



Sleaford Transport Strategy

December 2022

Summary document



Sleaford Transport Strategy

Foreword

“Sleaford is one of our county’s larger market towns, which is why one of our focuses over the past two years has been on making it quicker, easier and safer to get into and around town.

With major improvements projects at the A17/A153 rugby club junction and Holdingham Roundabout now complete, our focus is on how else we can shape travel and transport in and around Sleaford to make the town the absolute best it can be over the next fifteen years.

And that’s where this strategy comes in...

As part of this strategy’s development, we’ve factored in the significant changes to working patterns and travel habits we’ve seen as a result of the pandemic, with more people using online services and working in home/work hybrid scenarios.

We want to meet these, and other changing travel demands by offering a wider range of affordable, reliable, and environmentally-friendly travel options for people to choose from – all while supporting planned economic growth in the area.

This will lead to more people using alternative forms of transport, resulting in less congestion and a more pleasant town centre, making Sleaford a more prosperous, attractive, and healthier place to live, learn, work and visit. This strategy provides a number of proposals for us, the district council and developers to consider over the next fifteen years as we strive towards meeting growth targets for the area.

Some of our top priorities are to: make the town centre a more pleasant and safer place; improve facilities for walking and cycling; and investigate junction improvements at key pinch-points. Doing this will help cut congestion, open up new development land and meet changing travel demands.

The challenge now is finding the funding needed to make these improvements a reality. And the only way we’re going to be able to do that is if everyone gets behind the plan and works together.”



Cllr Richard Davies

Executive Member for Highways and Transport at Lincolnshire County Council

Introducing the strategy



Overview

The Sleaford Transport Strategy has been developed by Lincolnshire County Council, in partnership with North Kesteven District Council, in order to provide a clear vision for the future of transport and travel in and around the town up to 2036.

It aims to support residents, visitors, and organisations through improvements to movement and transport, supporting the transition to net zero carbon, helping to build a resilient economy, and enhancing access to opportunities and services.

With the proposals and interventions contained in this strategy, the aim is to improve travel choice and access through the development of an inclusive, sustainable, and future-ready transport system, helping Sleaford to grow and adapt and to meet the big challenges and opportunities over the next 10 to 15 years.

What is the purpose of the strategy?

The purpose of the transport strategy is to help develop and provide a transport system within Sleaford that helps residents, visitors, businesses and organisations meet their daily needs now and over the next 15 years. It will be consistent with, and support, the county council Corporate Plan, The Green Masterplan and Local Transport Plan 5.

As we all continue to adapt and change in response to a range of societal and environmental issues such as climate change, the transition to net zero carbon emissions and the COVID-19 pandemic recovery, there will be a range of challenges that the transport strategy will help the town and the wider area to meet. These include:

- Supporting Sleaford's key economic sectors including agri-food by increasing the resilience of the transport network
- Supporting the planned housing and economic growth in the study area, including the delivery of the Sustainable Urban Extensions
- Providing more travel choice and maintaining an inclusive and reliable transport network across the urban and more rural areas, that supports all of Sleaford's communities and businesses
- Successfully meeting the different and changing travel demands across the area, including tackling how people access different activities such as employment, education, healthcare, retail, leisure and tourism
- Helping meet the significant environmental challenges resulting from the impact of travel. This includes improving air quality, protecting the town's historic centre and green spaces, and playing our part in tackling climate change, by using more sustainable forms of travel and transitioning to low emission vehicles



Vision and objectives



Vision

By 2036, Sleaford will have a vibrant and resilient high street. The emphasis on walking and cycling within central Sleaford has created a 'people-centric' environment that has enhanced access and movement within the town.

Improvements to Sleaford Rail Station and the local bus network has improved connections to the surrounding villages and regional centres, providing greater travel choice and enhancing access to key services and opportunities. The delivery of the two sustainable urban extensions has also been supported by strong digital connectivity, extensive walking and cycling networks, fast and reliable passenger transport services to support more sustainable travel choices, and reduced urban traffic. The wider area has also benefited the roll out of electric and low emission charging infrastructure which has helped the transition to low emission vehicles.

The strategic network, both road and rail, continue to play an important role in the local and regional economy, with the A15 and the A17 continuing to form key routes for Lincolnshire's priority economic sectors, including the agri-food industry. To support these journeys, the road network has been equipped with the infrastructure and innovative technology to help travel become more efficient and greener.



Objectives

Objective theme	Objective
Health and wellbeing	To enhance the health and wellbeing of Sleaford through improved air quality (carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and particulates), reduced traffic noise level and increased physical activity and safety.
Thriving high street	To support the development of a thriving and vibrant high street and town centre through improvements to the walking and cycling network, and the urban realm.
Sustainable Urban Extension delivery	To support the delivery of new housing and employment sites, including the sustainable urban extensions, through integrating sustainable travel infrastructure and delivering strong digital, walking and cycling and passenger transport connectivity.
Protecting heritage	To protect and enhance the historic and cultural environment of Sleaford including supporting an improved public realm.
Climate change / net zero	To support the net zero carbon emission reduction targets by limiting the impact of travel and providing the infrastructure to increase the numbers of people walking, cycling and travelling by public transport.
Active travel, natural environment and open space	To enhance the health and wellbeing of communities by establishing and promoting walking and cycling within the strategy area for shorter trips and leisure purposes, the creation of green corridors and improving access to green space.
Future mobility ready	To prepare the strategy area for the transition to low emission vehicles including the use of electric vehicles and alternative fuels, shared and connected mobility as well as the business models that support them.
Strategic highway connections	To ensure Sleaford's key strategic links, including the A17 and the A15, operate efficiently and effectively and continue to support the areas key economic sectors including agri-food.
Economy	Strengthen Sleaford's position as a key market town by improving strategic connectivity, public transport connectivity and network resilience.
Rural to urban connectivity	To increase accessibility of the town centre and rail hub by increasing multi-occupancy, shared mobility, local bus and passenger transport options.
Customer focused / improved choice	Promote technologies that help to improve travel choice and access to alternative modes of transport.



Delivering for the current and future population

The focus of this strategy is on accessibility and inclusivity, ensuring residents, visitors and businesses are connected to employment, services, and leisure facilities via more sustainable transport modes. The strategy aims to improve connections within the town and village centres, as well as between them. Crucially, this will tackle the identified problem of isolation amongst some residents who are currently unable to access Sleaford, and many local services, from the surrounding villages.

The strategy aims to deliver this set of objectives, whilst addressing the significant local and national challenges relating to the climate change agenda. The proposed shift toward sustainable transport modes and low carbon travel, supports the vision whilst responding to these challenges, ensuring Sleaford is future ready and climate resilient.

To facilitate the modal shift that underpins the context of the strategy's vision, sustainable modes need to become an attractive alternative. A comprehensive and integrated public transport and active travel network will dramatically improve the experience of these forms of travel, improving choice and increasing connectivity. It recognises the continued importance of the road network, whilst also acknowledging the potential of digital connectivity to access employment and services, thus eliminating the need to travel all together.





Up and coming shared modes, such as car clubs and e-cargo bikes, are proposed in instances where the strategy aims to provide people and businesses with greater travel choice and flexibility. Capitalising on these new technologies now will make sure that Sleaford is future ready.

As highlighted in this strategy, a number of local, national and global factors have been identified that are expected to have a significant impact on the provision of transport across Sleaford up to the year 2036. This includes the significant population growth that is projected across the region, the changing way we access services and employment, and the need to deliver sustainable and inclusive communities.

Transport will have an important role to play, and the strategy aims to provide the framework to help the transition and support Sleaford adapt to these changes.

This strategy will monitor these trends and adopt those which are appropriate for Sleaford, to ensure an efficient transport network for all. The strategy aims to support the need for sustainable growth with a core focus on improving accessibility and inclusivity, for current and future generations, including residents, workers and visitors.

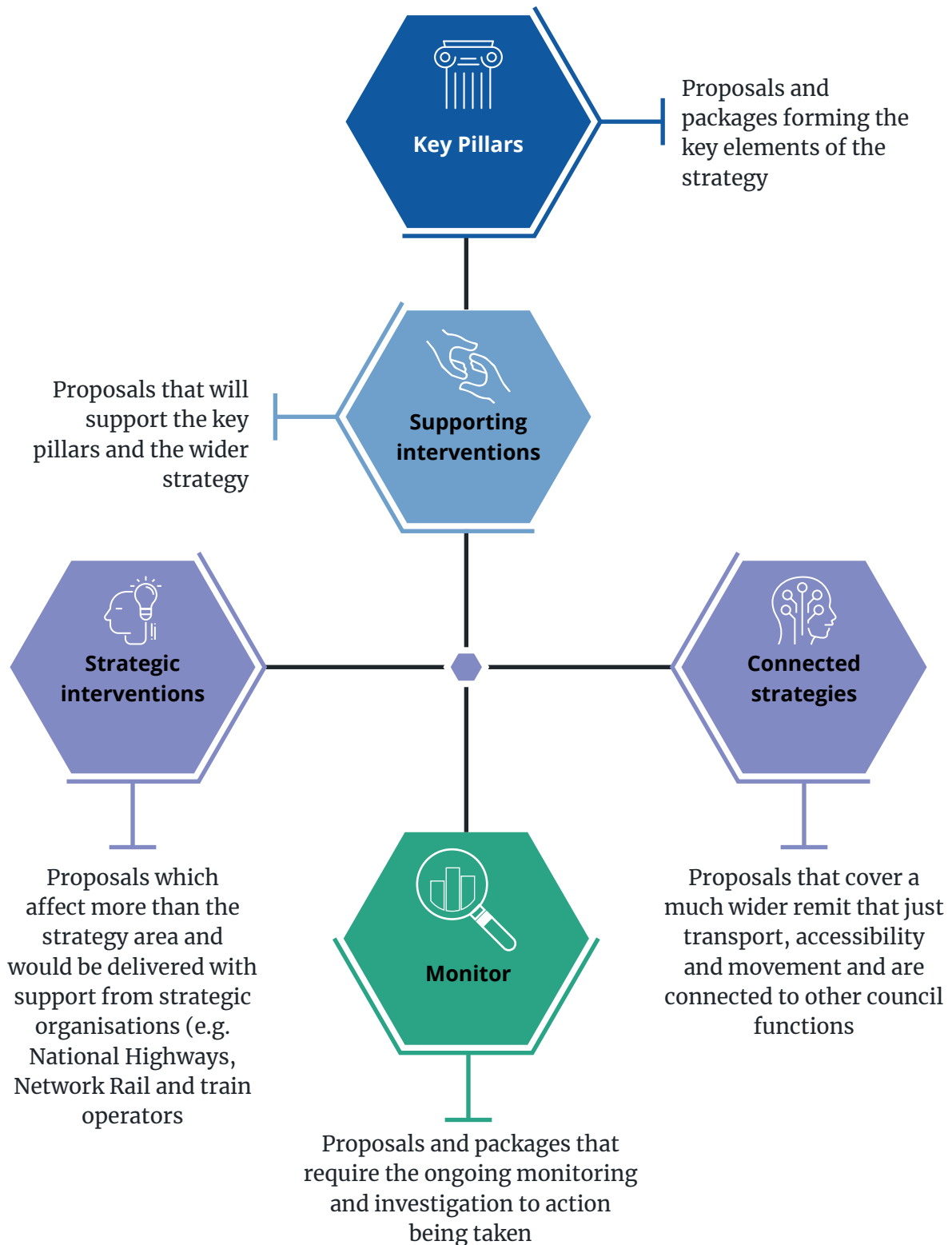
Defining priorities

-  Considerable population growth in and around Sleaford between now and 2036 and with a likely increasingly ageing population.
-  Major development planned for Sleaford over the next two decades, including business and major housing growth.
-  Significant travel behaviour changes prompting alterations to the demand for travel, new technologies and new ways of purchasing and paying for mobility.
-  Working to increase choice, resilience and flexibility on the transport network.



Strategy components

The strategy and the proposals identified to deliver the vision and objectives are structured under several different themes, that when brought together, will help to deliver the strategy's aims:



Pillars of the strategy



The key pillars of the strategy are the interventions which will form the priority infrastructure, service and policy interventions. These will provide the key plans to support the delivery of the vision and objectives.



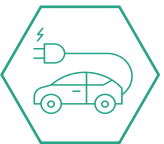
Sleaford cycling and walking network plan package

Providing a comprehensive cycling and walking network for Sleaford



Bus service reliability

Improving the reliability of bus services running along congested routes



Electrification package

Decarbonising travel and transport is key to tackling climate change. The transition to electric vehicles is gathering pace and the strategy aims to support this



Local bus improvement package

Enhancing the bus network through increasing evening and Sunday bus services, delivering new or improved services to the new sustainable urban extension, the surrounding villages and synchronising services with the rail services



Local bus infrastructure package

Upgrading the quality and accessibility of buses, improving local bus stops and providing enhanced facilities and converting the bus fleets to low emission or electric vehicles



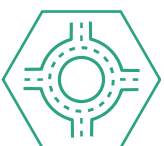
Demand responsive transport

Increasing the number of CallConnect vehicles operating across Sleaford



Traffic management package

Managing the impact of traffic through a number of options including a turning ban from the A15 bypass to Drove Lane, the implementation of a no-loading ban on South Gate during peak times and exploring partial pedestrianisation of South Gate to improve air quality and improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists



Junction improvement package

Targeted improvements to junctions such as Grantham Road/Mareham Lane/South Gate and Grantham Road/London Road and evaluating the efficiency of the traffic signal operations throughout Sleaford



Parking package

Supporting the strategy and wider parking offer through improvements to car parking supply and demand, payment systems, residents parking zones, signing and electric charging facilities

Strategic, connected and monitoring proposals



Strategic interventions

Working with other organisations including the Department for Transport, National Highways and Network Rail to improve access.



Sleaford interchange

Bringing together transport and facilities to make travel easier through enhancing the facilities at the Sleaford rail station to create a mobility hub. This would include expanding the train station area to incorporate an improved bus facility, increased cycle parking, cycle hire, EV charging and public realm improvements



Rail station improvements package

Improving the facilities and disabled access at Sleaford rail station to encourage use and improve accessibility



Public transport ticketing package

Vision for a county-wide, affordable, integrated public and shared transport ticketing system



Rail service improvements package

Working in partnership with the rail industry to deliver better train services we will look to improve frequency and quality of services to Sleaford rail station



Connected strategies

We will look to ensure that transport continues to be at the heart of a range of wider functions.



Sleaford 30-minute rural community strategy

To improve accessibility to services, limited walking and cycling infrastructure in the Greater Sleaford area and combat isolation a 30-minute rural community strategy will be developed



Sleaford access to green space strategy

Improving access and links to green spaced within the Sleaford Transport Strategy area



Digital package

Enabling people to access work and services differently through working with partners to improve digital access



Land use package

Putting accessibility at the heart of land use planning through integrating sustainable transport decision making and land use policy, particularly for the sustainable urban extension to the west of Sleaford



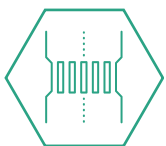
Monitor and investigate

We will continue to monitor and investigate opportunities to make further improvements to movement and transport across Sleaford.



Sleaford southern bypass feasibility study

During the life of the transport strategy a feasibility study will be undertaken to explore the need for a southern bypass



A17 dualling

The A17 is a highly trafficked road and subject to congestion and slow journey speeds during different periods of the day. A study will be considered to explore the opportunities and benefits that dualling a portion of the A17 would bring to Sleaford and the surrounding area



Eastgate to Boston Road link road

A feasibility study will be commissioned during the life of the transport strategy to assess the benefits and challenges of a new link from Eastgate to Boston Road

Supporting interventions



Active travel package

Supporting people to make walking and cycling journeys through improved wayfinding and cycle parking



Low traffic neighbourhoods

Reviewing the feasibility and appetite for low traffic neighbourhoods



Education package

Promoting better ways to travel to school through the use of travel plans, improving walking and cycling routes and improving the reliability of school bus services



Behaviour change package

Provide training and education opportunities on improving safety for cyclists and promoting the health benefits of active travel



Quiet lanes

Protecting the countryside and our green spaces



Freight and deliveries package

Reducing the impact of deliveries on the road network at peak times in the town centre



Speed limit review

Improving road safety by reviewing the existing speed limits in the Sleaford Transport Strategy area



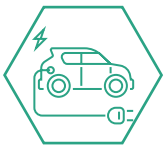
Sharing package

Making more transport accessible without the need to own through e-cycle and cargo bike hire, electric car clubs and community transport



Ride-sharing

Increasing the number of available taxis across Sleaford



Electric vehicle car sharing/car clubs

Working with industry partners we will increase the number of EV car clubs and car sharing schemes across Sleaford



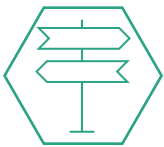
Travel plans

Working with residents and employees to encourage more sustainable choices through rolling out bikeability training, greater use of travel plans and personalised travel planning



Highway maintenance package

Producing a highway condition / maintenance strategy for the study area which would assess the condition of all highways in the study area, identify where there is a need for improvement, and drafting a plan for regular maintenance



Road signage review

Review all road signage across the study area to ensure all existing signage is necessary, beneficial and in good condition, and to identify gaps in signage and install more where appropriate



Equestrian routes strategy

Promoting safe, comfortable, and convenient travel by horse in Sleaford



Delivering the strategy



A collaborative approach

The Sleaford Transport Strategy Board is responsible for progressing the interventions outlined in the strategy and identifying potential funding streams, opportunities, and funding sources to allow for successful delivery of these projects. The board will encourage its members to take a lead on progressing elements of the strategy that fall within their remit. The interventions set out in this strategy will be led by transport strategy board members deemed most appropriate to progress its delivery.

Success will also be dependent on engagement from a range of stakeholders and the general public. A collaborative approach will be needed, with the process capturing expertise from a number of individuals and organisations.

There are interventions within this strategy which have the potential to secure third-party funding and provide an opportunity for greater collaboration with the private sector and through local development. This would allow for sustainable travel choices to be embedded from early stages of development and could lead to securing funding for off-site measures.

Programming the strategy

The strategy provides a long-term plan for transport and mobility within Sleaford for the period up to 2036. Timescales have been set for the various interventions, ranging from short, medium and long-term delivery. The transport strategy board will ensure that measures are delivered as soon as is feasible. It will be appropriate in some cases to have set timescales for some projects while others will continue throughout the strategy period.

Monitoring the strategy

The transport strategy board will be responsible for the continual monitoring and reviewing of the interventions, ensuring progress and improvements are being made where necessary.



