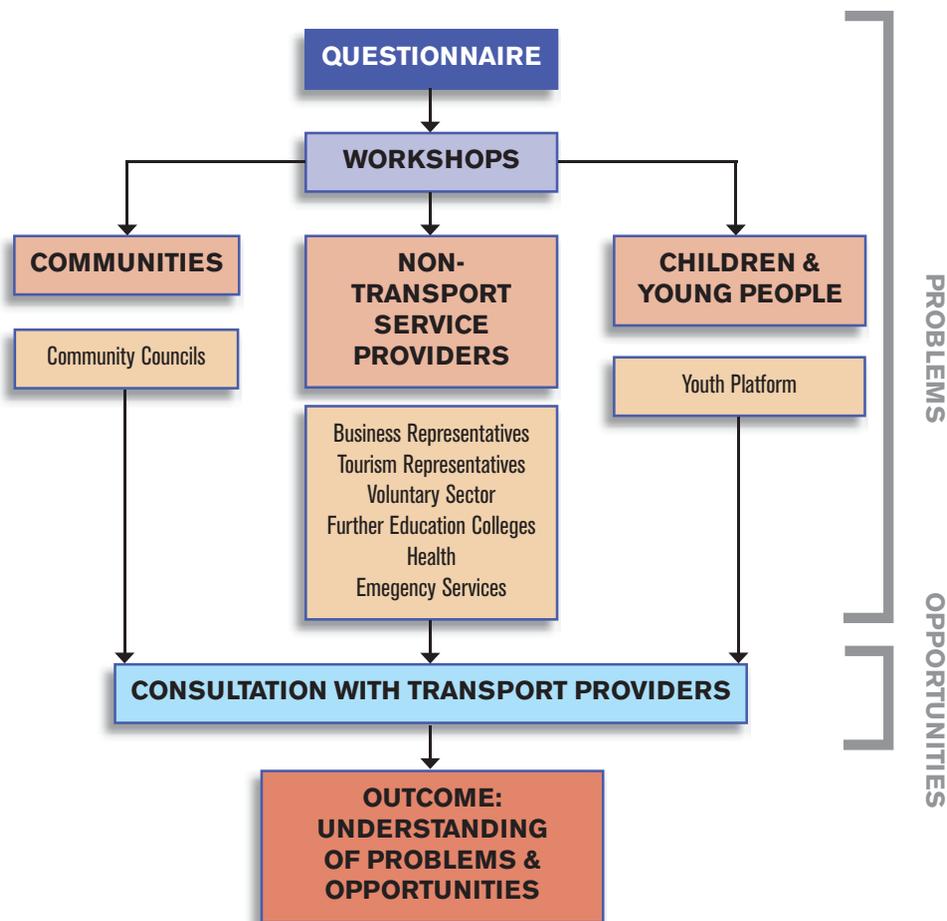


Figure 1.1 The consultation process

The Environmental Report

1.12 In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations 2004 and the relevant guidance, full consideration must be given to the environmental impacts of policies, strategies, plans or programmes, such as this LTS, and the impacts of the transport facilities and services themselves.^{1,2} Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) provides a systematic process for identifying, predicting, reporting and mitigating the potential effect of strategies on the environment, including environment-related human health.

1.13 A SEA has been undertaken which considers all significant environmental changes resulting from the proposals set out in this LTS. The process of the SEA can be broadly divided into five stages (A to E), – with two main reports. The environmental report is produced at the end of stage D1 as shown in Figure 1.2.

¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Scotland) Regulations 2004 – SSI 2004 No. 258

² ODPM, Scottish Executive, et al (October 2005) – ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’

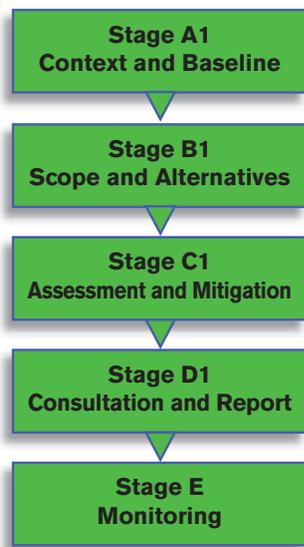


Figure 1.2 Environmental assessment process

1.14 The Council has followed this process and prepared both a SEA scoping report and a full environmental report to accompany the final LTS. In preparing the SEA scoping report and the full environmental report the major environmental stakeholders have been consulted.¹

1.15 The scoping report explains why a SEA is required and describes what is involved in preparing a full SEA for an LTS. It sets the context by investigating relevant plans and programmes, and establishes the environmental baseline. SEA objectives are set, and the assessment methodology is laid out, along with a set of indicators.

1.16 The SEA shows that the Council has thought about the environmental impacts of the transport proposals that are being put forward. The final environmental report is the main written document produced at the end of the SEA process. It summarises the contents of the scoping report, and describes the significant effects on the environment of the LTS strategy. It then gives the reasons for the selection of the preferred strategy and suggests appropriate mitigation measures, if necessary. This report proposes monitoring relevant to the SEA objectives, and also provides a non-technical summary. The full Environmental Report accompanies this LTS.

¹ The statutory consultation bodies for SEA are Historic Scotland, Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) and Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH).

Review of 2001- 2004 Midlothian Local Transport Strategy

1.17 The preparation of the new LTS was informed by a review of the original LTS for the period 2001-2004 (LTS1). LTS1 laid down a strategy comprising 18 Transport Strategy Proposals (TSPs) intended to achieve the long-term vision for transport in Midlothian. This strategy remains largely valid although specific proposals have been amended and updated in order to deliver the quality of transport needed to achieve the transport vision for Midlothian.

1.18 Not all of the strategy proposals set out in LTS1 have yet been achieved. However, the Council and its partners have made significant progress. Some notable key improvements resulting from the first LTS include:

- **Support for the re-introduction of rail services into Midlothian.** The Council is continuing to work in partnership with the lead authority, Scottish Borders Council, and others to realise the re-instatement of the Waverley Rail Route linking Edinburgh to the Scottish Borders, via Midlothian. In July 2006, the Bill received Royal Assent. Construction is programmed to commence in 2008, with completion forecast for 2011.
- **Provision of new bus services.** The Council introduced new supported bus routes to provide direct links between Midlothian towns and key services such as the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary and to provide connecting services to other commercial services passing through the main towns. A demand responsive taxi service was also introduced to replace bus services in very rural areas.
Through the Scottish Executive Bus Route Development Grant Scheme (BRDG) five new or expanded bus services that benefit Midlothian residents have been introduced on the following routes:
 - Lothian Buses 31 / N31 (promoted by Midlothian Council)
 - Lothian Buses 37 / 47 / X47 (promoted by City of Edinburgh Council and supported by Midlothian Council)
 - First Borders 62 (promoted by Scottish Borders Council and supported by Midlothian Council)
 - First Borders X95 (promoted by Scottish

Borders Council and supported by Midlothian Council)

- Munro's of Jedburgh 51 / 52 (promoted by Scottish Borders Council and supported by Midlothian Council).

In addition, three further proposals have been awarded, funding through the BRDG scheme, and will be implemented in the near future. These are

- X48 – extension of the existing Ingliston Park and Ride service to also serve the new Park and Ride due to open at Sheriffhall (promoted by Midlothian Council).
- A package of night bus service improvements (promoted by Midlothian Council).
- Extension of the service 29 to Mayfield (promoted by Midlothian Council).
- **Interchange: Provision of Park and Ride facilities.** A new Park and Ride site at Sheriffhall on the A7 has been planned, and construction of this new facility began in August 2006. The site is due to open in Summer 2007 and has been funded by the Scottish Executive. Additional funding has been awarded by SEStran to extend the facility in the future. Funding has also been identified from SEStran for a further park and ride facility on the A702 at Lothianburn and planning permission given to the City of Edinburgh Council to build a park and ride at Straiton (within the Midlothian area).
- **Road safety.** A wide range of schemes have been implemented to improve road safety and, based on the 1994-98 average, Midlothian has seen a 24% reduction in killed or seriously injured (KSI) casualties, a 15% reduction in KSI child casualties and a 3% reduction in slight casualties. Trends in road accidents are however fluctuating and more work still needs to be done in reducing road accidents in order to meet national targets. The Council is however on track to meet national road safety targets set for 2010.
- **Safer Routes to Schools.** Fifteen schools in the Midlothian area have benefited from infrastructure improvements through the Safer Routes to Schools Initiative. The Dalkeith Schools Campus in particular has benefited from a new footbridge, cycleways, advanced stop lines for cyclists, pedestrian crossing facilities, cycle parking facilities, three new puffin crossings, four new zebra crossings,

traffic calming and build out at one of the main junctions. Twenty mile per hour speed limits with speed cushions have also been introduced around most schools in Midlothian and part-time speed limits are proposed on high-speed roads where this has not been possible.

- **School Travel Plans.** A School Travel Plan Co-ordinator has been in post since 2004 with the remit of working with all schools in the area on the development of their own travel plans. Almost half of all schools in Midlothian now have a travel plan in final or draft form. Work does still need to be done in encouraging the remaining schools to develop their own travel plans and in monitoring the effects of those that have been developed.
- **A68 Dalkeith by-pass.** One of the aims of the previous strategy was to lobby the Scottish Executive to consent to the construction of a road to bypass the town of Dalkeith. This has been successful and work on the new bypass commenced in the summer of 2006. The bypass is due to be completed in May 2008.

1.19 In addition to those achievements listed above, the Council has been able to utilise financial contributions from developers and other external bodies to provide public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure improvements. This has been made possible through the strong links that have been formed between the transport and planning processes within the Council and with external bodies such as SEStran.

1.20 The Council believes that this, and other, investment in transport since 2001, has brought significant travel benefits to the people of Midlothian. Despite these areas of success, however, there is still much work that needs to be done, and many elements of the first LTS that require to be taken forward into the second strategy period. Such schemes include improvements to the roundabout at Sheriffhall and improvements to the A701 corridor.