

2 • National, regional and local policies

Introduction

2.1 It is important that the LTS acknowledges the aims and objectives of other relevant plans, such as national policies and those of neighbouring authorities, in order to provide a consistent approach to achieving the key objectives for Midlothian as a whole. It is vital to ensure that the strategy contributes to existing national, regional and local objectives and targets. This Chapter outlines the policy context within which the LTS has been developed.

National perspectives

2.2 There are a wide range of national policies and strategies that have shaped the development of the LTS and these are outlined in the sections below.

Transport White Paper: Scotland's Transport Future (2004)

2.3 The Scottish Executive published their Transport White Paper in June 2004 establishing their vision of an accessible, safer, integrated and reliable transport system, to provide opportunities for all and meeting the needs of many people whilst respecting the environment and contributing to the health of communities¹. This Transport White Paper aims to promote economic growth, social inclusion, health and protection of our environment through a safe, integrated, effective and efficient transport system. The White Paper contains five key objectives based around this aim:

- To promote economic growth by building, enhancing, managing and maintaining transport services, infrastructure and networks to maximise their efficiency.
- To promote social inclusion by connecting remote and disadvantaged communities and increasing the accessibility of the transport network.
- To protect our environment and improve health by building and investing in public transport and other types of efficient and sustainable transport which minimise emissions and consumption of energy resources.
- To improve safety of journeys by reducing

accidents and enhancing the personal safety of pedestrians, drivers, passengers and staff.

- To improve integration by making journey planning and ticketing easier, and working to ensure smooth connections between different forms of transport.

2.4 The Local Transport Strategy has been developed to reflect the aims and objectives of this national transport policy document.

National Transport Strategy (2006)

2.5 The National Transport Strategy (NTS), published in December 2006, will guide transport policy formulation and investment in Scotland over the next 20 years. Throughout its lifetime the NTS will act as a reference point for all those who wish to contribute to transport policy, planning or practice. The overall aim of the NTS is to promote economic growth, social inclusion, health and protection of our environment through a safe, integrated, effective and efficient transport system. The key objectives for transport are set out in the Transport White Paper (see above) with key goals for transport identified as:

- facilitate economic growth;
- promote accessibility;
- promote choice and raise awareness of the need for change;
- promote modal shift;
- promote new technologies and cleaner fuels;
- manage demand;
- reduce the need for travel; and
- promote road safety.



2.6 The following principles also underpin the Strategy:

- Investment should be targeted where the overall balance of impacts is positive, taking into account all five key objectives.
- Transport should serve businesses, communities and individuals and should address the transport requirements of different equalities groups.
- Transport policy should seek to influence the behaviour of individuals and reward sustainable, physically active choices.

¹ Scotland's National Transport Strategy is available at www.scotland.gov.uk

- Delivery should take place at the most appropriate level – national, regional or local – and by the most appropriate agent.
- The Scottish Executive supports partnership working between public sector agencies, the private and voluntary sectors.

2.7 The vision for the NTS covers a 20 year period to around 2025. The expected time horizon of the plans and policies contained within the NTS is around 10-15 years. This is in line with timescales for the Strategic Projects Review, which will determine future major transport infrastructure investment in Scotland.

The UK's Shared Framework for Sustainable Development (2005)¹

2.8 The objectives of this strategy follow the five guiding principles of **living within environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance and using sound science responsibly**. For a policy to be sustainable, it must reflect all five of these principles. The strategy also identifies four priority areas for immediate action. These are:

- sustainable production and consumption;
- climate change and energy;
- natural resource protection and environmental enhancement; and
- sustainable communities.

Meeting the Needs...Priorities, Actions and Targets for Sustainable Development in Scotland (2002)²

2.9 This document is the Scottish Executive's statement on sustainable development. The key priorities outlined in this strategy are:

- Resource use: to understand where our materials come from, how they are replaced and what happens to the community that supplied them.
- Energy: to generate less energy and use power from renewable sources.

- Transport: to encourage better land use planning, alternative service delivery and sustainable transport systems.

A Partnership for a Better Scotland (2003)³

2.10 This document outlines the work of the Scottish Parliament over the period 2003 to 2006. The strategy outlines its four key aims as, growing the economy; delivering excellence in public services; supporting strong communities and developing an ambitious and confident Scotland. Transport issues are a key component within the strategy and this is reflected in its aim to create an accessible Scotland, with a modern, safe, efficient and sustainable transport system.

Scottish Planning Policy 17 (2005) and Planning Advice Note 75: Planning for Transport (2005)⁴

2.11 The planning policy contained in these two documents supports the aims of 'A Partnership for a Better Scotland' through the integration of land use, economic development, environmental issues and transport planning. The planning system is a key mechanism for integration, by encouraging a pattern of development that:

- supports economic growth;
- takes account of identified population and land use changes in improving accessibility to public services;
- reduces the need to travel;
- promotes road safety and safety on public transport;
- facilitates movement by public transport including provision of interchange facilities between modes;
- encourages and facilitates freight servicing by rail or water; and
- enables people to access local facilities by walking and cycling.

2.12 Planning Advice Note 75: Planning for Transport accompanies SPP17 and aims to create awareness of how linkages between planning and transport can be managed through the provision of good practice guidance.

1 Source: www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

2 Source: Scottish Executive (www.scotland.gov.uk)

3 Source: Scottish Executive (www.scotland.gov.uk)

4 Source: Scottish Executive (www.scotland.gov.uk)

2.13 The vision is for a Scotland where the economy can flourish and communities can function without significant environmental and social problems arising from traffic congestion and pollution. By advocating these values, the planning system is a key mechanism for integrating land use and transport.

Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2000)¹

2.14 This strategy provides a set of objectives for protecting human health and relates to concentrations of, among others, carbon monoxide, lead, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and particulates. This national strategy therefore has a direct impact through the setting of targets for controlling the levels of road traffic in Midlothian.

Regional perspectives

SEStran Regional Transport Strategy (due to be submitted to the Scottish Executive in March 2007)

2.15 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on Scottish Ministers to create Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) covering the whole of Scotland.² The RTPs bring together local authorities and other key regional stakeholders in order to take a strategic approach to transport across the regions. As a result of this new legislation, greater emphasis is now placed on the regional dimension. This will benefit Midlothian, as planning at a regional level will help identify the problems and the opportunities for the area as a whole and deliver real improvements to the regional transport network. As Midlothian is a small local authority, and due to its proximity to Edinburgh, many journeys start or end outside Midlothian and many of the transport problems experienced in Midlothian are shared by other authorities in the region.

2.16 Midlothian is a constituent member of the South East Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SEStran) area, which consists of the following local authorities:

- Midlothian;
- East Lothian;

- West Lothian;
- City of Edinburgh;
- Falkirk;
- Fife;
- Clackmannanshire; and
- Scottish Borders.

2.17 The SEStran partnership has developed a Draft Regional Transport Strategy for the region with the final strategy due to be published in 2007. Both the regional and local strategies are complementary in their aims and objectives and work towards achieving the national aims and objectives as set out above.

Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan 2015 (2004)

2.18 The Structure Plan for the Edinburgh and Lothians area sets out the long-term vision for the development of land in Edinburgh and the Lothians until 2015. It centres on a land-use and transportation strategy together with a set of policies which co-ordinate sustainable public and private investment with the protection of the environment.

2.19 The four main aims of the Structure Plan are to:

- maintain and enhance economic competitiveness;
- promote a more inclusive society;
- protect and enhance the natural and built environment; and
- integrate land use and transport.

2.20 In relation to transport, the Plan aims to:

- 'locate new development, to reduce the need to travel, particularly by private car';
- 'reduce commuting to Edinburgh from the landward Council areas';
- 'maximise accessibility for all in the community by foot, cycle and public transport'; and
- 'identify new transport infrastructure required to support the development strategy'.

2.21 The Structure Plan highlights the strong relationship between land use planning and transportation and that 'the maintenance and improvement of accessibility through the appropriate location of land uses and the development of

¹ Source: www.defra.gov.uk

² <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/legislation/scotland/acts2005/20050012.htm>

transport networks is fundamental to the success of the strategy¹. The Structure Plan identifies the A7 / A68 and A701 corridors as core development areas for Midlothian. It also identifies a number of strategic transport investment proposals required to deliver the growth aspirations contained in the Plan. These are²:

- Re-open Penicuik rail link;
- Waverley Rail Route to Gorebridge and Borders;
- South East Wedge public transport;
- A720 Sheriffhall junction grade separation;
- A68 Dalkeith Northern Bypass;
- A701 Straiton to Milton Bridge improvement;
- A701 on-line upgrade;
- Orbital rapid transit; and
- Park and Ride at Straiton, Todhills (Sheriffhall) and Hillend (Lothianburn).

2.22 In approving the Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan 2015, the Scottish Ministers required that transport modelling be carried out to test the development strategy because of the possible implications for transport infrastructure of accommodating the scale of growth envisaged across the area. This is currently in progress with funding from the Cities Growth Fund.

Local perspectives

2.23 There are a number of local strategies and plans produced by the Council that either impact on transport services or which will be affected by this LTS. These have been taken into account to ensure integration across the various sectors and responsibilities of the local authority.

Midlothian Council Corporate Strategy (2005)

2.24 The Midlothian Corporate Strategy sets out the strategic aims for the Council for the period 2005-07 which are summarised as:

- Our community and society: we want to create cohesive and socially inclusive communities.
- Our environment: we will protect and enhance the natural and built environment of Midlothian

for today's and future generations.

- Our economy: we want to ensure that the Midlothian economy is successful, vibrant, diverse and rewarding enough to benefit all of the people of Midlothian.
- Our Council: we will reflect our values in everything that we do.

Midlothian Moving Forward: The Midlothian Community Plan

2.25 The most important and wide ranging of the local policies is the Midlothian Community Plan. This strategy has at its core a vision for the year 2020 which encapsulates:

"the means for promoting a higher quality of life for individuals and communities within Midlothian (measured in terms of the four dimensions of lifelong learning, health and well-being, safety and economic capacity) will be achieved while enhancing the environment, celebrating our cultural heritage and diversity and combating social exclusion".

2.26 This vision comprises seven key themes, which are illustrated in the figure below.

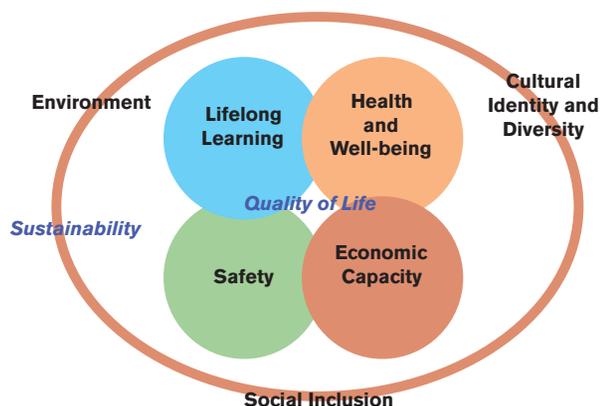


Figure 2.1 Midlothian Community Plan: vision

2.27 Transport policies and initiatives have an important role to play in many of the identified themes such as social inclusion, community safety, environment and economic capacity. A key function of the LTS is to link seamlessly to the Community Plan proposals to assist Midlothian Council to realise the development of its strategic vision for the whole area.

¹ Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan 2015, page 14

² Edinburgh and Lothians Structure Plan, Schedule 2, Strategic Transport Investment Proposals

2.28 This LTS has been developed through consultation and engagement with the various members of the community planning partnership in Midlothian.¹

Midlothian and Shawfair Local Plans (2003)

2.29 The Midlothian and Shawfair Local Plans are currently being replaced by a single Local Plan – to be called the Midlothian Local Plan. The finalised Midlothian Local Plan is due to be considered at a Hearing and Public Local Inquiry commencing in May 2007. The policy framework in both the adopted and emerging Local Plans is consistent with national and structure plan policy in seeking to promote public transport and to increase its quality and range to residents.

2.30 Through the adopted and emerging Midlothian Local Plans, there are approximately 12,000 new houses planned for Midlothian over the period to 2015, some of which are already under construction or the subject of development briefs and Section 75 agreements currently being finalised. Two new settlements (Shawfair and Redheugh) are a fundamental part of this development strategy.

Midlothian Economic Development Strategy

2.31 The purpose of this strategy is to reverse the decline in employment in Midlothian and to increase the number of jobs by a third by the year 2008. The strategy outlines five strategic objectives which are:

- to develop a modern, dynamic and competitive company base;
- to create and attract a skilled, flexible, qualified workforce;
- to ensure the provision of quality infrastructure for business growth and development;
- to offer an outstanding and distinctive environment for work, housing and leisure; and
- to promote regeneration and help all sections of the community enjoy the benefits of growth and prosperity.

A Road Safety Plan for Midlothian (2004 – 2008)

2.32 The principal aims of the Road Safety Plan are:

- to raise awareness of the scale of death and injury on Midlothian's roads;
- to encourage community responsibility and action;
- to encourage social inclusion;
- to reduce the number of road casualties in line with government targets; and
- to set out policies and procedures to enable the above.

2.33 The Plan details the means by which the Council will achieve the challenging accident reduction targets set by the UK government.

A701 Edinburgh to Penicuik Multi Modal Study (2004)

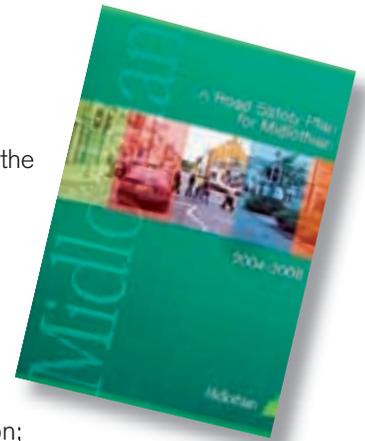
2.34 Over the course of 2003, a Multi Modal Study was undertaken to develop a sustainable transport strategy for the A701 between Edinburgh and Penicuik. Although the primary focus of the study was the A701 corridor, the wider effects of travel within the corridor were also considered. The preferred strategy consisted of:

- a bus based strategy which includes park and ride facilities at Straiton and a Quality Bus Corridor;
- a range of complementary measures including travel plans at schools and workplaces, upgraded walking and cycling facilities and safety measures;
- heavy rail to Straiton; and
- a pattern of land use which concentrates development in the Straiton area.

Other local strategies

2.35 Other local strategies of importance are:

- **Midlothian Tourism Action Plan (2004 – 2007).** The first Tourism Action Plan for Midlothian covered the period 1998-2002. This plan sets out the key aims and objectives of the partners for the period 2004-2007 under the categories



¹ The core partners involved in Community Planning are the Council, the Police and Fire Services, the NHS, Midlothian Voluntary Action and the Midlothian Federation of Community Councils.



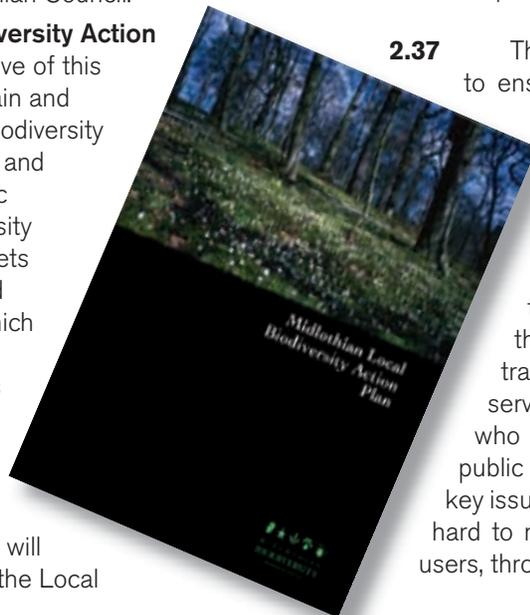
'product and connectivity', 'marketing' and 'skills'. The Action Plan supports the development of appropriate tourism projects in Midlothian and the initiatives that will help create and sustain the necessary infrastructure to facilitate this.

- **The Midlothian Sustainability Strategy (2006)** aims to integrate sustainability into all aspects of the local authority's responsibilities as a regulator, service provider, investor and community leader.
- **The Midlothian Environment Strategy (1999)** provides the framework within which environmental issues such as energy conservation, environmental education, waste management and environmental education are addressed within Midlothian Council.
- **Midlothian Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2006)**. The objective of this Plan is to protect, maintain and enhance the quality of biodiversity and increase awareness and understanding and public appreciation for biodiversity in Midlothian. The plan sets out separate Habitat and Species Action Plans which are aimed at identifying key habitats and species for protection and actions for the different organisations that have signed up to the Action Plan. The LTS will have to take account of the Local

Biodiversity Action Plan, in particular, during the Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

Common themes

2.36 Two key themes become apparent from the policy documents detailed above. First, the need to promote economic growth whilst at the same time ensuring sustainability and environmental protection. In particular this relates to the predicted large-scale housing growth along some of Midlothian's key transport corridors and the management of demand for travel through the planning system. In addition, Midlothian is fast becoming a centre of expertise in the biotechnology sector and is aiming to attract more business development to the area.



2.37 The second key theme is the need to ensure a better quality of life for all of the population. This includes increasing accessibility to key services, whilst ensuring safety and security in the process. Improving quality of life is a key issue in Midlothian and steps towards this are already evident in the existing provision of community transport services and supported bus services for communities and people who have difficulty in accessing the public transport network. Safety is also a key issue and Midlothian Council is working hard to reduce accidents amongst all road users, through its Road Safety Plan.

