

# Sub-Regional Transport Plan 2015





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## Foreword

I am pleased to present the Sub-Regional Transport Plan 2015. During its development, work has included separate Local Transport Studies covering 29 towns and cities across the north and an extensive public consultation exercise conducted on the Draft Sub-Regional Transport Plan and supporting documents.



The Sub-Regional Transport Plan completes the coverage of Transport Plans. The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan was published in November 2004 and the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan was published in March 2005. The three Transport Plans are based upon the guidance provided by the Regional Development Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy whose strategic direction and underlying principles were agreed by the Assembly in 2002.

The Plan represents a significant proposed investment of £2.3 billion up to 2015, subject to the availability of funds through the normal budgetary processes. It contains practical blueprints for the development of sustainable transport networks in our main towns and cities and guidance for improvements in the rural areas. It presents a balanced set of proposals for improvements in local transport including walking, cycling, public transport and highway measures which will contribute to an improvement in mobility for all, whilst seeking to minimise adverse environmental impacts.

I wish to express my thanks to all who contributed to the formulation of this Plan including the District Councils, stakeholders and members of the public who made a contribution during the public consultation exercise.

Publication of the Plan clarifies the task of implementation. Whilst implementation of individual schemes is subject to economic appraisals, relevant statutory processes and the availability of funding, I am confident that the Plan will facilitate local transport investment across the north.

It gives me great pleasure to adopt the Sub-Regional Transport Plan 2015.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Conor Murphy".

CONOR MURPHY MP MLA

Minister for Regional Development

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# Executive Summary

## EI. The Sub-Regional Transport Plan

### Introduction

The Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP) has been prepared by the Department for Regional Development (the Department) based upon the guidance provided by the Regional Development Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS). The SRTP deals with the transport needs of the whole of Northern Ireland with the exception of the Belfast Metropolitan Area and the rail and trunk road networks which are covered in earlier Transport Plans.

The purpose of the SRTP is to study the needs of the designated areas in detail and to confirm a package of transport schemes, consistent with the general principles and indicative levels of spend in the RTS. This package of schemes and initiatives must aim to service the future transport demands taking account of financial allocation, planned developments and any changes in Government policy.

In line with the Regional Transportation Strategy, the SRTP notes the highway linkages with the Regional Strategic Transport Network and identifies separate packages of measures for the period 2002 – 2015 by mode of transport:

- walking and cycling;
- bus;
- rail; and
- highways.

The costs of the packages are consistent with the relevant indicative expenditure, by mode of transport, given in the Regional Transportation Strategy, enhanced by the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI). It is important to note that the implementation of the measures proposed in the SRTP will be subject to:

- appropriate economic appraisal;
- any relevant statutory procedures such as environmental assessment, planning and land acquisition; and
- the availability of public money through the normal budgetary processes.

### Other Urban Areas and Rural Areas

The Sub-Regional Transport Plan is concerned with two quite distinct areas, designated by the Regional Transportation Strategy:

- Other Urban Areas (OUA) – the towns and cities; and
- Rural Areas – the smaller settlements and the dispersed population living in the open countryside.

The proposed measures are presented separately for each.



## E2. Total SRTP Costs

### Total Costs of Proposed Measures

Table E2.1 summarises the total costs of all the measures proposed in the Sub-Regional Transport Plan covering the period 2002 – 2015, using 2005 prices. The first two numerical columns in the table present the cost of OUA measures and Rural Areas measures. The third numerical column presents the Cross-cutting OUA and Rural Areas measures which can neither be forecast reliably nor allocated specifically to the OUA or the Rural Areas.

Further information on the measures contributing to these spending proposals are given in later sections. As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual schemes and measures will be subject to the completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes.

**Table E2.1 - SRTP Costs and RTS Financial Controls**

Mode	OUA Measures (£ m)	Rural Measures (£ m)	Cross-cutting Measures (£ m)	SRTP Total Measures (£ m)	RTS 2002 – 2015 Spending (£ m)
All Modes	0	0	5	5	5
Walk/Cycle	33	16	29	78	78
Rail	5	0	1	6	6
Bus	70	88	293	450	450
Highways	73	40	1708	1821	1781
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>2035</b>	<b>2359</b>	<b>2320</b>

Note: All values are quoted in rounded form which may lead to apparent minor inaccuracies in summation. For reference, the unrounded values are presented in Table 9.1. (page 91)

### Comparison with RTS Spending Extrapolated to 2015

The final two columns in Table E2.1 provide a comparison of total SRTP costs with the 2002 – 2015 RTS funding in 2005 prices. The comparison highlights that the SRTP costs are in line with RTS spending. The SRTP includes a small relative increase over RTS spending in Highways. This is a result of the additional proposed funding in ISNI.

In addition, since the RTS was published in 2002, there have been increases in bus expenditure<sup>1</sup> which exceed the RTS baselines and are not reflected in Table 9.1. These are attributable to increases in the number of bus services and the number of passenger journeys and increases in expenditure on concessionary fares arising out of changes in eligibility and fares. The impact of these increases will be addressed as part of the RTS Review.

<sup>1</sup> Includes Transport Programme for People with Disabilities, Rural Transport Fund, Fuel Duty Rebate and Concessionary Fares.

## E3. Proposals for Other Urban Areas

### Introduction

Transport conditions in each of the 29 towns and cities in the SRTP area have been examined by Local Transport Studies. Each Local Transport Study has gathered data from a range of sources and carried out surveys in the town or city to get an independent view of the transport conditions. Each study has also estimated traffic conditions in 10 years time, where possible in conjunction with the Development Plan process.

Whilst the scale of the problems and the specific needs vary considerably between towns and cities, the Local Transport Studies have, in general, found a number of common problems, including:

- variability in the standard of provision for pedestrians;
- limited provision for cyclists;
- underdeveloped local bus networks, unattractive to potential users;
- limited provision for people with disabilities or others with reduced mobility;
- localised traffic congestion in the peak periods; and
- limited enforcement of parking regulations in advance of the decriminalised parking enforcement.

The major drivers for change in the OUA arise from:

- concerns over road safety in Northern Ireland;
- economic and demographic forces; and
- trends in the availability and use of different transport modes.

### Proposed Measures

The Local Transport Studies have identified and confirmed the value of a number of individual schemes and measures for each town and city in the Other Urban Areas, as summarised below. The total costs of the measures proposed are presented in Table E3.1. It should be noted, however, that work will continue throughout the period to 2015 to identify and implement additional schemes and measures.

**Table E3.1 - Costs of Proposed Measures for Other Urban Areas**

Mode	OUA Measures (£ m)
Walk/Cycle	32.8
Rail	5.0
Bus	69.5
Highways	73.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>180.4</b>

Overall, the proposed measures represent a substantial improvement in local transport provision in the 29 towns and cities. Whilst the proposals differ according to individual circumstance, the Department proposes a number of features that are common to the majority of towns/cities.

## Walk/Cycle Measures

The Local Transport Studies have identified walk measures across NI estimated to cost £29.8 million at 2005 prices. The SRTP also identifies additional walk links, which are beyond the scope of the Plan, but which could potentially be implemented in the future.

In the town or city centres the Department proposes the following walking measures:

- a continuous pedestrian network designed and maintained to an appropriate standard;
- footways that make it easier for children's buggies and people with mobility aids to pass more easily;
- additional crossing facilities where people normally wish to cross, taking account of safety and the volume of traffic; and
- upgraded links on the pedestrian network from the town centre to bus and rail stations, where required.

The Local Transport Studies have identified cycle measures across NI estimated to cost £2.8 million at 2005 prices. Cycle facilities are proposed where it is considered that they are most needed and most likely to be used. The provision of continuous cycle networks is considered most beneficial in towns with significant numbers of existing cyclists or where large student populations and flat cycling conditions suggest greatest potential. The SRTP also identifies potential additional cycle links, which are beyond the scope of the Plan, but could be used for long term planning and negotiation with developers and other stakeholders, as opportunities arise.

The proposals for cycle measures include:

- networks of cycle routes which, depending on road widths and physical constraints, may be on-road, shared footway/cycleways or off-road paths; and
- cycle parking at bus and rail stations.

## Highway Measures

The Local Transport Studies have identified highway measures across NI estimated to cost £72.4 million at 2005 prices. These costs incorporate estimates for urban land values at 2005 prices for appropriate schemes. It should be noted therefore that schemes requiring land purchase may be subject to significant cost changes in the future.

It is proposed that in general towns and cities will include the following:

- traffic management measures to lessen the effects of forecast increases in traffic flows;
- measures to reduce bottlenecks at key junctions; and
- measures to direct traffic away from areas where there are high pedestrian flows.

In some towns and cities more extensive measures are proposed:

- new roads to provide access to new development areas - where these are directly related to new development, developers will be expected to fund them as appropriate; and
- new roads to provide congestion relief to the town centre or other environmentally sensitive areas.

In addition, some towns and cities obtain direct benefits from the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan schemes. These schemes may increase capacity on existing key links or provide new bypass routes hence reducing congestion in the urban centres and providing opportunities for environmental improvements.

## **Parking Measures**

A draft parking strategy has been developed for each of the 29 towns/cities to take advantage of the improved enforcement that will result from the decriminalising of parking enforcement. The strategies may be refined or further developed in due course, in line with future changes in parking demand and accessibility.

In general, the draft parking strategies have been devised to provide:

- convenient short stay parking close to the town or city centre;
- longer stay parking located further from the town or city centre;
- appropriate additional exclusive provision for loading vehicles, taxi stands and Blue Badge vehicles; and
- where practical, parking has also been proposed convenient to bus and rail stations to encourage public transport use by commuters.

## **Public Transport Measures**

### ***Bus Measures***

The Local Transport Studies have identified a spend of approximately £3.3 million at 2005 prices for bus facilities.

The Department proposes improvements in bus facilities in towns /cities to:

- upgrade a number of bus stops in towns and cities where necessary, paying particular attention to the stops in town centres and other well-used stops in housing areas;
- provide those upgraded stops with raised kerbs to allow all passengers, including those with buggies and wheelchairs, to board fully accessible low floor buses; and
- provide priority for bus services, with measures allowing buses to enter or exit bus stations likely to be the most practicable.

The RTS identified a spend of approximately £45.6 million at 2005 prices to improve local town services. The SRTP has progressed to identify minimum levels of service for each of the towns and cities on the basis of finding a balance between the cost to the Department (in subsidy) and the level of service offered to the public. These levels of service are expressed as the number of hours, throughout a weekday, when a frequency of at least one bus per hour is maintained. Table E3.2 presents these minimum levels of service in the first column.

As part of the Ulsterbus Strategic Review, Translink will seek to introduce additional local town or city bus services where viable. Modern fully accessible low floor buses will run these services to frequent, user friendly, clock-face timetables throughout the day. The routes will join the residential areas to the town or city centre and the main shopping centres and places of work. Translink plans to implement the services by

the end of 2008. Table E3.2 presents the Translink proposals in the final column. It is notable that, in a number of towns/cities, Translink's proposals for 2008 will substantially exceed the SRTP minimum levels of service for the period up to 2015.

**Table E3.2 - Daily Period Of Hourly Bus Service Operation (Mon – Fri)**

<b>SRTP Minimum Operating period</b>	<b>Towns / Cities</b>	<b>Translink Proposed Operating Period</b>
4 hours	Portrush	14.5-17 hours
	Kilkeel	7 hours
	Ballynahinch	7 hours
	Ballycastle	8 hours
7 hours	Ballymoney	N/A independent operator
	Comber	7 hours
	Magherafelt	10.5 hours
	Portstewart	14.5-17 hours
	Newcastle	9-10 hours
	Warrenpoint	N/A independent operator
11 hours	Omagh	9.5-11 hours
	Larne	10 hours
	Banbridge	11 hours
	Armagh	9-10.5 hours
	Enniskillen	9-11 hours
	Strabane	7-10.5 hours
	Limavady	10 hours
	Dungannon	11 hours
	Cookstown	10.5 hours
	Downpatrick	9-10 hours
	Craigavon	9-10 hours
	Ballymena	10-11 hours
	Newtownards	10-11 hours
13 hours	Newry	12-15 hours
	Coleraine	10.5 hours
	Antrim	10.5 hours
	Portadown	9-10 hours
	Lurgan	9-10 hours
	Londonderry	9-16 hours

The Local Transport Studies have identified a spend of approximately £10.5 million at 2005 prices for bus station refurbishment. The proposals will be examined and decided within the context of local Development Plans and the Ulsterbus Strategic Review.

The following improvements are proposed at selected bus stations:

- new or refurbished bus station to include access improvements and compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act; and
- additional parking at the bus station.

The Transport Programme for People with Disabilities (TPPD) funds door-to-door accessible transport services for people with disabilities or for those who find mainstream public transport either difficult or impossible to use.

The RTS identified a total spend of approximately £10.95 million for TPPD during the SRTP period. However, since 2002, much higher funding has been secured with a current annual spend in excess of £4.0 million across Northern Ireland.

TPPD funding is providing new door-to-door transport services for mobility impaired people as follows:

- new services first introduced to Dungannon on 29 September 2006;
- further new services recently introduced in Cookstown, Newry, Newtownards, Comber, Dundonald and Armagh; and
- new services being rolled out to every urban area with a population of 10,000 or more by Summer 2007.

The Local Transport Studies have made an allowance for bus based Park and Ride schemes totalling £5 million in Londonderry and possibly Ballymena in the longer term.

### ***Rail Measures***

The rail network forms part of the Regional Strategic Transport Network. Individual rail schemes and projects in support of the RTS are shown in the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan. However, the SRTP Local Transport Studies have identified a spend of approximately £5.0 million at 2005 prices.

The following rail station improvements are proposed:

- refurbishment at main rail stations;
- upgrade to all rail stations to improve access for all passengers and ensure compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act; and
- additional car parking where opportunities have been identified.

### ***Taxi Measures***

The provision of on-street taxi stands will provide convenient access to taxis for potential users and help taxis to fulfil their role in an integrated transport system. In addition, appropriately sized and located stands should help reduce the likelihood of traffic congestion to other road users.

In general it is proposed to improve taxi facilities as follows:

- each town and city should have at least one on-street taxi stand; and
- further taxi stands considered where practicable and where sufficient demand exists.

## E4. Proposals for Rural Areas

### Introduction

Identification of problems has been drawn largely from existing sources. Market research undertaken in the preparation of the RTS has provided a significant base. Research undertaken for the Accessible Transport Strategy and annual surveys undertaken by the Statistics and Research Agency and the Roads Service Customer Satisfaction surveys has also contributed in addition to regular Roads Service consultation with District Councils.

The principal problems in the Rural Areas include:

- limited facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in some small settlements;
- few public transport services; and
- inadequate levels of investment in roads maintenance.

The key forces with potential to change transport needs in the Rural Areas are:

- the RTS drivers of transport, social exclusion, and road safety;
- planned economic interventions aimed at bringing added prosperity to the Rural Areas;
- planned growth of the rural population especially in small towns, villages and settlements; and
- the increase in car ownership and the resulting progressive reduction in rural bus services as passenger levels drop.

Table E4.1 summarises the total costs of measures proposed for the Rural Areas. These are described in more detail below.

**Table E4.1 - Costs of Proposed Measures for Rural Areas**

Mode	Rural Measures (£M)
Walk/Cycle	16.2
Rail	0.0
Bus	87.6
Highways	40.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>143.9</b>

### Proposed Measures in Rural Settlements

There are a large number of settlements in the Rural Areas, each with its own characteristics and transportation needs. Rural settlements will be considered for a range of measures with care taken to ensure that they complement each other.

## Walk/Cycle

The Department proposes, as far as practicable, the following walk/cycle measures in rural settlements:

- infill missing footway links within the built-up areas of settlements paying special attention to links, both pedestrian and cycle as appropriate, between schools and residential areas. Delivery of such schemes may be complemented by the 'Safer Routes to Schools' (SRS) initiative;
- continuous pedestrian footways to link residential developments or community facilities on the edge of the settlement to the built-up area. In line with PPS3 the Department, through Planning Service, will seek to ensure that developers play their part;
- additional crossing facilities where people normally wish to cross, taking account of safety and the volume of traffic; and
- traffic calming measures to reduce inappropriate speeds and volumes where demand occurs. Such schemes may provide further opportunities to improve pedestrian crossing facilities where people wish to cross and gateway features on main routes through settlements.

## Bus Measures

The Department proposes the following improvements in bus facilities in rural settlements:

- each settlement to have at least two principal bus stops equipped to modern standards;
- these principal stops will be provided with raised kerbs to allow all passengers, including those with buggies and wheelchairs to board fully accessible low floor buses; and
- each stop will have up-to-date information on the services using that stop, a convenient shelter and adjacent crossing facilities, if appropriate.

The Department proposes the following improvements in bus services to rural settlements:

- introduce new services linking isolated communities to villages and towns using the Rural Transport Fund. Indicative service standards by settlement classifications are shown in Table E4.2.



**Table E4.2 - Proposed Service Levels For Rural Settlements**

Settlement	Population Band population	Minimum journeys / day	Notes
Other Small Towns	4500 - 5000	6	6 return journeys every weekday
Villages and Intermediate Settlements	1000 - 4499	3	3 return journeys every weekday
Small Village	500 - 999	1	1 return journey every weekday

For Hamlets with a population of less than 500 a proposed service frequency of two return services per week is envisaged using Demand Responsive Transport DRT.

The RTS identified a total spend of approximately £27 million (at 2005 prices) for the Rural Transport Fund (RTF) during the SRTP period. However, since 2002, a substantial increase in RTF investment has been secured with a current annual budget of £3.75 million.

## **Proposed Measures in Open Countryside**

### **Highway Measures**

The SRTP proposes the following measures for the open countryside:

- to continue to identify a range of improvement measures in the Rural Areas using existing systems to prioritise maintenance, collision remedial and network development schemes; and
- in future that the rural prioritisation procedures take linkage to the RSTN into account as an additional attribute.

The RDS Strategic Planning Guideline for Rural Northern Ireland RNI 4.2 states that the Department will “continue to invest in maintaining and upgrading the rural road network and particularly local rural roads feeding the Regional Strategic Transport Network”. Roads Service has well established and proven procedures to prioritise maintenance and improvements on the rural network. The procedures take account of attributes of need such as traffic flows and the strategic importance of routes, as identified by the Protected Route Network designated in PPS3.

### **Bus Measures**

The RTS acknowledges that the private car plays an important and dominant role in the Rural Areas, and for people with cars that will remain so. However, it is also recognised that public transport is important, not only to offer a more sustainable choice, but especially to provide access to key services for people without cars. In addition it is noted that a mix of different types of public transport service is necessary to improve access from the Rural Areas in a manner affordable to Government and that the mix is likely to vary from location to location.

The RTS includes proposals in the open countryside for:

- new innovative Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services for residents living in open countryside areas and for residents with a mobility impairment in rural settlements across Northern Ireland; and
- investigating the potential cost of providing these levels of service through evaluation of a number of current innovative DRT initiatives including flexibly routed Rural Rover schemes and the recently introduced door-to-door services for mobility impaired residents in the OUA.

The RTS identifies a spend of £47.25 million (at 2005 prices) for DRT initiatives during the SRTP period.

## E5. Additional Proposals

This section outlines the balance of measures which comprise the SRTP. These are measures which cannot be forecast reliably and are not allocated explicitly to either the OUA or the Rural Areas and are therefore classified as cross-cutting. Table E5.1 summarises the total costs of cross-cutting measures by mode. As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual measures will be subject to the completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes. The principal measures contributing to the modal totals are explained below.

**Table E5.1 - Costs of Cross-Cutting Measures**

Mode	Cross-cutting OUA and Rural Measures (£m)
All Modes	4.5
Walk/Cycle	28.6
Rail	0.9
Bus	293.1
Highways	1707.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2034.9</b>

### All Modes

Research, monitoring and review work will seek to ensure that the measures implemented are achieving their desired outcomes and remain relevant. This may require detailed data collection and computer modelling exercises.

### Walk/Cycle

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £24.7 million on traffic calming in the OUA and the Rural Areas. The objective of a traffic-calming scheme is to improve driver behaviour and reduce traffic speed in order to make the environment safer for both pedestrians and cyclists.

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £3.7 million for improving accessibility in the OUA and the Rural Areas. The proposals include dropped kerbs and other measures to assist all users including people with disabilities. A further £0.2 million is proposed for promoting sustainable modes.

### Bus Measures

The RTS identified expenditure totalling £48.2 million (at 2005 prices) on **Fuel Duty Rebate (FDR)** in the OUA and the Rural Areas. FDR is a grant which rebates a proportion of the duty paid by bus operators on fuel used in providing approved stage carriage services. Current annual expenditure is over £6 million for the SRTP area

The RTS identified expenditure totalling £102.3 million (at 2005 prices) on the **Concessionary Fares Scheme** in the OUA and the Rural Areas. The Scheme offers free or half fare travel on all public transport in Northern Ireland to elderly people,

people with disabilities and young people (up to 16 years) in full time education. Current annual expenditure is over £9 million for the SRTP area.

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £128.1 million on the **Bus Replacement Programme** in the OUA and the Rural Areas. The programme helps Translink purchase new accessible vehicles and achieve high standards of comfort and accessibility across its stage carriage fleet.

The balance of measures making up the bus total include other Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company costs for which the Department is responsible.

## Highway Measures

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £922.7 million on **structural roads maintenance** in the OUA and the Rural Areas. Structural maintenance involves the upkeep of the surfaces and foundations of the road and footway network. As well as strengthening the foundations of roads to withstand the damage inflicted by heavy vehicles, structural maintenance also improves skidding resistance and makes an important contribution to road safety.

The SRTP includes an allowance for spending totalling £27.3 million for specific **collision remedial schemes** within the SRTP area. The Department is committed to ensuring that the public road network is developed and maintained to improve road safety. Roads Service has prepared a Road Safety Plan, which sets out its intent to make a contribution to the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy.

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £301.2 million on **routine maintenance** in the OUA and the Rural Areas. Routine Maintenance refers to a wide range of activities such as winter service (gritting and snow removal), bridge maintenance, replacing street lighting bulbs, the maintenance of signs and road markings, cutting grass verges and clearing drainage gullies.

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £67.5 million on **bridge strengthening** in the OUA and the Rural Areas to continue an extensive assessment and strengthening programme allowing vehicles of up to 40 tonnes use our roads.

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £9.2 million on **Street Lighting Capital Programmes** in the OUA and the Rural Areas. Streetlights can help road safety in urban areas, but they also help create better conditions for walking and cycling and aid the uptake of public transport.

The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £341.0 million for **network management** costs in the OUA and the Rural Areas. These 'overhead' costs of managing the road network include staff, buildings and Information Technology.

The balance of measures making up the Highway total includes car park maintenance and promoting sustainable modes.





# **I. Introduction**

## **I.1 The Sub-Regional Transport Plan**

- I.1.1. The Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP) has been prepared by the Department for Regional Development (DRD or the Department) based upon the guidance provided by the Regional Development Strategy and the Regional Transportation Strategy. The SRTP deals with the transport needs of the whole of Northern Ireland with the exception of the Belfast Metropolitan Area and the rail and trunk road networks which are covered in earlier Transport Plans.
- I.1.2. In line with the Regional Transportation Strategy, the SRTP identifies separate packages of measures for walking and cycling, public transport, and traffic and highways for the period 2002 – 2015, in addition to the relevant linkages with the Regional Strategic Transport Network. The costs of the packages are consistent with the relevant indicative expenditure, by mode of transport, given in the Regional Transportation Strategy, enhanced by the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.
- I.1.3. It is important to note that the implementation of the measures proposed in the SRTP will be subject to appropriate economic appraisal, any relevant statutory procedures such as environmental assessment, planning and land acquisition and the availability of public money through the normal budgetary processes.
- I.1.4. The Sub-Regional Transport Plan is concerned with two quite distinct areas:
- Other Urban Areas – the towns and cities; and
  - the Rural Areas – the smaller settlements and the dispersed population living in the open countryside.
- I.1.5. The Regional Transportation Strategy defines the Other Urban Areas (OUA) as “collectively those towns described as main or local hubs in the Regional Development Strategy and other towns outside the Belfast Metropolitan Area with a population greater than 5000”. Together these OUA comprise nearly 490,000<sup>2</sup> or 29% of the Northern Ireland population and 45% of people living in the Sub-Regional area. Londonderry is designated as “Regional City for the North West” by the Regional Development Strategy, whilst Enniskillen, Larne and Newry are each designated “main hubs” and “gateways”. The remainder of the towns and cities are designated as “main hubs” or “local hubs” and are located on or linked to the Regional Strategic Transport Network of roads and rail lines.
- I.1.6. The Rural Areas comprise a range of smaller settlements and a large network of non-strategic roads. In total, the population of the Rural Areas is over 580,000<sup>3</sup> and represents 35% of the Northern Ireland (NI) total. Almost 220,000 or 13% live in the settlements and nearly 370,000 or 22% live in scattered dwellings in the open countryside. The length of the highway network in the Rural Areas represents 75% of the NI total.

<sup>2</sup> Source: 2001 Census, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

<sup>3</sup> Source: 2001 Census, Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

## **I.2 Regional Development Strategy and Regional Transportation Strategy**

- I.2.1. The SRTP is based upon the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS). The RDS presents a Spatial Development Strategy to guide the physical development of the Region to 2025. The Spatial Development Strategy is a framework based on urban hubs and clusters, key and link transport corridors and the main regional gateways of ports and airports. The RDS identifies the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN) as the skeletal transport framework of the region that connects all the main centres of economic and social activity and the major public transport hubs.
- I.2.2. The RTS for Northern Ireland 2002 - 2012 supports the RDS and makes a significant contribution towards achieving the RDS vision for transport. The RTS changed the way we plan for transport and sets out a rational, costed and balanced strategy that is sensitive to our future needs. On the 3rd July 2002, the Assembly adopted the strategic direction and underlying principles of the RTS and it remains the definitive guidance for transport investment for the period up to 2012.
- I.2.3. The RTS provides indicative levels of spend to provide a balance of transport investment. These levels of spend were published for each mode of transport (i.e. walk/cycle, bus, rail and highway) and for four separate areas (i.e. Belfast Metropolitan Area, Regional Strategic Transport Network, Other Urban Areas and the Rural Areas). It was noted, however, that the types of schemes and initiatives presented in the RTS were illustrative only and implementation would be subject to the normal economic, environmental and budgetary processes.
- I.2.4. The RTS is now being delivered through the preparation and implementation of more detailed Transport Plans. The purpose of the Transport Plans is to study the needs of the designated areas in detail and to confirm a package of transport schemes, consistent with the general principles and indicative levels of spend in the RTS. This package of schemes and initiatives must aim to service the future transport demands taking account of financial allocation, planned developments and any changes in Government policy.
- I.2.5. There are three Transport Plans, as shown in Figure I.1:
- The Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (BMTP) – published in November 2004 (covering the Belfast Metropolitan Area);
  - The Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP) – published in March 2005 (dealing with the Regional Strategic Transport Network); and
  - The Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP) – this plan, (dealing with Other Urban Areas and the Rural Areas).



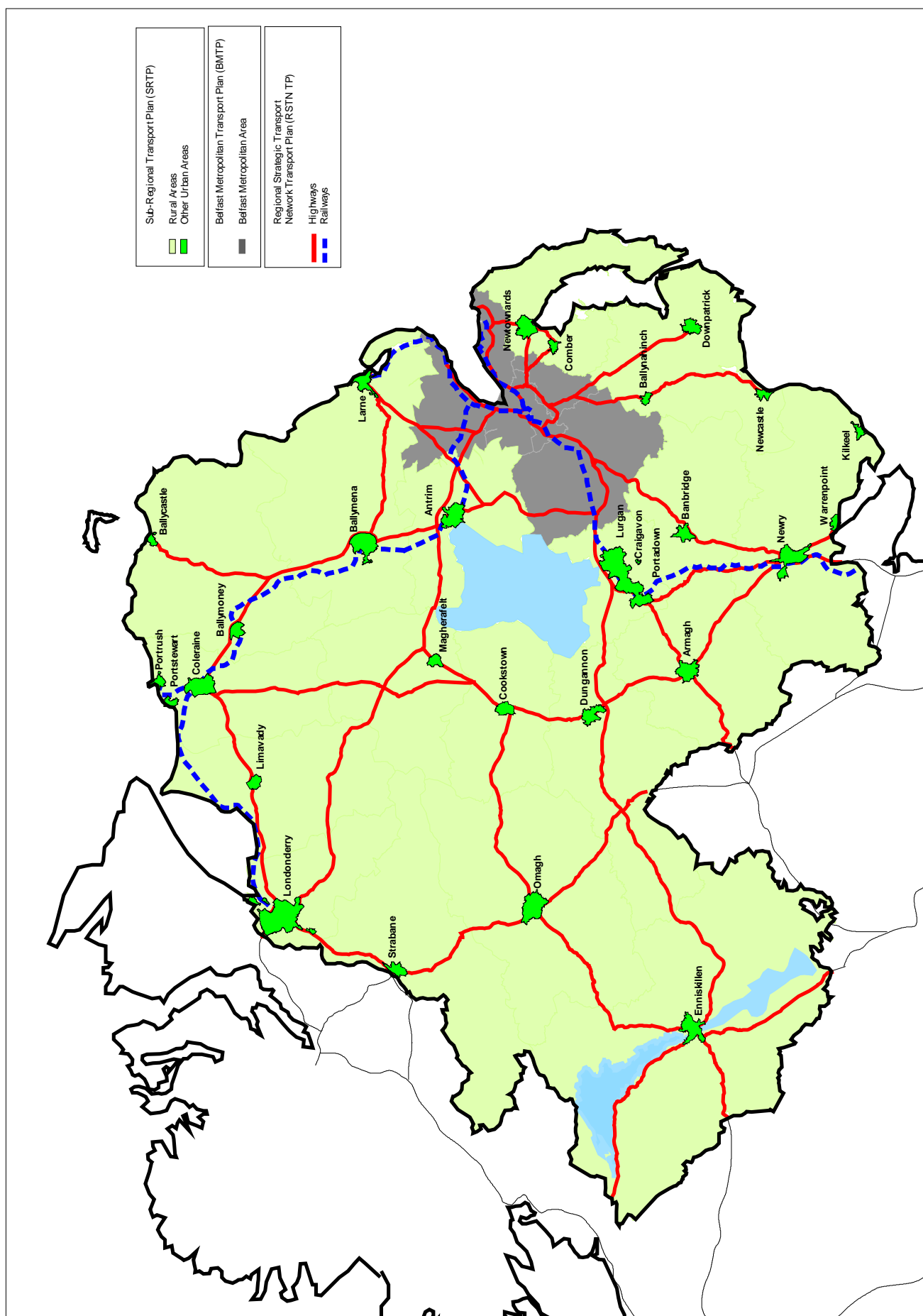


Figure 1.1 – RTS Transport Plans



- 1.2.6. The RSTNTP is particularly important to the SRTP as its schemes and measures link the towns, cities and Rural Areas that make up the SRTP providing journey time benefits to its resident populations. In addition, some RSTNTP schemes serve as bypasses to SRTP towns and cities providing traffic congestion relief in the urban centres and opportunities for environmental improvements.

### 1.3 Structure of the Plan

- 1.3.1. The structure of the SRTP is as follows:

- Chapter 2 provides the **Policy Context** that sets out the principal policies and strategies that have been taken into account in preparing the SRTP as well as the division of responsibilities for transport;
- Chapter 3 outlines the **Characteristics of the Other Urban Areas** in terms of demography, transport networks, current problems and drivers for change;
- Chapter 4 outlines the **Characteristics of the Rural Areas** in terms of demography, transport networks, current problems and drivers for change;
- Chapter 5 summarises the **Other Urban Areas: Proposed Measures and Costs**;
- Chapter 6 presents a supplementary assessment of the **Londonderry Urban Area** –Regional City for the North West;
- Chapter 7 summarises the **Rural Areas: Proposed Measures and Costs**;
- Chapter 8 outlines **Proposed Cross-Cutting Measures and Costs**;
- Chapter 9 collates the **Total SRTP Costs and Impacts**;
- Chapter 10 outlines the **Implementation, Targets, Monitoring and Review**; and
- Chapter 11 presents the **Other Assessments** including Sustainability, Rural Proofing, Good Relations, Human Rights, New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) and Health Impact Assessment (HIA).

### 1.4 Supporting Documents

- 1.4.1. This Sub-Regional Transport Plan is supported by a Technical Supplement, the Equality Impact Assessment Report and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement.
- 1.4.2. The Technical Supplement contains the proposed measures, costs and impacts for each town or city in the sub-region, generally in detailed map form. The Technical Supplement is available for Northern Ireland in total or by sub-volume per Council area.
- 1.4.3. The SRTP is required under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to produce an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) report. The EQIA contains an assessment of the impacts of the strategy for the nine population groupings required under Section 75 of the Act and is available separately.

- I.4.4. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was undertaken in accordance with the “Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004<sup>4</sup>”. These regulations implement the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC. The SEA statement includes details of how environmental considerations have been integrated into SRTP and the measures that are to be taken to monitor environmental effects of the implementation.

<sup>4</sup> Statutory Rules of Northern Ireland 2004 No.280





## 2. Policy Context

### 2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1. This chapter outlines the policy context within which the SRTP has been developed. It begins with the Review of Public Administration and an overview of the principal land use/transportation planning interactions. The chapter then proceeds to discuss the bodies responsible for the planning and delivery of transport before concluding with an outline of key current transport-related reviews.

### 2.2 Review of Public Administration

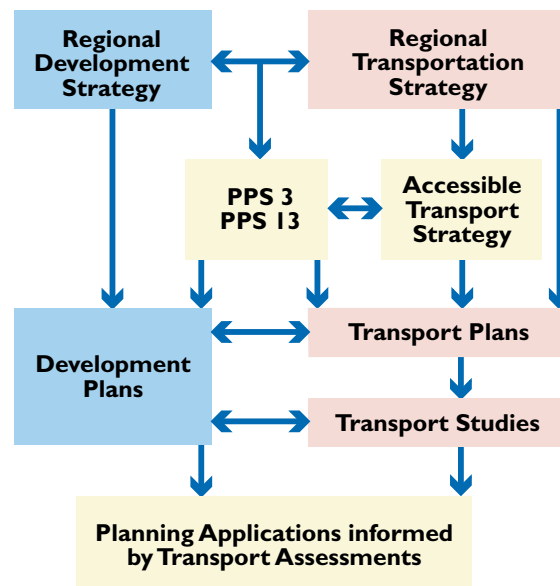
- 2.2.1. The **Review of Public Administration** (RPA) announcement, in November 2005 by the Secretary of State, envisages the establishment of 7 new councils by 2009 in place of the existing 26 councils. These new councils would have additional responsibilities including local roads' functions and a role in the planning of local bus services. Responsibility for motorway and trunk roads, which make up the Regional Strategic Transport Network, would remain with a regional Roads Authority. It is confirmed that the content of this SRTP has not been influenced by the RPA. However, as the SRTP is focused on existing Council areas, the Plan should continue to be relevant when Council areas are amalgamated under RPA.

### 2.3 Land Use/Transportation Planning Interactions

- 2.3.1. This SRTP has been prepared taking account of a number of policies and strategies. Figure 2.1 shows how they relate to each other. They are listed and explained in more detail below:

- The Regional Development Strategy (RDS);
- The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS);
- The Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI);
- Planning Policy Statements (PPS); and
- The Accessible Transport Strategy (ATS).

**Figure 2.1 - Linkages between RDS and RTS in terms of principal Land Use/Transportation Planning interactions.**



## **The Regional Development Strategy (RDS)**

- 2.3.2. The Regional Development Strategy<sup>5</sup> sets out to guide the future development of Northern Ireland to 2025 and help meet the needs of a fast growing region with a population that is expected to reach two million.
- 2.3.3. The RDS presents a Spatial Development Strategy to guide the physical development of the Region to 2025. The Spatial Development Strategy is a framework based on urban hubs and clusters, key and link transport corridors and the main regional gateways of ports and airports. The RDS identifies the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN) as the skeletal transport framework of the region that connects all the main centres of economic and social activity and the major public transport hubs.
- 2.3.4. The RDS presents four Strategic Planning Guidelines<sup>6</sup> that relate directly to transport and influence the context and content of the SRTP, especially the urban areas:
- SPG - TRAN 1: To develop a Regional Strategic Transport Network based on key transport corridors, to enhance accessibility to regional facilities and services;
  - SPG - TRAN 2: To extend travel choice for all sections of the community by enhancing public transport;
  - SPG - TRAN 3: To integrate land use and transportation; and
  - SPG - TRAN 4: To change the regional travel culture and contribute to healthier lifestyles.
- 2.3.5. The RDS also contains two Strategic Planning Guidelines that support the vitality of the Rural Areas by promotion of improved public transport and the maintenance of key rural roads:
- SPG - RNI 3: To support the network of service centres based on main towns, small towns and villages in Rural Northern Ireland; and
  - SPG - RNI 4: To create an accessible countryside with a responsive transport network that meets the needs of the rural community.

## **The Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS)**

- 2.3.6. The RDS is supported by a 10-year Regional Transportation Strategy 2002-2012 (RTS<sup>7</sup>). The RTS aims to make a significant contribution towards achieving the longer-term vision for transport put forward by the Regional Development Strategy 2025, which is:

*“...to have a modern, sustainable, safe transportation system which benefits society, the economy, and the environment and which actively contributes to social inclusion and everyone’s quality of life...”*

<sup>5</sup> The full text of the Regional Development Strategy can be viewed at:  
<http://www.drdni.gov.uk>

<sup>6</sup> The full text of the Strategic Planning Guidelines can be viewed at:  
<http://www.drdni.gov.uk>

<sup>7</sup> The full text of the Regional Transportation Strategy can be viewed at:  
<http://www.drdni.gov.uk>

- 2.3.7. On the 3rd July 2002, the Assembly approved the strategic direction and underlying principles of the RTS. The RTS is the basis upon which all transportation initiatives are now being taken forward.
- 2.3.8. This is being achieved through three Transport Plans, which contain the detailed programmes of major schemes and transport initiatives that the Department for Regional Development wants to carry out to achieve the RTS objectives and targets. These Transport Plans link with relevant Development Plans and thus provide Northern Ireland with an integrated approach to transportation and land use planning.
- 2.3.9. The overall development of the RTS was based on the Guidance on the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies (GOMMMS), an objective-led approach to seeking solutions to transport-related problems. GOMMMS establishes five objectives specifically for transport:
- environmental impact - to protect the built and natural environment;
  - safety - to improve safety;
  - economy - to support sustainable economic activity and achieve good value for money;
  - accessibility - to improve access to facilities for those without a car and to reduce severance; and
  - integration - to ensure that all decisions are taken in the context of the Government's integrated transport policy.
- 2.3.10. The RTS was developed following extensive consultation on transportation issues facing the region. This allowed an understanding of the current constraints of the transportation system and requirements for future growth in line with the RDS. Testing of alternatives and application of value for money principles resulted in a comprehensive list of potential transportation initiatives being drawn up. These were grouped across four modes of transport, namely:
- walk/cycle;
  - bus;
  - rail; and
  - highways.
- 2.3.11. The RTS provided indicative levels of spend by mode and area for the three Transport Plans as in Table 2.1. These costs covered the period 2002-2012 and were based on 2002 prices.

**Table 2.1 - RTS Total Levels of Spend**

	BMTP (£ m)	RSTNTP (£ m)	SRTP			RTS Total (£ m)
			OUA (£ m)	Rural Areas (£ m)	Total (£ m)	
Research, Monitoring and Review	3.3	3.7	1.1	1.9	3.0	10.0
Walk/Cycle	36.7	5.4	28.4	16.0	44.4	86.5
Rapid Transit	100.0	-	-	-	-	100.0
Bus	272.5	51.5	102.7	199.1	301.8	625.8
Rail	6.9	485.0	9.3	0.4	9.7	501.6
Highways	460.3	528.3	368.5	819.0	1187.5	2176.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>879.7</b>	<b>1073.9</b>	<b>510.0</b>	<b>1036.4</b>	<b>1546.4</b>	<b>3500.0</b>

2.3.12. A review of the RTS is due to commence in 2007. The review will consider the rate of implementation and the effectiveness of the RTS measures. It will also consider the continuing appropriateness of the RTS objectives and outcomes.

### **Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland**

2.3.13. In December 2005, the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI)<sup>8</sup> was published. ISNI presents an increase in capital spend over the period 2005-15 that reflects the Government's strong commitment to investment in infrastructure. It identifies some £1,945 million for road development and £558 million for public transport investment over the period. However, it must be recognised that beyond 2007/08, the ISNI sums are subject to the normal budgetary processes and must be treated as indicative only.

2.3.14. Whilst the focus of ISNI road investment is on the RSTN, it is estimated that the ISNI proposals represent an additional investment of approximately £40 million over the RTS levels of spend for the SRTP.

2.3.15. For public transport, there is an NI-wide allocation of over £230 million for the first three years to 2007/08. The focus of the funding will be on the core railway network in line with the Railways Review Group (RRG)<sup>9</sup>. However, the funding will also allow Translink to replace a further 350 buses across their bus fleets.

### **Integrating Transport and Land Use – Planning Policy Statements (PPS)**

2.3.16. In February 2005 the Department for Regional Development published PPS 13<sup>10</sup> "Transportation and Land Use". This sets out principles to guide the integration of transportation and land use planning by promoting more sustainable transport choices, accessibility for all, and reducing the need

<sup>8</sup> Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland is available at <http://www.sibni.org.uk/isnifulldocument141205.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> The full text of the RRG Report can be viewed at <http://www.drdni.gov.uk>

<sup>10</sup> The full text of PPS 13 can be viewed at [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk)

to travel, especially by private car. Linked with this is PPS 3<sup>11</sup> “Access, Movement and Parking” published at the same time by the Department of the Environment (DOE). PPS 3 sets out planning policies for vehicular and pedestrian access, the protection of transport routes, transport assessment, and parking.

- 2.3.17. Planning Policy Statements set out the policies of the Government on particular aspects of land use planning both at a strategic and operational level, and apply to the whole of Northern Ireland. They are material planning considerations and will be taken into account by DOE in preparing Development Plans and in determining individual planning applications. They are also relevant to the preparation of Transport Plans prepared by DRD.
- 2.3.18. Development Plans and Transport Plans have a complementary role to play in promoting greater integration of transportation and land use planning. Local Transport Studies carried out as part of the work on the SRTP have provided details of the transport issues, problems and opportunities across different areas and have helped inform the process of land use allocation in Development Plans. Where the Local Transport Study has identified schemes or measures, which have significant land use implications, normally these have been or will be identified in the relevant Development Plan.
- 2.3.19. PPS 13 introduces the concept of Transport Assessment for new development proposals. Transport Assessment is a comprehensive review of all the potential transport impacts of a proposed development or redevelopment, with an agreed plan to mitigate any adverse consequences. It aims to provide information so that decision makers can better understand how a proposed development is likely to function in transport terms.
- 2.3.20. DOE Planning Service will, where appropriate, require the submission of a Transport Assessment as part of the development control process. The operational policy is set out in PPS 3 “Access, Movement and Parking” supported by the recent Transport Assessment Guidelines<sup>12</sup> issued jointly by DRD & DOE.

## **Republic of Ireland Planning Documents**

- 2.3.21. The SRTP takes due account of the following Republic of Ireland planning documents:

- National Spatial Strategy<sup>13</sup>;
- National Development Plan<sup>14</sup>; and
- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> The full text of PPS 3 can be viewed at [www.planningni.gov.uk](http://www.planningni.gov.uk)

<sup>12</sup> Transport Assessment – Guidelines for Development Proposals in Northern Ireland (DRD and DOE October 2006)

<sup>13</sup> The full text of the National Spatial Strategy can be viewed at <http://www.irishspatialstrategy.ie/>

<sup>14</sup> The full text of the National Development Plan can be viewed at <http://www.ndp.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/homepage.asp>

<sup>15</sup> The full text of the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Border Region can be viewed at <http://www.border.ie/downloads/BORDER%20REGIONAL%20AUT.pdf>



- 2.3.22. It should be noted that, due to the local nature of the SRTP, there are no substantive cross-border linkage issues.

### **An Accessible Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland (ATS)**

- 2.3.23. Many people in Northern Ireland are unable to use, or make full use of, the transportation system because of the barriers they face. These may be physical barriers that are present in the built environment or the design of vehicles, but they can also stem from issues such as society or individuals' attitudes, the design of services or the way in which information is provided. For these reasons, the RTS gave a commitment that DRD would develop an Accessible Transport Strategy for Northern Ireland<sup>16</sup>.
- 2.3.24. The Department published the Accessible Transport Strategy 2015 in April 2005. The ATS presents a vision – “To have an accessible transport system that enables older people and people with disabilities to participate more fully in society, enjoy greater independence and experience a better quality of life.”
- 2.3.25. Implementation of the ATS will be achieved principally through a number of key initiatives identified in the RTS which are included in Transport Plans as well as other spending programmes such as the Rural Transport Fund, the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities and the Northern Ireland Concessionary Fare Scheme. Some initiatives involve changes to administrative processes or the introduction of new legislation.
- 3.3.26. The ATS includes seven strategic objectives and a range of supporting policies that will be followed to assist in achieving those objectives. For example the ATS includes policies on the evaluation of accessible transport initiatives and about consultation on the detailed implementation of access features incorporated in new transportation infrastructure. Government agencies responsible for implementing Transport Plans and for managing other transportation spending programmes will have regard to the ATS strategic objectives and policies when carrying out this work.
- 2.3.27. The SRTP fully recognises the findings of the ATS and its Action Plan. Where appropriate, these have been embedded in the preparation and outputs of the SRTP. In line with the SRTP's focus on infrastructure and services, the strategic objectives concerned with the development of an integrated accessible public transport system<sup>17</sup> and with enabling safe travel using cars and other means of private transport<sup>18</sup> have been particularly important.
- 2.3.28. The ATS Action Plan is due to be reviewed in 2007. The review will report on what has been achieved to date, its impact on older people and people with disabilities, and where its future direction and priorities should lie.

<sup>16</sup> The full text of the Accessible Transport Strategy can be viewed at:  
<http://www.drdni.gov.uk>

<sup>17</sup> Strategic Objective 3 – To develop, in partnership with key stakeholders, an integrated, fully accessible public transport system which will enable older people and people with disabilities to travel by bus, train, taxi, private and community transport services in safety and in comfort and move easily between these modes.

<sup>18</sup> Strategic Objective 4 – To enable older people and people with disabilities to travel safely using cars and other means of private transport.

## **2.4 Responsibilities for Transport**

### **Public Transport**

- 2.4.1. The Department for Regional Development has overall responsibility for public transport policy and transport planning in Northern Ireland, whilst the DOE is responsible for the safety and operating standards of road passenger transport providers and licensing of bus routes. The majority of public transport services in Northern Ireland are provided by subsidiary companies of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (NITHC), a public corporation established by the Transport Act (Northern Ireland) 1967 to oversee the provision of public transport.
- 2.4.2. In Northern Ireland, unlike the rest of the United Kingdom, public transport remains regulated. The principal NITHC bus companies, Citybus (trading now as Metro) and Ulsterbus, operate a comprehensive network, with a number of uneconomic services being cross subsidised from profitable services. Private operators provide a limited number of scheduled bus services. Rail services are operated by the NITHC subsidiary, Northern Ireland Railways. Metro, Ulsterbus and Northern Ireland Railways operate under the brand name Translink.

### **Highways**

- 2.4.3. Roads Service is an Executive Agency within the Department for Regional Development and operates within the context of the Department's strategic objectives to maintain, manage and develop Northern Ireland's transportation network.
- 2.4.4. Roads Service is the sole road authority in Northern Ireland, responsible for just over 24,900 kilometres of public roads together with about 9,000 kilometres of footways, 5,800 bridges, 254,000 streetlights, and 370 public car parks in addition to the Strangford Ferry.
- 2.4.5. Roads Service is responsible, in addition, for ensuring that measures are taken to implement the roads aspects of the Regional Transportation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2002-2012.

## **2.5 Public Transport Policy and Operational Reviews**

### **Future of Public Transport Services in Northern Ireland**

- 2.5.1. An effective, efficient and sustainable public transport service, which contributes to mobility and social inclusion, is a key element of the world class economy Government has been trying to develop in Northern Ireland. The approach to public transport has been to link substantial investment with a programme for reform.
- 2.5.2. The Department has built on foundations laid in 2002 when it published the consultation paper "A New Start for Public Transport in Northern Ireland". A key aim was to attract private sector finance and skills in pursuing the

challenging investment proposals of the Regional Transportation Strategy, by opening up the market in a manner which was publicly acceptable and financially feasible.

2.5.3. On 22 August 2006, the Minister responsible for the Department for Regional Development, David Cairns, announced the Government's plans for the development of bus and rail public transport in Northern Ireland. The decisions announced have five main elements:

- The new local authorities will have responsibility for planning, designing and securing public transport services, both bus and rail. This is a development of the commitment made, as part of the Review of Public Administration, that the new local authorities would be involved in the planning of bus services;
- Arrangements will be made for the local authorities to discharge these responsibilities acting together in the form of a unitary public transport authority that would comprise district councillors drawn from each of the new local authorities. This is intended to ensure that there is a unified, integrated and co-ordinated approach to public transport provision and development;
- Bus services in Northern Ireland will continue to be regulated, that is to say there will not be on the road competition by bus operators as happened in Great Britain. This is consistent with an integrated approach to public transport development;
- The Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company's subsidiaries will continue to provide the majority of public transport services. However, the new body will be able to secure services from private operators;
- Currently Government supports bus public transport in large measure through capital grant for the purchase of new buses. It is intended to shift support for buses away from capital to revenue funding, building on existing revenue support mechanisms.

2.5.4. In effect these proposals will result in a three tier structure:

- A top, Government, tier responsible for broad policy, legislation and regulation, including the regulation of operators;
- A middle tier responsible for designing and managing services and securing their provision; from
- A third tier comprising transport operators.

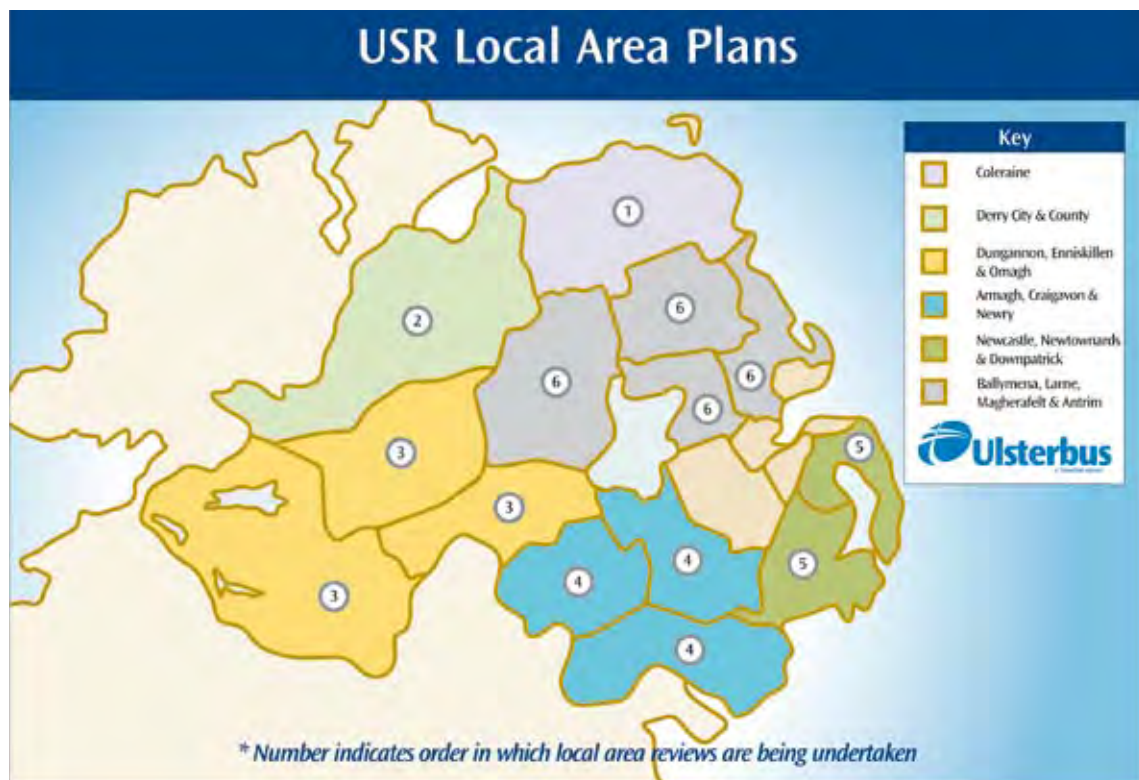
2.5.5. The Department will be developing implementation arrangements which dovetail with the arrangements for the Review of Public Administration. Work streams are currently being developed to take these reforms forward with a view to establishing a new regime from 2010.

## **Ulsterbus Strategic Review**

2.5.6. Following the production of the RTS, Translink has undertaken strategic reviews of bus operations within the greater Belfast area and has commenced a review of the wider Ulsterbus network.

- 2.5.7. The aim of the Ulsterbus Strategic Review (USR), which covers all the operational and delivery functions of Ulsterbus, is to examine current bus service provision (outside of the area covered by Belfast's Metro) and to identify and justify the level/timing of any proposed changes to existing products and services. The review will also identify the investment needed for new vehicles, infrastructure and any additional operating costs to deliver the type of public transport network to achieve the outcomes set out in the RTS and wider policy objectives.
- 2.5.8. The Review is being undertaken on a regional basis and implemented in the following areas:-
- Coleraine District (Apr 2006);
  - Derry City & Londonderry District Area (Sep 2006);
  - Omagh, Enniskillen & Dungannon Districts (Nov 2006);
  - Armagh, Craigavon and Newry Districts (Feb 2007); and
  - Downpatrick, Newcastle and Newtownards (July 2007).
- 2.5.9. The remaining area reviews (Antrim, Larne, Magherafelt and Ballymena) will be implemented by the summer of 2008. Figure 2.2 summarises this information.

**Figure 2.2 - Ulsterbus Strategic Review Implementation Plan**



## **2.6 Other Transport Related Reviews**

### **Review of the Home to School Transport Policy**

- 2.6.1. In 1997 the home to school transport arrangements were amended with the aim of reducing escalating costs. Despite this policy change the costs have continued to rise. In light of these rising costs the Department of Education (DE) initiated a Review of Home to School Transport.
- 2.6.2. This wide-ranging review encompassed all aspects of the service, including the impact of the 1997 policy change and issues that have emerged since then. DE employed a consultant, the Transport Research Institute (NI Centre), to carry out the initial stage of the Review. DE is currently considering the consultant's findings, developing options for change reform, and will shortly consult with Education and Library Boards and other key players on the way forward. Any proposals for fundamental change to the existing policy will be the subject of a public consultation. The introduction of any new arrangements will be publicised in advance.

### **Taxis Bill**

- 2.6.3. In August 2006, and following a comprehensive review of taxi regulation known as the 'Taxi Review' and extensive consultation on policy proposals for reform of taxi regulation, the Department of the Environment (DOE) published a draft Taxis (Northern Ireland) Order for consultation. The aim of the Taxis Order was to create a new legal framework for the licensing of taxi operators, drivers and vehicles and services and provision of taxi services. DOE's overall objective in making these reforms is to facilitate the delivery of safe, high quality, innovative and accessible taxi services designed to benefit both taxis users and taxi service providers. With restoration of the NI Assembly, DOE has obtained the agreement of the Executive Committee to introduce the Taxis Bill (which has been converted from the draft Order ), to the Assembly before the Summer 2007 recess. Using the powers under the Taxis Bill, which could become law in early 2008, full implementation of the measures resulting from the Taxi Review could take three to five years to achieve.
- 2.6.4. Both the Taxi Review and the subsequent Taxis Bill, recognised that taxis can and do make a significant contribution to public transport provision in Northern Ireland. This is particularly the case at times when there are few, or no, bus or train services and in areas relatively less well served by conventional public transport. In support of this, results from the DOE Taxi Consumer Survey 2003 show that 4% of respondents depend on taxis as their main mode of transport as compared to 5% of respondents who depend on buses and 1% who rely on trains.
- 2.6.5. Under the DOE's plans to improve the standard of taxi services generally and, more specifically, to encourage the taxi industry to make a greater contribution to more accessible public transport provision, the Taxis Bill will make it possible for the Department to:

- bring in operator licensing for all taxi businesses;
- allow all taxis to pick up on the streets without a booking;
- set maximum fare rates for all taxis;
- require all taxis to have taxi meters;
- make all new drivers pass a taxi driving test;
- insist that all taxi drivers have relevant training, including how to deal with customers;
- allow some taxi drivers to operate shared services able to charge individual passengers separate, but cheaper-than-normal, fares;
- require operators to provide more taxis designed to meet the needs of older people and people with disabilities; and
- allow only accessible vehicles like these to use taxi stands.

## **Review of the Rural Transport Fund**

2.6.6. The Rural Transport Fund (RTF) was introduced in November 1998 to increase accessibility and mobility in the countryside. The prime objective of the RTF is to reduce social exclusion by improving/providing transport opportunities for people with reduced mobility in the Rural Areas. It also seeks to:

- target social need by improving access to training or employment opportunities for the rural population;
- complement the work of other agencies involved in the development of rural communities;
- support a range of community based activities and have a broad base of community support; and
- encourage volunteering activity.

2.6.7. The future direction of the RTF is dependent on a currently ongoing review. The review, which will be subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA), will examine whether or not the RTF has achieved any or all of the above and to what degree. It will assess the impact of the transport services provided by Translink, the Rural Community Transport Partnerships and the support service provided by the Community Transport Association. It will also compare the services provided through the support of the RTF with similar activities in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.





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## **3. Characteristics of the Other Urban Areas**

### **3.1 Introduction**

- 3.1.1. Transport conditions in each of the 29 towns and cities in the SRTP area have been examined by Local Transport Studies. Each Local Transport Study has gathered data from a range of sources, including the Accessible Transport Strategy, and carried out surveys in the town or city to get an independent view of the transport conditions. Each study has also estimated traffic conditions in 10 years time, where possible in conjunction with the Development Plan process.
- 3.1.2. This chapter summarises the characteristics of the towns and cities in the Other Urban Areas under the headings of personal travel, transport networks, statement of current problems and drivers for change. More detailed summaries for each town are given in the Technical Supplement.

### **3.2 Personal Travel**

- 3.2.1. The 29 towns and cities comprising the Other Urban Areas were identified by the RTS. They consist of the settlements outside the Belfast Metropolitan Area with a population of 5,000 or greater, according to the 2001 Census.
- 3.2.2. The 29 towns and cities are listed in Table 3.1 which includes population numbers and other characteristics that relate to personal travel choices, namely:
- percentage of households without car;
  - percentage of people who walk or cycle to work; and
  - percentage of people who use public transport to get to work.
- 3.2.3. Table 3.1 highlights the following key characteristics of the towns and cities:
- the range of population between Londonderry with a population of 90,736 and Ballycastle with 5,089;
  - the relatively high percentage of households without cars in Londonderry (36.5%), Strabane (34.1%) and Larne (34.0%) in contrast to the relatively low percentage in Comber (17.8%), Ballynahinch (21.1%), and Magherafelt (21.8%);
  - the relatively high percentage of people walking or cycling to work in Strabane (21.7%) and Omagh (20.2%) in contrast to the relatively low percentage in Comber (7.3%) and Newtownards (10.3%) and Portstewart (10.3%); and
  - the relatively high percentage of people using public transport to travel to work in Londonderry (7.7%) and Antrim (7.1%) in contrast to the relatively low percentage in Omagh (2.1%) and Ballymoney (2.2%).

**Table 3.1 - Demographic Details of the Towns and Cities in the OUA**

Name	Population	Percentage of Households without car (%)	Percentage walk or cycle to work (%)	Percentage using public transport to work (%)
Antrim	20001	32.3	14.3	7.1
Armagh	14590	29.3	16.5	2.6
Ballycastle	5089	28.5	17.1	2.3
Ballymena	28717	28.4	16.0	2.9
Ballymoney	9021	26.0	15.3	2.2
Ballynahinch	5364	21.1	12.0	4.9
Banbridge	14744	23.1	11.4	4
Coleraine	24089	30.2	18.1	2.6
Comber	8933	17.8	7.3	6.8
Cookstown	10646	26.1	15.6	1.6
Craigavon	57685	33.2	14.1	6.7
Downpatrick	10316	28.9	15.4	4.6
Dungannon	11139	27.6	11.9	2.9
Enniskillen	13599	27.4	14.1	2.3
Kilkeel	6338	26.0	15.5	3.8
Larne	18228	34.0	17.4	5.2
Limavady	12135	27.2	11.6	2.9
Londonderry	90736	36.5	15.3	7.7
Lurgan	<i>Included with Craigavon-</i>			
Magherafelt	8372	21.8	13.6	2.3
Newcastle	7444	24.7	14.5	3.8
Newry	27433	32.2	16.0	3.8
Newtownards	27821	25.4	10.3	7.1
Omagh	19910	27.0	20.2	2.1
Portadown	<i>Included with Craigavon-</i>			
Portrush	6372	31.1	14.4	4.8
Portstewart	7803	23.6	10.3	6.3
Strabane	13456	34.1	21.7	3
Warrenpoint	7000	23.6	12.9	3.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>486981</b>	<b>30.1</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>4.9</b>

**Source: 2001 Census**

3.2.4. Table 3.2 summarises the same demographic characteristics for the Other Urban Areas in the context of the NI population. The table highlights the following:

- the 29 towns and cities represent almost one third (28.9%) of the total NI population;
- the percentage of households without cars is substantial (30.1%) and lies between the Rural (20.5%) and the Belfast figure of 33.7%;



- the percentage of persons walking or cycling to work (14.8%) exceeds the Belfast figure (13.0%); and
- the percentage using public transport to work (4.9%) is substantially less than the Belfast figure (12.4%) and not significantly larger than the rural figure (4.2%).

**Table 3.2 - Northern Ireland Population and Transport to Work Summary**

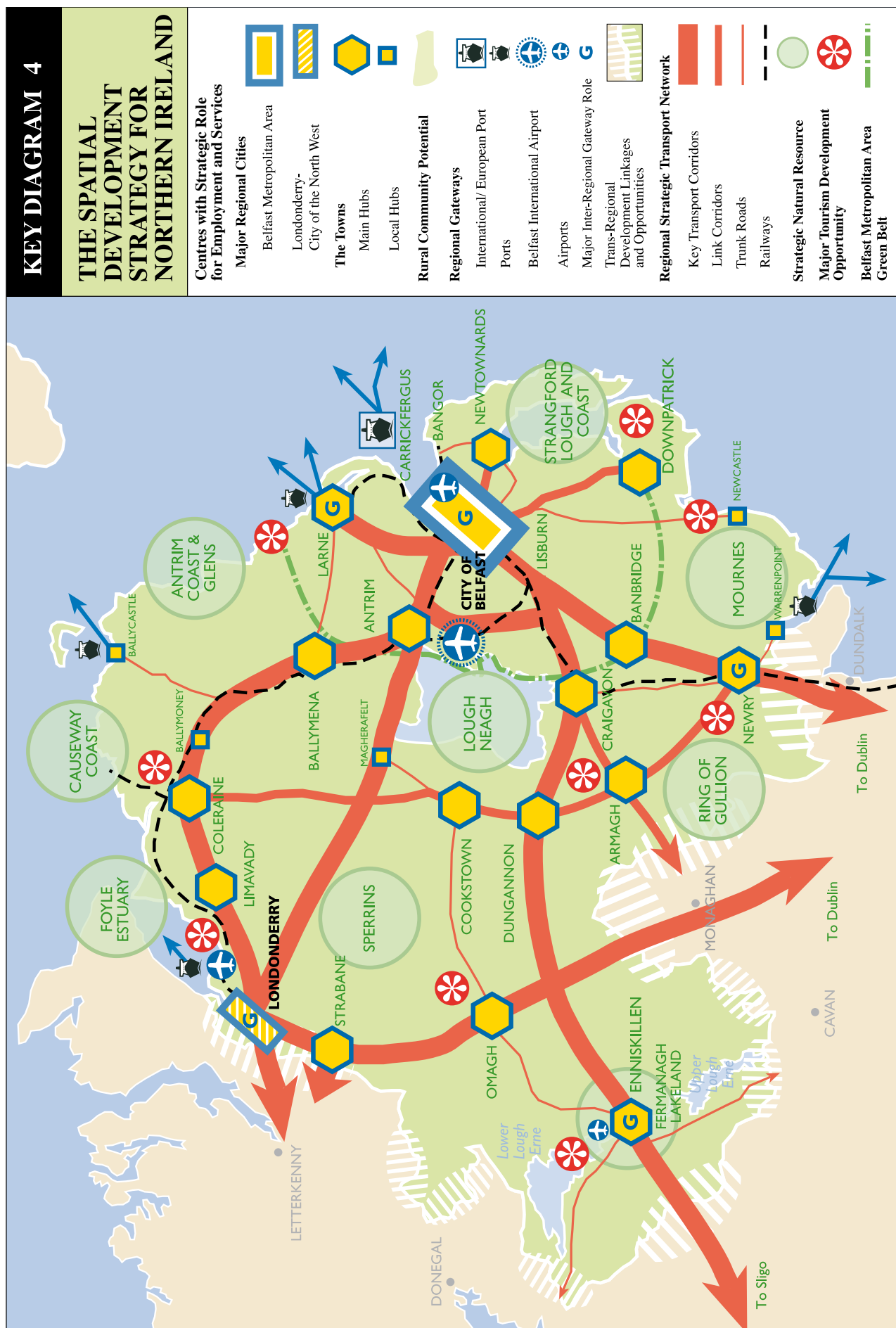
Area	Population	Percentage of NI population (%)	Percentage of Households without car (%)	Percentage walk or cycle to work (%)	Percentage using public transport to work (%)
Other Urban Areas	486981	28.9	30.1	14.8	4.9
Belfast Metropolitan Area	614112	36.4	33.7	13.0	12.4
Rural Areas	584174	34.7	20.5	10.7	4.2
<b>NI Total</b>	<b>1685267</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>6.9</b>

**Source: 2001 Census**

### 3.3 Transport Networks

- 3.3.1. Figure 3.1 is taken directly from the RDS and illustrates the spatial development strategy for Northern Ireland. It shows the majority of the Other Urban Areas as Main Hubs with Londonderry, Larne and Newry serving as Gateways and some of the smaller towns as Local Hubs. The exceptions are the towns of Portrush, Portstewart, Kilkeel, Ballynahinch and Comber which are not hubs but are linked to the RSTN. The RSTN provides essential linkages from Hub to Hub and through to Gateways. The 5 Key Transport Corridors provide the clear majority of linkages focussing on Belfast and Londonderry. The remainder of the network consists of the Link Corridors and the Trunk Roads which complete the linkages to the Hubs. The figure also confirms Londonderry as “City of the North West”.
- 3.3.2. The RSTN is therefore particularly important to the SRTP in providing key linkages between its towns and cities and rural hinterlands, and in some cases, providing bypass relief to the urban centres. It follows therefore that benefits arising from the RSTN Transport Plan will accrue to residents and businesses located in the SRTP.

Figure 3.1 - Northern Ireland Transport Networks (extract from RDS)



- 3.3.3. With a few exceptions most towns and cities already support town bus services. Londonderry also has black taxis which operate ‘bus style’ services on the cityside. The frequency and hours of operation of the existing town services vary depending on demand.
- 3.3.4. The majority of town bus services are provided by Translink, but services are also provided by independent operators in some areas including Ballymoney, Ballycastle, Londonderry, Warrenpoint and Portadown.

### **3.4 Statement of Current Problems**

- 3.4.1. Whilst the scale of the problems and the specific needs vary between towns and cities, the Local Transport Studies have, in general, found a number of common themes, including:
- variability in the standard of provision for pedestrians;
  - limited provision for cyclists;
  - underdeveloped local bus networks, unattractive to potential users;
  - limited provision for people with disabilities or others with reduced mobility, due to incomplete travel chains <sup>19</sup>;
  - localised traffic congestion in the peak periods; and
  - limited enforcement of parking regulations in advance of the decriminalisation of parking enforcement<sup>20</sup>.

### **Walk/Cycle**

- 3.4.2. People are now making fewer journeys on foot and more journeys by car. In particular the number of children walking to school has declined dramatically over the past 30 years. The quality of the infrastructure for pedestrians may contribute to the decline of walking as a mode of transport. In a number of our town and city centres footways are narrow and uneven, there is not enough help with crossing streets busy with traffic or street lighting is poor. All of these factors affect people’s decision whether to walk or not. In addition, older people or people using wheelchairs may encounter special difficulties in crossing the road where there is no specific crossing provision.
- 3.4.3. Many towns have few cycle lanes or traffic-free routes for cycling whilst, for example, Londonderry, Craigavon and Coleraine have substantial networks. Cycle facilities in some towns and cities are more likely to be used due to the flat terrain or the high numbers of students or holidaymakers.

<sup>19</sup> It is noted that any journey is made up of a number of different sections or links. For example, the walk from home to bus stop, the bus ride from bus stop to bus station and the walk from bus station to town centre shops can all be considered links. The full journey can be considered as a transport chain and if any link in the chain is weak, then the chain may be broken. In effect, any short-coming in provision at any point in the journey, may make the journey impractical and may lead to a mobility difficulty.

<sup>20</sup> Decriminalised parking enforcement (DPE) passes responsibility from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) to DRD for the enforcement of on-street waiting and loading restrictions and permitted parking regulations. DPE was introduced on 30 October 2006.



## **Bus Services**

- 3.4.4. To make a comparative assessment of the current bus networks in each of the 29 towns, a set of bus service standards has been developed in line with the RTS. These standards are:
- i. For towns with a significant population living beyond an 800m radius from the town centre, local bus services will be provided at a minimum hourly frequency;
  - ii. These services should be accessible to 90% of the ward population within 400m of their home address; and
  - iii. The periods during which the hourly service should be provided, Monday to Friday, will be related to the size of the town.
- 3.4.5. Prior to the Ulsterbus Strategic Review (USR), of the 29 towns and cities that comprise the OUA, only Ballycastle, Ballymoney, Portrush and Portstewart met these minimum standards. In addition, with the exception of Londonderry, relatively low levels of service were offered by local bus networks. In general, the hours of operation are effectively limited to shopping hours in the remaining towns and cities.
- 3.4.6. The standards recognise that in some of the smaller, more compact settlements, with significant population within 800m radius from the town centre, a local town service may not be required. This is because associated amenities are within comfortable walking distance for many people.
- 3.4.7. It is also noted that older people and people with disabilities may encounter difficulties in using buses due to their design with high floors and steep steps. Pedestrian access routes to and from bus stops and stations may also provide difficulties whilst facilities at stops, such as seats or shelters, are often lacking.

## **Taxi Services**

- 3.4.8. Taxis have an important role in an integrated transport system. Their round-the-clock availability and their capacity to provide door to door service mean that they are a key form of transport both in their own right and because they can provide access to other modes. Also, although taxi services are used by all sections of society, they tend to be depended on most by those who are less mobile, people on lower incomes and those who do not have access to a car.
- 3.4.9. Taxis are most heavily relied on for transport in areas poorly served by public transport and at times when there are few, or no, bus or train services. However currently there are only a limited number of taxi stands spread across the towns and cities. As a consequence, in some locations there is either no, or insufficient, stand provision while in others, as a result of urban re-development, stands may no longer be optimally sited. This makes integration with other modes of transport difficult or inefficient and means that taxis cannot fulfil their potential. In addition, in some locations where stands are provided, over-spilling taxis may cause traffic congestion.

- 3.4.10 Another problem is that only a very small percentage of the vehicles serving taxi stands are accessible to older people and people with disabilities including wheelchair users.
- 3.4.11 Clearly therefore there is a need for more, well-situated, stands better serviced by accessible taxis.

## Highways

- 3.4.12 There can be localised traffic congestion in some of the larger towns especially at peak times during the mornings and evenings and indeed during the afternoon 'school rush'. A number of the towns do not have bypasses and therefore are particularly prone to congestion due to heavy through traffic volumes. Some towns with bypasses suffer town centre congestion at peak times due to local traffic. Delays are focused on junctions which, despite control measures, are often operating at or beyond capacity at peak times.
- 3.4.13 The principal problem affecting car parking has been widespread illegal parking, compounded by the lack of enforcement<sup>21</sup> of parking regulations. This can take the form of overstaying on time-limited spaces or simply parking on double yellow lines or clearways. Illegal parking can therefore result in traffic congestion in the town and city centres and frustration for drivers searching for convenient spaces for short-stay shopping. In some towns or cities this leads to the perception that there are insufficient parking spaces.
- 3.4.14 For older people or people with disabilities they may face difficulties even as private car drivers. Despite the 'Blue Badge' scheme, inconsiderate parking by others can often lead to badge holders facing excessive distances on the pedestrian network to their ultimate destination.

## 3.5 Drivers for Change

- 3.5.1. The RTS has identified that the major drivers for change arise from:
- concerns over road safety in Northern Ireland;
  - economic and demographic forces; and
  - trends in the availability and use of different transport modes.
- 3.5.2 In 2005, 40%<sup>22</sup> of fatal and serious injury accidents occurred on urban networks which comprise only 19% of the total network. This accident rate is a key driver for change.
- 3.5.3 However, perhaps the principal driver for change in the urban areas relates to rising car ownership driven in turn by economic and demographic forces. The increasing number and use of private cars in our urban areas is a core contributor to problems of congestion, environmental conditions, safety and reductions in bus service levels.

<sup>21</sup> The parking surveys were undertaken before the introduction of decriminalised parking enforcement on 30 October 2006.

<sup>22</sup> The full text of the Road Traffic Collision Statistics Annual Report 2005 can be viewed at [http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/statistics\\_branch/pg\\_road\\_traffic\\_related\\_statistics.htm](http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/statistics_branch/pg_road_traffic_related_statistics.htm)

- 3.5.4 In some towns and cities substantial growth is anticipated in the number of homes over the next 10 years. It is important to offer realistic sustainable transport choices in place of the car. Transport infrastructure must be planned to service the needs of this new housing. This should aim to reduce further growth in car dependency and to minimise unwanted impacts on the town and city centres. In many cases planning for local transport can take advantage of the opportunities that arise from strategic highway investment, such as bypasses, identified in the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan.
- 3.5.5 In general, local air quality is good in our towns and cities. However, in a small number, high traffic volumes and congestion at key junctions coincide with specific localised air conditions resulting in poor air quality. In these towns and cities, improvements in air quality are a further reason to consider changes to the transport networks.





## **4. Characteristics of the Rural Areas**

### **4.1 Introduction**

4.1.1. This chapter summarises the characteristics of the Rural Areas consisting of the rural settlements and the open countryside. As for the Other Urban Areas, the following sections are laid out in turn:

- Personal Travel;
- Transport Networks;
- Statement of Problems; and
- Drivers for Change.

### **4.2 Personal Travel**

4.2.1. Recent work by the Department for Social Development<sup>23</sup> has classified the population of Northern Ireland as shown in Table 4.1. The Rural Areas account for 34.7% of the total population, with over one third of these living in settlements with populations ranging from 50 to 5,000 people. The remaining two thirds of rural dwellers live in settlements with populations of less than 50 people or in the open countryside. This means that there is a sizeable proportion of the rural population who live beyond walking range to a number of key services such as schools and food shops. Therefore these people need to use motorised modes of transport.

<sup>23</sup> The system of classification of settlements within the rural areas adopted for the SRTP is adapted from the Report of the Inter-Departmental Urban-Rural Definition Group, published February 2005  
<http://www.nisra.gov.uk/archive/urbanreport.pdf>.



**Table 4.1 - Demography Summary of the Rural Areas<sup>24</sup>**

Area	Population Band	Number	Population	Percentage NI
Other Small Towns	4500-5000	4	21311	1.3
Intermediate Settlements	2250-4499	19	54222	3.2
Village	1000-2249	43	61770	3.7
Small Village	500-999	58	40151	2.4
Hamlets	50-499	197	39438	2.3
Open Countryside	<50	Not Applicable	367282	21.8
<b>Total Rural</b>		<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>584174</b>	<b>34.7</b>
Belfast Metropolitan Area	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	614112 <sup>25</sup>	36.4
Other Urban Areas	Not Applicable	29	486981 <sup>26</sup>	28.9
<b>Total NI</b>		<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>1685267</b>	<b>100.0</b>

4.2.2. The averages of personal travel characteristics are summarised in Table 4.2 below, namely:

- percentage of households without car;
- percentage of people who walk or cycle to work; and
- percentage of people who use public transport to work.

4.2.3. The table highlights characteristics which contrast with urban areas:

- the average of 20.5% of households in the Rural Areas without a car is derived from a range from 10.9% in hamlets to 24.1% in small towns;
- the households without a car (20.5%) is substantially lower than the comparable figure for the Other Urban Areas (30.1%);
- as might be expected, the lowest percentages of walk and cycle to work occur in the smallest settlements (hamlets) and the open countryside; and
- the percentage using public transport to travel to work is consistently low around 4 – 5% in all rural settlements. The exceptions are the smallest hamlets and open countryside where it falls further to 3% approximately.

<sup>24</sup> Source: 2001 Census Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)

<sup>25</sup> Includes Ballyclare, with a population of 8,770

<sup>26</sup> Includes Derry Urban Area, with a population of 90,736

**Table 4.2 - Rural Personal Travel Information**

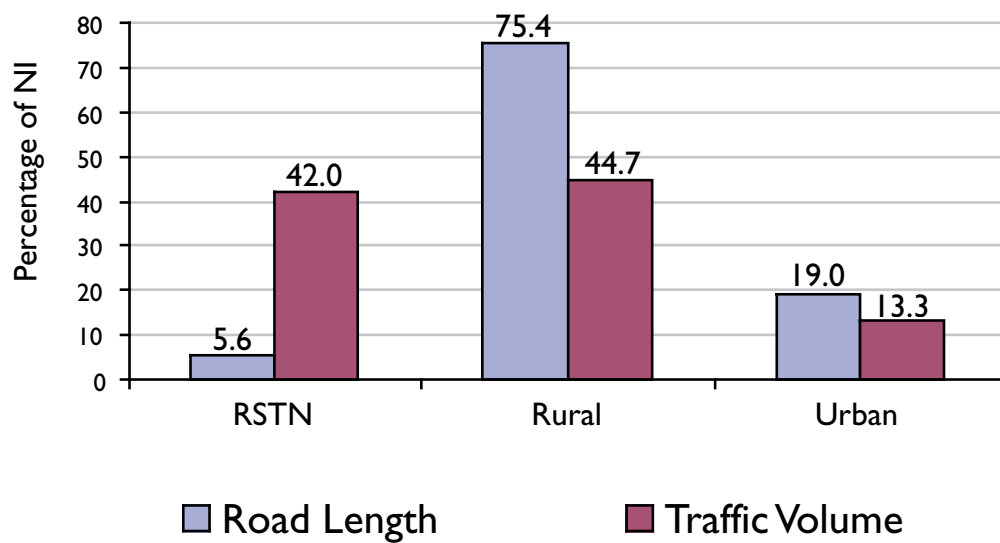
Area	Households without a car (%)	Working population who walk or cycle to work (%)	Working population who use public transport to work (%)
Small Towns	24.1	9.4	4.4
Intermediate Settlements	20.0	8.5	4.8
Villages	23.8	16.3	4.9
Small Villages	21.4	16.6	4.4
Hamlets	10.9	4.0	2.7
Open Countryside	14.9	5.5	3.3
<b>Rural</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>4.2</b>
<b>Other Urban Areas</b>	<b>28.6</b>	<b>14.8</b>	<b>4.9</b>
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>26.3</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>6.9</b>

**Source: 2001 Census**

### 4.3 Transport Networks

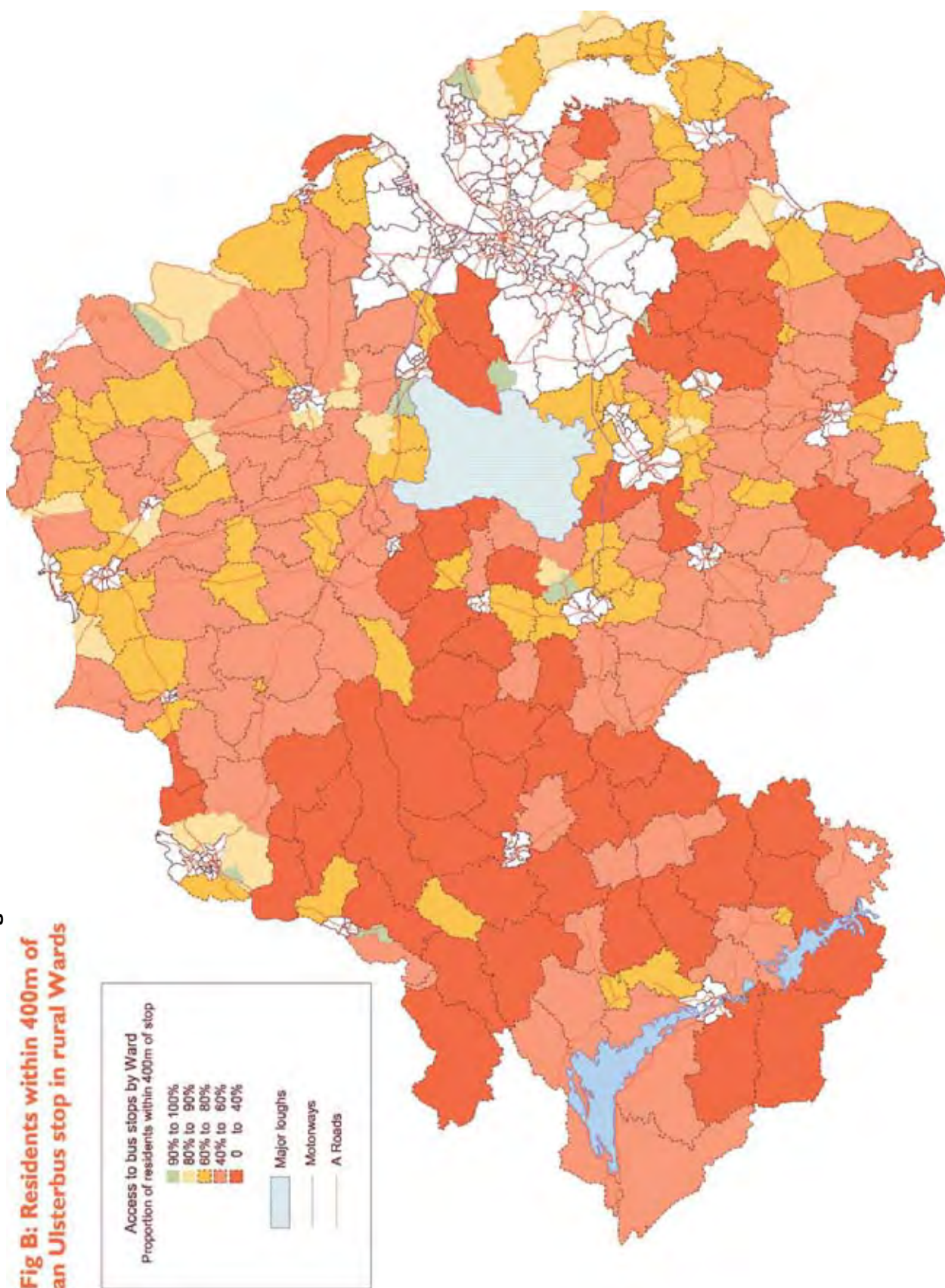
- 4.3.1. The rural road network is extensive and relatively lightly trafficked in comparison to the RSTN and urban road networks. Figure 4.1 displays the road lengths for RSTN, rural roads and urban roads expressed as a percentage of the total NI road network. The figure also displays comparable figures for traffic volumes expressed as a percentage of the NI total. The figure highlights that the rural network carries approximately the same amount of traffic in percentage terms (44.7%) as the RSTN (42%), yet is over thirteen times its length.
- 4.3.2. Beyond the RSTN, the rural road network is usually single carriageway standard and the maximum permitted speed is 60mph. Whilst at off-peak times traffic volumes are generally light, overtaking opportunities may be limited and hence average journey times can vary widely.
- 4.3.3. In general rural residents access key services by travelling to one of the 29 towns or cities in the Other Urban Areas. As a consequence rural bus services are focused on these towns and cities carrying people to work, shops and health services and children to school.

**Figure 4.1 - Road Lengths and Traffic Volumes**



- 4.3.4. Figure 4.2 shows the proportion of the population in each rural ward who live within 400 metres of an Ulsterbus stop. Note that this refers to any bus stop, and does not imply a bus service of specific minimum frequency. However, it clearly demonstrates that in much of rural Northern Ireland, especially in the north and west, the majority of people do not live within easy reach of an existing bus service.
- 4.3.5. It should however be noted that these services are supplemented, in a few cases, by conventional bus services provided by private sector operators, notably in the Ballymoney area. However, these do not significantly affect the overall results, which show that a quarter of the rural population currently receives a minimal level of service from conventional bus services. However, no-one lives in a ward with no service whatsoever.

**Figure 4.2 - Percentage of Residents within 400m of an Ulsterbus stop in the Sub-Regional Area**



Source: Translink

## **4.4 Statement of Current Problems**

- 4.4.1. Identification of problems has been drawn largely from existing sources. Market research undertaken in the preparation of the RTS has provided a significant base. Research undertaken for the Accessible Transport Strategy and annual surveys undertaken by the Statistics and Research Agency and the Roads Service Customer Satisfaction surveys has also contributed in addition to regular Roads Service consultation with District Councils.
- 4.4.2. The principal problems in the Rural Areas include:
- limited facilities for pedestrians and cyclists in some small settlements;
  - few public transport services; and
  - inadequate levels of investment in roads maintenance.

### **Walk/Cycle**

- 4.4.3 The provision of pedestrian facilities varies across rural settlements. Within some settlements there may be missing footway links. Footways are sometimes provided on one side of the road only, and there may be limited facilities to assist pedestrians in crossing roads. This may also lead to particular difficulties for older people and people with disabilities.

### **Public Transport**

- 4.4.4 Bus service frequencies and coverage are generally perceived as poor in the Rural Areas, with users claiming that “services don’t go where you want to go” or “services don’t run when you need them”. There is poor infrastructure at some stops where passengers do not have a proper footway access nor a hard standing on which to wait. Older people or people with disabilities are often prevented from using bus services because of the lack of modern, fully accessible buses on rural routes. Finally many children travel to and from school by bus, resulting in buses being crowded at particular times of the day.

### **Highways**

- 4.4.5 A number of the highway problems are related to inadequate investment in the development of rural roads and historical under-funding of their maintenance. Problems are stated in terms of uneven road surfaces, sometimes due to utility reinstatements, and hence slow journey times, but also in terms of occasional localised flooding. Other problems arise because the standard of the road is now inadequate for the volume and kind of traffic that it carries. Problems include large vehicles damaging verges and poor visibility at junctions.

## **4.5 Drivers for Change**

- 4.5.1. The key forces with potential to change transport needs in the Rural Areas are:
- the RTS drivers of transport and social exclusion and road safety;
  - planned economic interventions aimed at bringing added prosperity to the Rural Areas;

- planned growth of the rural population especially in small towns, villages and settlements; and
  - the increase in car ownership and the resulting progressive reduction in rural bus services as passenger levels drop.
- 4.5.2. Increasing awareness of the links between transport and social exclusion is a driver for change. Limited public transport services, as commonly occur in the Rural Areas, may lead to social exclusion for residents. Where households have one car, this is commonly used to travel to work leaving other members of the household dependent on public transport or lift sharing. Distances to key services make walking impractical and taxis, where available, an expensive option.
- 4.5.3. It is estimated that 59%<sup>27</sup> of fatal and serious injury collisions occurred on rural networks. This accident rate is a key driver for change. Where analyses of collisions identify recurring causes or common contributory circumstances these will be investigated and addressed appropriately. Programmes of collision remedial works will therefore be developed in response to identified needs.
- 4.5.4. Planned economic interventions and growth in the rural population will impact on the transport needs of the Rural Areas. Improved telecommunications may make electronic communication a viable option and deliver reductions in car travel. Telecommunication may take the form of teleworking (where employers encourage employees to adopt a range of remote working practices) or teleconferencing (where telecommunication is used to facilitate contacts that might otherwise have involved business travel). Depending on the extent to which employers may offer these alternatives, telecommunications has the potential to substantially reduce car travel.
- 4.5.5. The increase in car ownership in the Rural Areas, including growth in the number of households with 2 or 3 cars invariably reduces the use and hence financial viability of rural bus services. Rural bus services reduce at off-peak and interpeak times to focus on services which suit only children travelling to school or adults travelling to work in the towns. This impact of worsening bus services is to further encourage growth in car ownership hence strengthening the 'vicious circle'.

<sup>27</sup> Road Traffic Collision Statistics Annual Report 2005, available at [http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/statistics\\_branch/pg\\_road\\_traffic\\_related\\_statistics.htm](http://www.psnipolice.uk/index/statistics_branch/pg_road_traffic_related_statistics.htm)





## 5. Other Urban Areas: Proposed Measures and Costs

### 5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1. The Local Transport Studies (LTS) have identified and confirmed the value of a number of individual schemes and measures for each town and city in the Other Urban Areas. This chapter collates and summarises the proposals contained in the Local Transport Studies. It should be noted, however, that work will continue throughout the period to 2015 to identify and implement additional schemes.
- 5.1.2. Table 5.1 summarises the financial totals for measures in the OUA. The table presents three columns of figures as follows:
- RTS 2002 – 12, the sums which appear in the RTS (Table 5.4) in 2002 prices;
  - SRTP 2015, adjustment of RTS sum to account for the longer time period (1.375) and inflation to 2005 prices (1.091); and
  - LTS 2002 - 15, selected measures identified explicitly and described in this chapter.

**Table 5.1 - Summary of OUA Financial Totals (£ million)**

	RTS 2002-12 £ million (2002 prices)	SRTP 2002-15 £ million (2005 prices)	LTS 2002-15 £ million (2005 prices)
All Modes	1.1	1.7	Not Applicable
Walk/Cycle	28.4	42.6	32.8 <sup>28</sup>
Rail	9.3	14.0	5.0 <sup>29</sup>
Bus	102.7	154.1	69.5 <sup>30</sup>
Highway	368.5	552.8	73.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>510.0</b>	<b>765.2</b>	<b>180.4</b>

- 5.1.3 It should be noted that the LTS 2002-15 figures cover only those measures identified explicitly by the Local Transport Studies, and described in this chapter. For example, whilst the LTS have identified walk and cycle networks, the LTS have made no attempt to identify future residential traffic calming or collision remedial measures. Rather, financial allowance has been made for those measures to be developed in direct response to needs that arise during the period of the Transport Plan. The financial allowance is included in the total SRTP sum presented in Chapter 8.

<sup>28</sup> Includes RTS proposed expenditure for: rail access improvements at/to rail stations; and bus access improvements at bus stations 50%

<sup>29</sup> Excludes RTS proposed expenditure for access improvements at/to rail stations (£8.7 M)

<sup>30</sup> Excludes 50% of RTS proposed expenditure for access improvements at bus stations (£2.6 M).

- 5.1.4. This chapter summarises separately :
- the methodology used in identifying and confirming the most effective schemes and measures; and
  - schemes and measures proposed including highway-based and public transport measures.
- 5.1.5 Full details of the proposals for each town and city are given in the Technical Supplement.
- 5.1.6 As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual schemes and measures will be subject to the completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes.

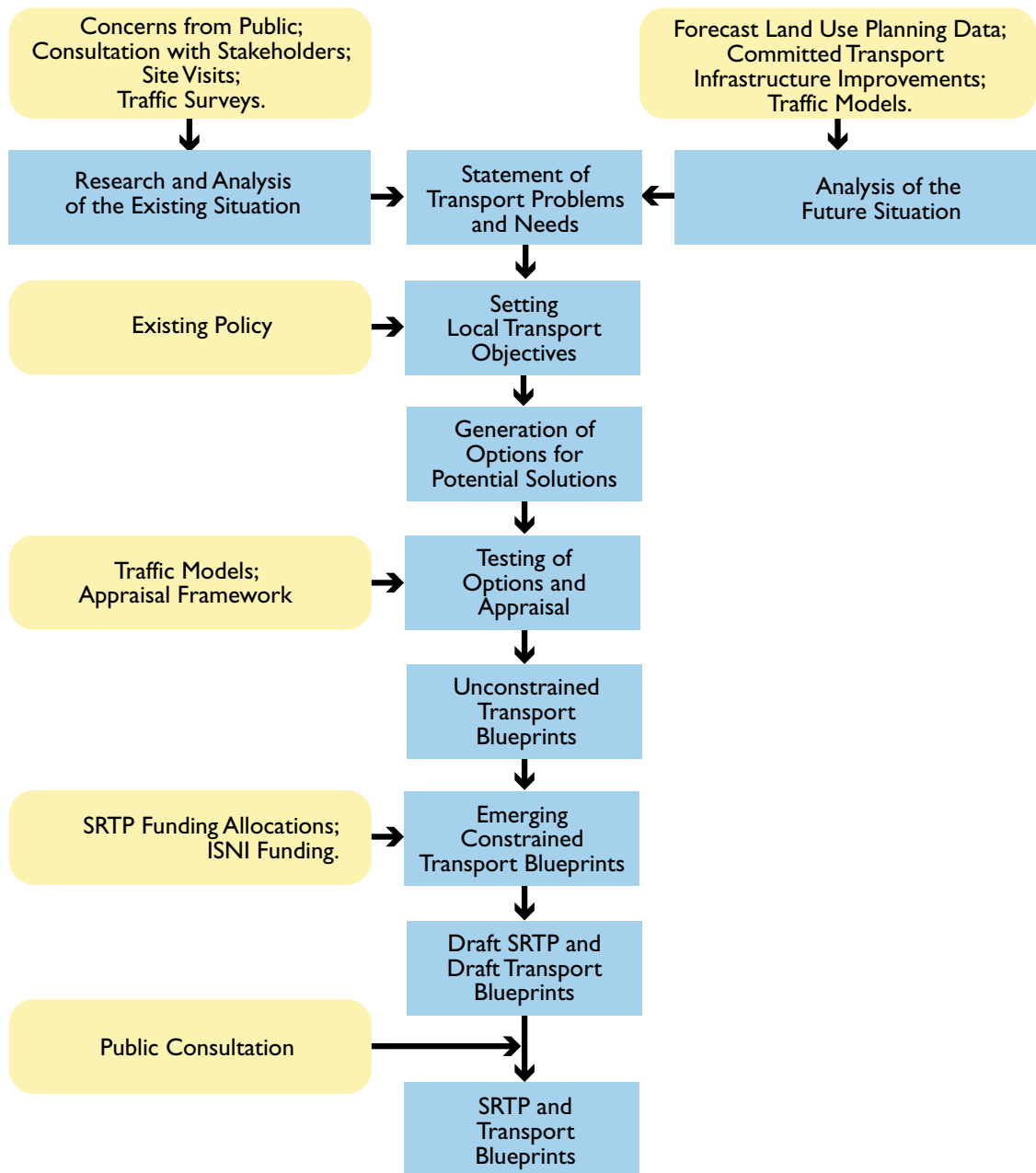
## **5.2 Methodology**

- 5.2.1. The methodology used for the Local Transport Studies is based upon best practice<sup>31</sup> and is illustrated in Figure 5.1. The methodology requires an understanding of the transport conditions in order to develop and test a number of alternative future solution measures.
- 5.2.2. The Department commissioned transport planning consultants to undertake research and analysis of the current conditions using surveys and computer models. The consultants also predicted how these conditions might change into the future, on the basis of known planning trends, and developed measures to address the problems. The measures ranged from walking, cycling and public transport facilities through to traffic management and new highway links. The computer traffic models were used to test the effectiveness of the traffic and highway measures including those that might lead to new traffic patterns. The consultants' needs-based assessments concluded with the collation of the best performing measures across a range of standard objectives<sup>32</sup>.
- 5.2.3. The Department then compared the costs of the consultants' proposals with the modal levels of spend for walk/cycle, bus, rail and highway as passed down by the RTS, and supplemented these by ISNI. The Department took into account the relative value for money of competing schemes within modal groupings and the differing characteristics and needs of each of the towns. The Draft SRTP was published for consultation in March 2006. The results of the cost comparisons were presented in the Draft Transport Blueprints for each town / city.
- 5.2.4. Following publication of the Draft SRTP, the Department undertook presentations and liaison with key stakeholders and received written consultation replies in summer 2006. The views expressed through this consultation were important in shaping the final SRTP and its Transport Blueprints. Full details of the consultation process are provided in the SRTP 2015 Consultation Process Report published separately.

<sup>31</sup> Developing Urban Transport Strategies, The Institution of Highways & Transportation, 1996

<sup>32</sup> The standard objectives are environment; safety; economy; accessibility; and integration.

**Figure 5.1 - Other Urban Areas Methodology**



## 5.3 Transport Measures

- 5.3.1. Overall, the proposed measures represent a substantial improvement in local transport provision in the 29 towns and cities. Details of the proposals for each town are given in the Technical Supplement. Whilst the proposals differ according to individual circumstance, the Department proposes a number of features that are common to the majority of towns.
- 5.3.2. The estimated total cost of the measures specifically identified in the Local Transport Studies were introduced in Table 5.1 and are presented again in Table 5.2. The costs cover the period 2002-2015 and are in 2005 prices. The figures are in line with the RTS levels of spend (extrapolated to 2015) for those specific measures adjusted for increases in line with additional ISNI-related sums.

**Table 5.2 - Costs of OUA Measures**

Mode	OUA Measures (£M)
Walk/Cycle	32.8
Rail	5.0
Bus	69.5
Highway	73.1 <sup>33</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>180.4</b>

- 5.3.3. The Walk/Cycle total has been prepared using individual estimates for each of the towns and cities comprising the Other Urban Areas. These individual estimates are presented in the Technical Supplement with each of the accompanying walk and cycle networks proposed. Aggregate unit cost rates have been assumed for the walk and cycle networks. The walk unit cost rates take account of existing facilities and assume that only a proportion of the network will require extensive works. The cycle unit cost rates take account of the significantly different costs of construction for on-road cycle lanes, shared surface walk/cycle paths and off-road exclusive cycle paths and make preliminary assumptions as to which form of provision will be required.
- 5.3.4. The Highways total has been prepared using individual estimates for each of the towns and cities comprising the Other Urban Areas. As for walk/cycle, the proposals are presented in the Technical Supplement. The highway costs have been estimated using standard cost rates appropriate for outline designs.
- 5.3.5. As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual schemes and measures will be subject to the completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes.

<sup>33</sup> These costs incorporate estimates for urban land values at 2005 prices. Therefore schemes requiring land purchase may be subject to significant cost changes in the future.



## 5.4 Walk/Cycle Measures

### Walk Measures

- 5.4.1. The Local Transport Studies have identified walk measures across NI estimated to cost £29.8 million at 2005 prices. The measures are shown in the Walking Blueprints in the Technical Supplement. The consultation on the Draft SRTP has identified additional walk measures, which are beyond the scope of the Plan but which could potentially be implemented in the future. These potential additional links are shown separately in the Walking Blueprints.
- 5.4.2. In the town or city centres the Department proposes a continuous pedestrian network, which will be designed and maintained to an appropriate standard. The aim will be to provide footways that make it easy for children's buggies and people with mobility aids to pass easily<sup>34</sup>. There should be more crossing facilities where people normally wish to cross, taking account of safety and the volume of traffic. The facilities should be appropriate to the individual circumstance and may range from the building out of the kerb, to reduce the width of the carriageway, to a signal controlled pelican crossing for which the Department's criteria will apply. The pedestrian network will include links from the town centre to the bus and rail station where required, and to car parks, both central and more distant.
- 5.4.3. Particular focus will also be given to links to schools in conjunction with the Safer Routes to School programme. This programme involves packages of measures tailored to individual circumstances to improve safety for children walking or cycling to school. The measures may include enhanced signage, road markings or other traffic management measures and infrastructure and may be implemented in conjunction with promotional initiatives to encourage children to walk or cycle.

### Cycle Measures

- 5.4.4. The Local Transport Studies have identified cycle measures across NI estimated to cost £3 million at 2005 prices. Cycle facilities are proposed where it is considered that they are most needed and most likely to be used. The provision of continuous cycle networks is considered most beneficial in towns with significant numbers of existing cyclists or where large student populations and flat cycling conditions suggest greatest potential. In some towns the narrow width of streets and steep hills make provision difficult and unlikely to be used.
- 5.4.5. Cycle facilities range from cycle parking at bus and rail stations to networks of cycle routes. Depending on road widths and physical constraints, cycle routes may be on-road cycle lanes, shared footways/cycleways or off-road paths. It should also be noted that where traffic volumes and vehicle speeds are low,

<sup>34</sup> Improvements to walking infrastructure will be undertaken having considered "Access for All", which is an underlying principle of the Northern Ireland Walking Action Plan, and "Inclusive Mobility – a guide to best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure."



cycling may be an attractive travel option for adults, without the provision of specific cycle measures.

- 5.4.6. The consultation on the Draft SRTP has confirmed the value of identifying more extensive cycle networks. In general, it is not intended that Roads Service leads on the funding and implementation of these additional cycle links but that they are used for long term planning and negotiation with developers and other stakeholders as opportunities arise. These potential additional links are shown separately in the Cycle Blueprints in the Technical Supplement but are not costed.

## **5.5 Highway Measures**

- 5.5.1. A draft parking strategy has been developed for each of the 29 towns/cities to take advantage of the improved enforcement that will result from the decriminalising of parking enforcement<sup>35</sup>. In general, the parking strategies have been devised to provide convenient short stay parking close to the town or city centre with longer stay parking located further out. Where practical, parking has also been proposed convenient to bus and rail stations to encourage public transport use by commuters. The strategies may be refined or further developed in due course in line with future changes in parking demand and accessibility.
- 5.5.2. The short stay parking will be managed by either waiting restrictions or payment, whether on-street or off-street in car parks, depending on local circumstances. In general, charging will simplify enforcement and make it more cost effective. Where charging is applied, in general the strategies seek to apply the following principles:
- highest charges in the shopping core to encourage turn over of spaces;
  - higher charges on-street than off-street – accounting for the greater convenience of on-street; and
  - lowest charges furthest from the shopping core with a premium payment for on-street spaces to discourage use in comparison to any off-street provision.
- 5.5.3. The principal reasons for divergence from the charging principles above would be :
- where town centre vitality issues suggest that any charging will have significant detrimental effect for specific stakeholders or the town in general;
  - historical context for off-street charges and for free on-street provision; and

<sup>35</sup> On 30 October 2006 DRD assumed responsibility from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) for the enforcement of on-street waiting and loading restrictions and permitted parking regulations. The introduction of decriminalised parking enforcement allows the Department to reduce traffic congestion impacts and improve highway and pedestrian safety by reducing incidences of illegally parked vehicles. Enforcement is carried out by issuing Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), non-payment of which may result in vehicles being clamped or removed.

- charging for long stay on-street spaces may conflict with residential parking needs.
- 5.5.4. The SRTP has considered the findings of the Local Transport Studies and the recommendations of the consultants regarding possible parking strategies for each of the towns and cities. The SRTP considers it will be advantageous for a degree of consistency to be applied across the range of towns and cities to the forms of parking controls and the level of charges. However, the SRTP also notes that the principal criterion must be the turn-over of short-stay parking spaces and hence the vitality of the towns and cities.
- 5.5.5. In addition, the parking strategies recognise that the introduction of DPE is likely to reduce illegal parking acts of all kinds including 'border-line' acts such as lengthy loading activities or taxis overspilling legitimate taxi stands. Therefore to reduce the instances of these acts and to promote other transportation objectives, the parking strategies propose additional exclusive provision for:
- loading vehicles – to discourage double parking or waiting on yellow lines to load, which again may cause congestion;
  - taxi stands – as explained below;
  - Blue Badge vehicles – to encourage Blue Badge holders to park in locations which will not cause traffic congestion for other road users; and
  - bus and rail passengers in Translink car parks close to the stations – to encourage the use of public transport by including the rural catchment area.
- 5.5.6. The Local Transport Studies have identified highway measures across NI estimated to cost £73.1 million at 2005 prices. These costs incorporate estimates for urban land values at 2005 prices for appropriate schemes. It should be noted therefore that schemes requiring land purchase may be subject to significant cost changes in the future. In some towns and cities, new roads are proposed to provide access to new development areas or to provide congestion relief to town centres or other environmentally sensitive areas. Where practicable, new access roads have been linked to the existing network to provide new routes. These new routes further reduce congestion on existing heavily trafficked junctions. Where these new roads are directly related to new development then developers will be expected to fully or part fund them as appropriate.
- 5.5.7. In general, towns and cities include traffic management measures to lessen the effects of forecast increases in traffic flows. The measures are designed to reduce bottlenecks at key junctions and direct traffic away from areas where there are high pedestrian flows. The proposed highway measures for each of the towns and cities are shown in the Highway Blueprint presented in the Technical Supplement.
- 5.5.8. It should be noted that some towns and cities obtain direct benefits from RSTNTP schemes. These schemes may increase capacity on existing key links

or provide new bypass routes reducing congestion in the urban centres and providing opportunities for environmental improvements.

## **5.6 Taxi Measures**

- 5.6.1. The provision of more on-street taxi stands will both provide convenient access to taxis for potential users and help taxis to fulfil their role in an integrated transport system. In addition, appropriately sized and located stands should help reduce the likelihood of traffic congestion to other road users.
- 5.6.2. In general it is proposed that each town and city should have at least one on-street taxi stand with further taxi stands considered where practical and where sufficient demand exists. Precise locations of taxi stands will be confirmed locally in conjunction with licensed taxi operators, however locations in the vicinity of bus and/or rail stations and town centre shopping areas are more likely to be prioritised. Following the proposed changes in taxi licensing<sup>36</sup>, DOE will give early consideration to introducing measures to allow only accessible taxis to stand at taxi stands at or near transport interchanges.

## **5.7 Bus Measures**

### **Town Centre Bus Facilities**

- 5.7.1. The Local Transport Studies have identified a spend of approximately £3.3 million at 2005 prices for bus facilities, combining RTS indicative funding identified for bus station access. The Department proposes to upgrade a number of bus stops in towns and cities where necessary. Particular attention will be given to the stops in the town centre and other well-used stops in housing areas. The Department will refer to its own best practice guide in designing each stop<sup>37</sup>. Whilst the final decisions need to be taken after detailed local consideration and consultation, the Department envisages the following approach.
- key town/city centre stops provided with shelters. Kerbs to be raised to allow all passengers, including those with buggies and wheelchairs to board fully accessible low floor buses;
  - bus stop road markings and surfacing in red to discourage illegal parking and loading, enforced as a matter of priority and kept under continuous review. Where these measures prove ineffective further measures including bus boarders will be considered;
  - well-used stops close to shops, schools or hospitals to be provided with raised kerbs and shelters; and
  - each stop to have up-to-date information on the services using the stop. This information must be easy to read and understand.

<sup>36</sup> Taxis (Northern Ireland) Order 2007, see section 2.6

<sup>37</sup> Bus Stop Design Guide available at [www.roadsni.gov.uk](http://www.roadsni.gov.uk)

- 5.7.2. Traffic management measures will be considered in towns to reduce congestion and, where appropriate, provide priority for bus services. Schemes to allow buses to enter or exit bus stations and measures on corridors with frequent bus services are likely to be the most practical in terms of their design and justification of value for money. In addition, specific car parking provision will be made convenient to bus stations with commuter coach services. It is noted that systems will be required to ensure that the spaces are used exclusively by coach passengers. A partnership approach between Roads Service and bus operators will be adopted to ensure that infrastructure and service improvements are developed and delivered in a compatible manner (see also para 10.2 regarding implementation proposals).

### **Local Bus Services**

- 5.7.3. Through its Ulsterbus Strategic Review<sup>38</sup> (USR), Translink will seek to introduce additional local town or city bus services where viable. Modern fully accessible low floor buses would run these services to frequent, user friendly, clock-face<sup>39</sup> timetables throughout the day. The routes will join the residential areas to the town or city centre and the main shopping centres and places of work. In general medium-sized buses will be operated allowing them to use residential streets where appropriate. The new services are planned to be implemented by the end of 2008. The routes will be refined and kept up to date as new commercial properties and residential areas are developed.
- 5.7.4. Ideally every town would have services that operate 7 days a week and for over 12 hours a day. However, realistically there needs to be a balance between cost to the Department (in subsidy) and level of service offered to the public. The Department (through Translink) is investigating the potential cost of running these services with a range of different timetables. It is also recognised that there will be cases where many people do not require a bus service, as the distances involved are short enough to encourage walking.
- 5.7.5. Based on the analysis for developing minimum standards (outlined in paragraphs 3.4.4 - 3.4.7), 25 of the OUA require improved bus services. In these towns and cities current services to the centre will be enhanced in terms of frequency and hours of operation. The operating hours will relate to population size. Table 5.3 summarises the Translink proposals. These are indicative levels of service, and many (daytime) frequencies can and should be higher, especially in the larger towns and cities. It is noticeable that, in a number of towns/cities, Translink's proposals for 2008 will substantially exceed the SRTP indicative levels of service for the period up to 2015.

<sup>38</sup> Ulsterbus Strategic Review – See paragraphs 2.5.6 - 2.5.9

<sup>39</sup> Clock face frequencies- service operate at the same time every hour e.g.8:05, 8:35, 9:05, 9:35, 10:05 etc.

**Table 5.3 - Proposed daily period of hourly service operation (Mon – Fri)**

Proposed Operating period <sup>40</sup> / day	Towns / Cities	Proposed Operating Period under USR <sup>41</sup>
4 Hours	Portrush	14.5-17 hours
	Kilkeel	7 hours
	Ballynahinch	7 hours
	Ballycastle	8 hours
7 Hours	Ballymoney	N/A <sup>42</sup>
	Comber	7 hours
	Magherafelt	10.5 hours
	Portstewart	14.5-17 hours
	Newcastle	9-10 hours
	Warrenpoint	N/A <sup>42</sup>
11 Hours	Omagh	9.5-11 hours
	Larne	10 hours
	Banbridge	11 hours
	Armagh	9-10.5 hours
	Enniskillen	9-11 hours
	Strabane	7-10.5 hours
	Limavady	10 hours
	Dungannon	11 hours
	Cookstown	10.5 hours
	Downpatrick	9-10 hours
	Craigavon	9-10 hours
13 Hours	Ballymena	10-11 hours
	Newtownards	10-11 hours
	Newry	12-15 hours
	Coleraine	10.5 hours
	Antrim	10.5 hours
	Portadown	9-10 hours
	Lurgan	9-10 hours
17 Hours	Londonderry	9-16 hours

5.7.6. While the majority of needs are likely to be served best by extended hours of operation of (existing or modified) conventional bus services, some alternative models will also be trialled including the use of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) taxibuses and minibuses. Any proposals for new services or future pilot studies will be subject to detailed economic appraisal and the availability of funds through the normal budgetary processes.

<sup>40</sup> Period over which a frequency of at least one bus per hour is maintained

<sup>41</sup> Proposed operating periods likely to be achieved by 2008 through the USR for towns with Translink services.

<sup>42</sup> Town services in Ballymoney and Warrenpoint are operated by independent operators.

- 5.7.7. Improved town services introduced in both the Coleraine and Londonderry areas in 2006 through the USR are already showing large increases in passenger numbers. Table 5.3 shows the proposed periods of 'hourly' town service operation likely to be achieved in each of the OUA by completion of the first phase of the USR in 2008.
- 5.7.8. The RTS identified a spend of approximately £45.6 million (at 2005 prices) to improve local town services. However, any proposals for improvements will be subject to detailed economic appraisal and the availability of funds through the normal budgetary processes.

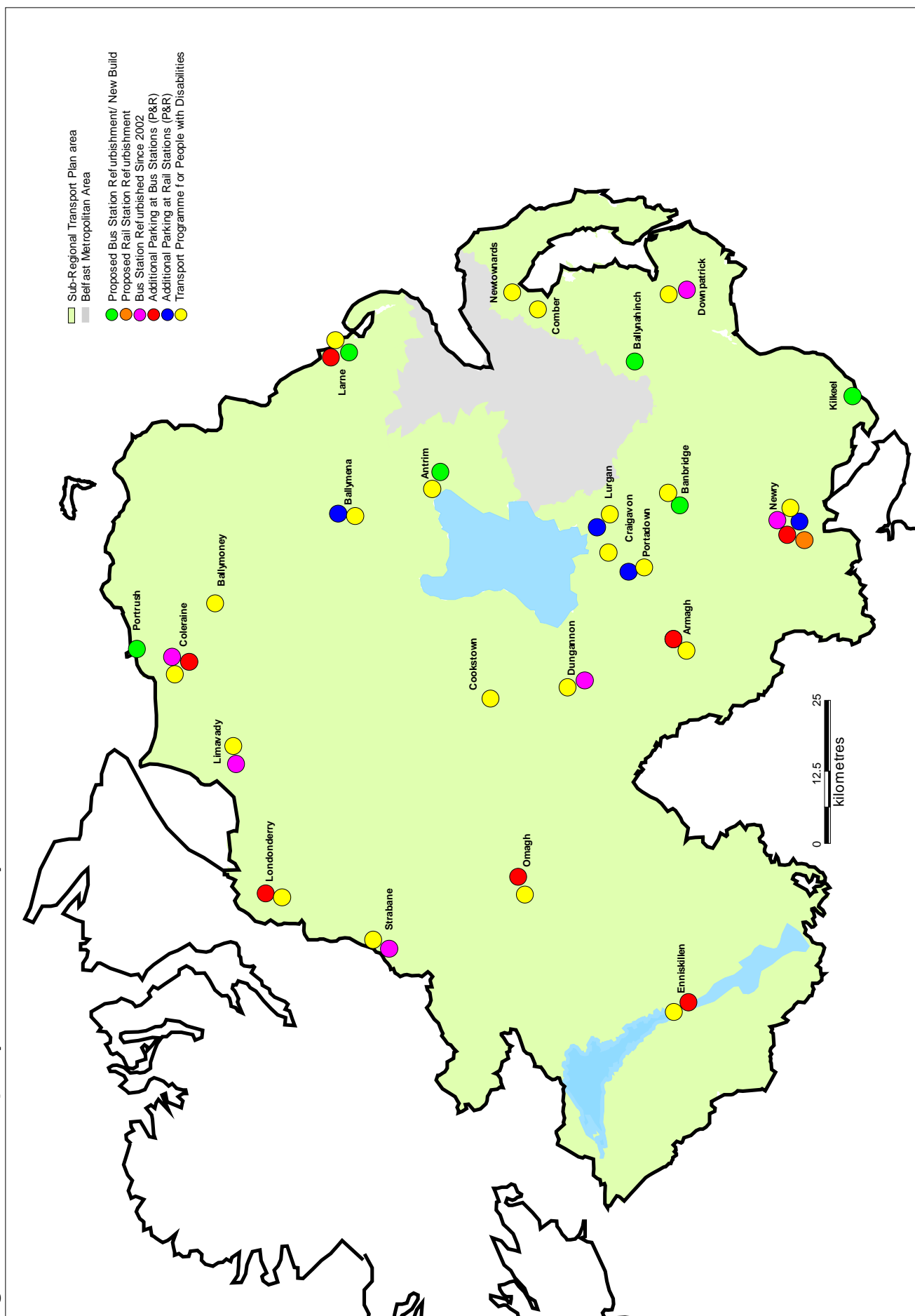
### **Refurbishment of Bus Stations**

- 5.7.9. The Local Transport Studies have identified a spend of approximately £10.5 million at 2005 prices for bus station refurbishment. Figure 5.2 presents the towns and cities proposed to benefit from a new or refurbished bus station and from additional parking.
- 5.7.10. The proposals will be examined and decided within the context of local Development Plans and the Ulsterbus Strategic Network Review. All bus station improvements will be designed to ensure full accessibility and therefore will comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995<sup>43</sup>. In addition, where appropriate, the Department will work in partnership with Translink to provide additional conveniently located car parking spaces. These spaces will be managed by Translink to ensure their exclusive use by passengers making onward journeys by bus and coach.

<sup>43</sup> The Disability Discrimination Act aims to end the discrimination experienced by many people with disabilities by establishing enforceable rights in the areas of employment, access to goods, facilities and services, and buying or letting of premises. It also allows Government to set minimum standards so that people with disabilities can use public transport more easily.



**Figure 5.2 - Location of Proposed Public Transport Measures 2002 - 2015**



## **Transport Programme for People with Disabilities**

- 5.7.11. The Transport Programme for People with Disabilities (TPPD) funds door-to-door accessible transport services for people with disabilities or for those who find mainstream public transport either difficult or impossible to use. Until recently, door-to-door services were only available in Belfast (operated by Disability Action) and Londonderry (run by Bridge Accessible Transport).
- 5.7.12. TPPD also funds a number of Shopmobility schemes, which provide electrically powered wheelchairs, scooters and manual wheelchairs to help people who have limited mobility to shop and use their local facilities/amenities. Schemes in the Sub-Regional Area include Newtownards, Foyle, Magherafelt and Newry.
- 5.7.13. The RTS identified a total spend of approximately £10.95 million (at 2005 prices) for the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities (TPPD) within the Rural and OUA during the SRTP period. However, since 2002, much higher levels of TPPD funding have been secured with a current annual spend in excess of £4.0 million across Northern Ireland<sup>44</sup>.
- 5.7.14. Through this increased funding, the Department has recently extended its provision of door-to-door transport services for mobility impaired people. These new services were first introduced to Dungannon on 29 September 2006, and are being rolled out to every urban area with a population of 10,000 or more in the Sub-Regional Area by the Summer 2007. Figure 5.2 shows the towns and cities to be served by this scheme.
- 5.7.15. The new TPPD services will be complemented by the existing Rural Community Transport Partnerships which offer travel opportunities for mobility impaired residents living in those OUA not covered by the proposed door-to-door services (i.e. areas with a population of less than 10,000).

## **Bus-based Park and Ride**

- 5.7.16. Bus-based Park and Ride is now widely used in cities as part of integrated transport systems. The aim of Park and Ride is to remove parking spaces from the city centre and to reduce traffic on congested urban networks whilst ensuring that the city centre remains accessible from its outer catchments by private car. Park and Ride encourages commuters and shoppers to leave their vehicles on the edge of the city in purpose built car-parks and transfer to dedicated bus services for the final part of their journey.
- 5.7.17. The costs of Bus-based Park and Ride are associated with the provision of the purpose built car park and the operation of dedicated bus services. Revenue is generated by charging on the basis of the bus journey or the length of parking stay. Subsequently, Park and Ride is generally only viable in cities where there is heavy congestion and pressure on central parking.

<sup>44</sup> This figure includes TPPD funding within the greater Belfast area which is covered by the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan.

- 5.7.18. The Local Transport Studies have identified a potential for Park and Ride in Londonderry and possibly Ballymena, in the longer term. The studies have also estimated total costs for land purchase, construction and bus operations at approximately £2 million per site for ten years<sup>45</sup>. The SRTP therefore makes an allowance of £5 million for Bus-based Park and Ride in the OUA. The SRTP makes separate provision for car parking at bus and rail stations as part of the parking strategies. It should also be noted that Christmas Park and Ride and one-off 'events' operations may also continue to play a role, but are not included in the cost estimate.

## **5.8 Rail Measures**

- 5.8.1. The rail network forms part of the Regional Strategic Transport Network (RSTN). Individual rail schemes and projects in support of the RTS are considered in the RSTNTP. However, proposals for access improvements and refurbishment at main rail stations in the OUA are recorded also as part of the SRTP. The Local Transport Studies have identified a spend of approximately £5.0 million at 2005 prices for station refurbishment. Figure 5.2 includes these improvements including additional car parking where opportunities have been identified.
- 5.8.2. Rail stations across the network are also being upgraded. The improvements include ramps or lifts to facilitate access to high-level platforms, station access, and car parking facilities for disabled persons. These improvements will mean that the stations will comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 5.8.3. Translink has also introduced a corporate culture change programme which seeks to maximise the benefits associated with the capital investment. The programme is designed to encourage staff in Northern Ireland Railways to take a more proactive approach to customer service with the aim of achieving higher levels of customer satisfaction.

<sup>45</sup> Assumes car park with 300 spaces.





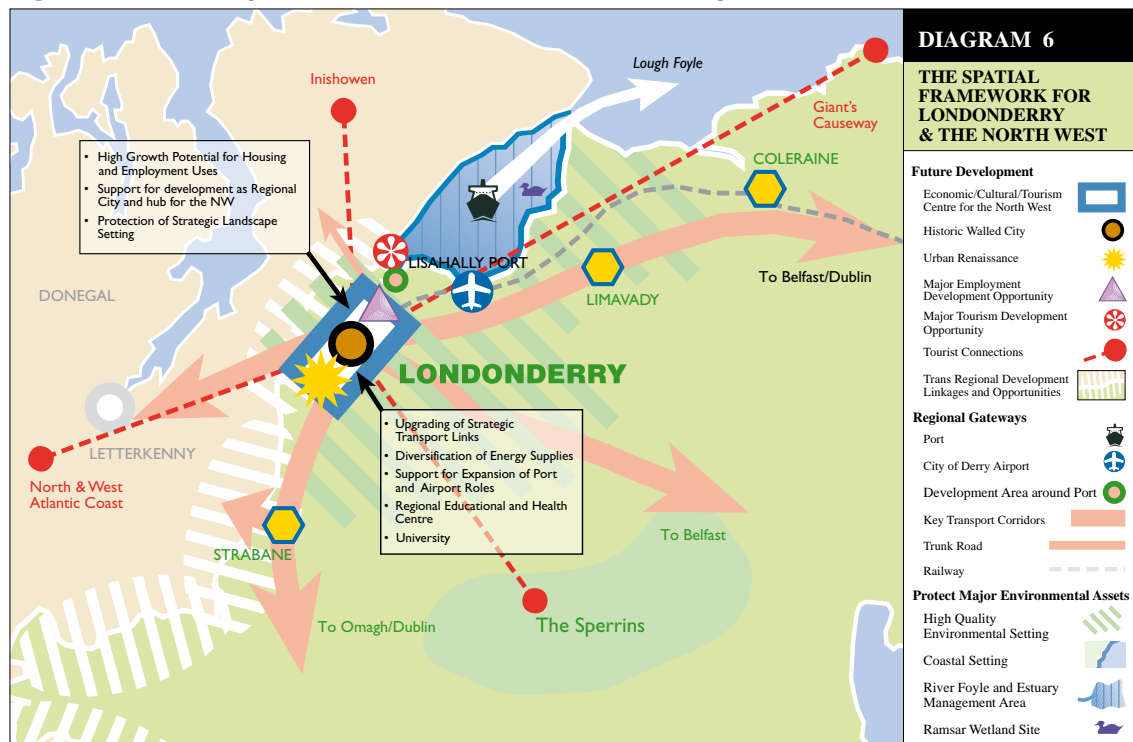


## 6. Londonderry Urban Area

### 6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1. Londonderry is, by far, the largest urban area<sup>46</sup> in Northern Ireland outside Belfast and is designated “Regional City of the North West” by the RDS. This designation arises from the city’s role as a centre for the North West of Ireland, servicing Donegal and the counties of Tyrone and Londonderry, and providing a range of key services including education, commercial and retail, see Figure 6.1 (taken from the RDS).

**Figure 6.1 - The Spatial Framework for Londonderry & The North West**



- 6.1.2. The RTS recognised that the size of the city gives rise to urban transport issues of a scale not generally found in the other towns and cities outside Belfast. Consequently the RTS gave a commitment that the SRTP “will fully recognise the urban needs of Londonderry as the regional city for the North West”. This summary chapter, the Technical Supplement and the supporting Local Transport Study of Londonderry published separately, fulfil that commitment.
- 6.1.3. As of the 2001 Census, the total Derry City Council area has a population of 105,000 of which almost 91,000 reside in the urban area of Londonderry spanning the River Foyle. The characteristics and proposed solutions for the rural area within Derry City Council are considered quite similar to those elsewhere in Northern Ireland. Subsequently this chapter deals only with the Londonderry urban area. It should be noted that, in keeping with the RTS area-based approach, this chapter supplements the chapters on the Other Urban Areas.

<sup>46</sup> 2001 Census gives the population of Londonderry as 90,736. The next largest is Craigavon with 57,685 then Ballymena with 28,717.



- 6.1.4. The remainder of this chapter is structured along the lines of the SRTP report, and deals in turn with:
- key characteristics including personal travel choices and current problems; and
  - proposed measures, by mode of transport.

## 6.2 Key Characteristics

### Key Features

- 6.2.1. Londonderry has a number of key features which have a bearing on its transport functions, both present and future. Its airport and seaport in combination with its border location make it a natural centre for the North West of Ireland. This role is recognised by the RDS and by the Republic of Ireland's National Spatial Strategy<sup>47</sup> which formally designates Derry in conjunction with Letterkenny as "linked gateways".
- 6.2.2. As the regional centre, Londonderry therefore generates and attracts substantial cross-border commuting traffic flows in addition to accommodating strategic cross-border traffic throughout the day. In addition, so-called 'fuel tourism', where Northern Ireland residents travel across the border to fill-up on the cheaper fuel, contributes significantly to this traffic and there are no clear indications that this practice will not continue for some time. In general cross-border flows are focussed on the A2 Buncrana Road and A2 Culmore Road.
- 6.2.3. The population of the city has grown in recent years<sup>48</sup> with the trend for reduced household sizes leading to a demand for new housing and an increase in car ownership. In general, the city's natural topographical constraints have lead to an extension of the built-up area in a northerly direction towards the border.
- 6.2.4. Recently, the former military bases at Ebrington on the Waterside, and Fort George on the Cityside have been released by Government for development. These are substantial urban holdings and their successful development is viewed as key to the future of the city. ILEX<sup>49</sup> has been given responsibility for their development.

<sup>47</sup> National Spatial Strategy for Ireland 2002 - 2020 People, Places and Potential, The Stationery Office, Dublin 2002

<sup>48</sup> The Urban Regeneration Baseline Study, Ilex 2005, noted a population growth of 7.7% over 1991 – 2001 in Derry City Council area.

<sup>49</sup> ILEX Urban Regeneration Company is an executive Non Departmental Public Body (NDPB) which was established in July 2003 by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister and the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland. ILEX has the mission "To create and promote a deliverable vision for the regeneration of Derry~Londonderry, to secure the community's commitment to that vision and to pursue single-mindedly its implementation".

## Personal Travel

- 6.2.5. Census statistics for 2001 show a relatively high proportion of persons travelling to work by public transport or walk or cycle. This is consistent with a relatively self contained city and low levels of car ownership. In addition the statistics represent an opportunity to promote continued use of these sustainable modes. However, in recent years with improving economic conditions, car ownership and hence traffic levels have grown at an average rate of over 2% per annum<sup>50</sup>.

## Transport Networks

- 6.2.6. The principal external transport linkages are shown in Figure 6.1. These external links and the internal transport networks are outlined below.

### Highway

- 6.2.7. Londonderry is distinctive in that a number of Regional Strategic Transport Network roads (comprising the Key Transport Corridors and Trunk Roads as termed in Figure 6.1) run through the city. These strategic roads link with Belfast (A6), Omagh and Dublin (A5), Limavady, airport and port (A2), and Letterkenny (N13). They feed traffic into the city and provide, with the Craigavon and Foyle Bridges a riverside network 'box'. These roads provide the main routes for local traffic, in addition to carrying longer distance traffic, and are congested at peak periods.
- 6.2.8. On the Waterside this congestion is exacerbated by the very limited secondary or local network. On the Cityside by contrast, Northland Road and Creggan Road provide secondary routes linking the city centre with residential areas to the north, whilst Racecourse Road fulfils a similar function to the east. These secondary roads have relatively low traffic capacities due to their widths, roadside developments and, in particular, their junctions. Currently Madam's Bank Road and Crescent Link provide the only high capacity orbital links. An eastern bypass route linking A6 (Belfast) with A2/N13 (Letterkenny) will not be complete until Skeoge Link is constructed.

## Public Transport

- 6.2.9. Londonderry is connected by rail to Coleraine and on to Belfast. However the timetable is limited and as the line is of one of the lesser-used lines<sup>51</sup> there are no current plans for significant improvements to the rail services<sup>52</sup>. The rail station is located on the east bank of the Foyle close to the Craigavon Bridge. Whilst there is a co-ordinated bus service, the station is relatively inconvenient for the city centre. By contrast, the coach service between the city and Belfast using the A6 has been growing in popularity and Ulsterbus now operate a much enhanced service with coaches at frequencies of 15 minutes during the

<sup>50</sup> Review of traffic data at permanent automatic traffic count sites between 1999 and 2004 provides a total growth of 11.9%. Source: Roads Service Traffic and Travel Information 2004.

<sup>51</sup> The lesser used lines are defined as those north of Ballymena and Whitehead.

<sup>52</sup> This is due for review as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review in late 2007

peak period. Coach services operate from the bus and coach station in Foyle Street in the city centre, with easy access to the Foyle Expressway.

- 6.2.10. Local bus services are operated by Ulsterbus and Lough Swilly Bus Company. Most recently, Ulsterbus has launched new improved services across the city, based on the objectives of the RTS and the standards prescribed in the Draft SRTP. These Ulsterbus Foyle services appear to be popular and early indications are that the improved levels of service will be sustained. Ulsterbus Foyle buses operate from Foyle Street. Passenger facilities at stops are currently relatively poor however and buses are also delayed by general traffic. Lough Swilly also operate services between Donegal and Londonderry. In some outer areas of the city these provide the sole service.
- 6.2.11. Local taxi operators provide shared taxi services to residential areas in the west of the city from Foyle Street on a 'fill up and go' basis. Taxis also operate on a conventional basis in the city. There are also taxi stands in William Street and Sackville Street.

### **Current Problems**

- 6.2.12. Current transport problems in the city arise chiefly from increasing traffic levels. There is congestion at peak times throughout the day on the main radial routes into the city, with significant delays at the junctions. These delays affect coaches, buses and taxis with Ulsterbus Foyle in particular finding difficulties in operating to timetable. At a few specific junctions to the north of the city centre, heavy traffic queues close to properties have contributed to pollutants exceeding accepted levels, and therefore a Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) area<sup>53</sup> has been designated. Parking problems arise in the city, with commuter parking encroaching into residential areas to find unrestricted spaces, free from payment.

### **Drivers for Change**

- 6.2.13. The principal drivers for change include the continued development of the city in response to planned population growth and trends in household size. The development includes the ILEX sites and Roads Service proposals for upgrades to the A2, A5 and A6 on the approaches to the city.
- 6.2.14. The development planned in the Derry Area Plan, will undoubtedly put the existing road network under further pressure. However a large part of the development is planned for the Buncrana Road axis where it can be accommodated, in some measure, by additional strategic radial and orbital road improvements and by additional bus services provided in conjunction with the private sector developers. Nevertheless periods of congestion and delay will lengthen focussing on the key junctions, the strategic riverside box and the secondary radials.
- 6.2.15. The ILEX sites present a substantial new opportunity for the city. Their inner city locations and their scale require that careful consideration is given to the

<sup>53</sup> The LAQM area incorporates parts of Creggan Road, Windsor Terrace on Infirmary Road, Creggan Street and Marlborough Terrace on Lone Moor Road.

provision of supporting transport infrastructure. The resulting developments and supporting infrastructure have the potential to significantly reshape the city centre and its transport networks, however this may take some time to bring to fruition.

- 6.2.16. Roads Service is progressing proposals for upgrades to all the main arterial routes into the city— A2 from the airport to Maydown, A2 Buncrana Road, A5 Londonderry to Strabane route and the A6 Londonderry to Dungiven route. There are a number of alternative options for how these routes may link to the Londonderry urban network. However, in any event, the strategic riverside box will continue to experience substantial traffic growth as traffic rebalances across the two bridges.

## **6.3 Proposed Measures**

### **Methodology**

- 6.3.1. The Derry Local Transport Study has tested a number of potential local transport measures and proposed a balanced package of measures. Where appropriate, the tests have made use of a computerised traffic model representation of peak conditions. The model was built using traffic data which included both local and strategic traffic, including cross-border flows. The tests have assumed the implementation of a number of Strategic Road improvements<sup>54</sup>. The Derry Local Transport Study has not considered the impacts of the development of the ILEX sites as proposals are just emerging and there is no firm timescale for implementation.
- 6.3.2. The model has shown that by 2015 transport measures will be required to mitigate increased traffic growth in the city. Due to the limited opportunities to substantially improve the highway network capacity, the achievement of modal shift to sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport is very beneficial to the operation of the city's highway network. Modal shift is also viewed as having realistic potential in view of the city's compact size. The proposed measures therefore include a balanced set of improvements across all modes. However, even with the proposed improvements, including both local and strategic highway network improvements, traffic conditions at peak times could deteriorate.

### **Proposed Measures**

- 6.3.3. Figure 6.2 highlights a number of the proposed measures. The full range of proposed measures across the urban area include:
- walk network improvements – to make walking an attractive option for short length journeys in the city, especially the city centre, and to improve access to bus services and peripheral car parking;
  - cycle network improvements – to encourage use of cycle for medium

<sup>54</sup> Refer to the consultation paper, "Expanding the Strategic Road Improvement Programme 2015" published in June 2006.

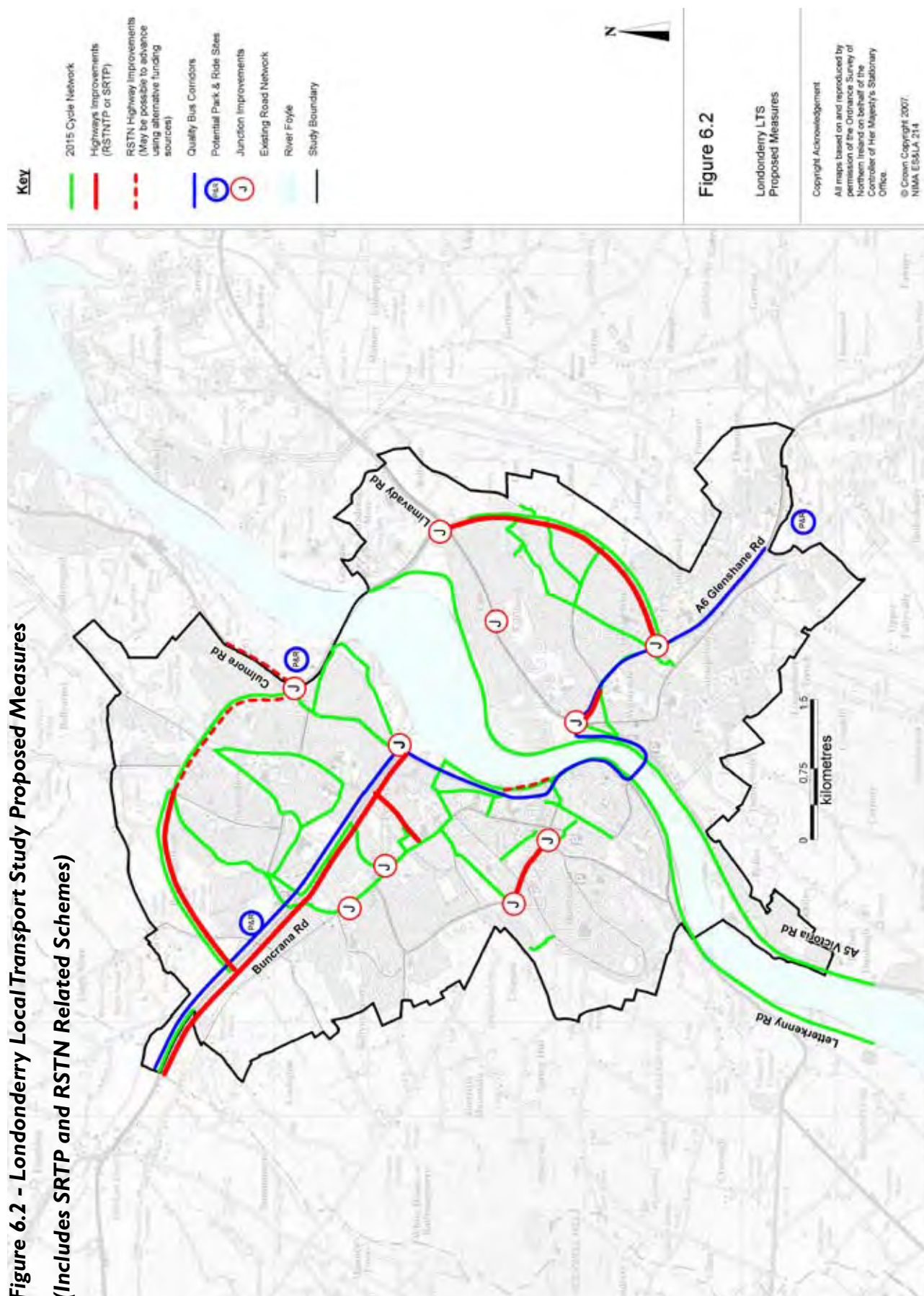
- length journeys in the city, especially from the residential areas, making full use of the opportunities offered by the riverside route;
- improved infrastructure to support investment in the new Ulsterbus Foyle bus network – to encourage use of public transport and modal shift from private car for commuting journeys;
  - new taxi stands – to improve facilities for all users;
  - establishment of a Quality Bus Corridor on the Buncrana Road – Altnagelvin route, with appropriate bus priority measures and upgraded bus frequencies in conjunction with Ulsterbus;
  - bus-based park & ride sites to be investigated at Buncrana Road and Drumahoe in conjunction with the Quality Bus Corridor, and at Culmore Road;
  - parking strategy – to encourage availability and turn over of convenient short stay spaces in the city centre and appropriate levels of long stay commuter parking at peripheral locations combined with Residents' Parking schemes;
  - strategic highway improvements, principally on the Regional Strategic Transport Network – to accommodate, where practicable, planned growth in strategic traffic (note: the proposed improvements include schemes not confirmed in the RSTNTP which may be possible to advance using alternative funding sources); and
  - local highway and traffic improvements, associated with the SRTP – to ameliorate, where practicable, future problems arising on the local network.

## Other Issues

- 6.3.4. The Local Transport Study has undertaken preliminary tests to consider the potential traffic role of a third bridge and of an outer western orbital route. The tests did not assess environmental impacts, detailed engineering feasibility or precise construction costs. These tests suggest that, in terms of traffic congestion relief, the location of a third bridge is critical whilst an outer western orbital could provide substantial relief but it would require careful consideration of linkages to the existing network. Further study of these other issues will be necessary.



**Figure 6.2 - Londonderry Local Transport Study Proposed Measures  
(Includes SRTP and RSTN Related Schemes)**







**FAST**  
Rural Transport Ltd  
FERMANAGH AND SOUTH TYRONE

Translink  
PUBLIC TRANSPORT

## 7. Rural Areas: Proposed Measures and Costs

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1. The needs of the Rural Areas have been considered separately for:

- settlements; and
- open countryside.

7.1.2. It would not have been cost effective to have considered the needs of each settlement individually and of the open countryside on a detailed basis. Rather, the Transport Plan has drawn on existing knowledge from earlier studies<sup>55</sup>, recent public transport analyses conducted on behalf of Ports and Public Transport Division and from local knowledge provided by Roads Service officers who communicate regularly with elected representatives, District Council officials and the general public.

7.1.3. Table 7.1 summarises the total costs in the Rural Areas. The second column presents the RTS rural figures and the third extrapolates these to 2015 and inflates to 2005 prices. The fourth and final column presents the specific measures proposed in this chapter. The figures are based upon the third column adjusted to correspond to the measures described.

**Table 7.1 - Summary of Rural Financial Totals (£ million)**

	<b>RTS 2002-12 £ million (2002 prices)</b>	<b>S RTP 2002-15 £ million (2005 prices)</b>	<b>Rural Measures 2002-15 £ million (2005 prices)</b>
All Modes	1.9	2.9	0
Walk/Cycle	16.0	24.0	16.2
Rail	0.4	0.6	0
Bus	199.1	298.7	87.6
Highway	819.0	1228.6	40.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1036.4</b>	<b>1554.8</b>	<b>143.9</b>

7.1.4. Unlike the Other Urban Areas, where individual Blueprints of measures have been identified for all towns and cities, a list of schemes and measures has not been identified for each rural settlement. However the general principles of the measures identified in the Blueprints apply equally in the rural settlements. In addition, however, prioritising systems will be needed to confirm the order in which the settlements should be improved and those measures that should be implemented first. As currently applied by Roads Service, annual programmes prepared for District Councils will continue to be the principal method of control and will ensure an equitable division of improvements. Care will be taken to ensure that, where possible, schemes are implemented in an integrated manner to minimise construction costs and inconvenience and to maximise benefits.

<sup>55</sup> Studies undertaken in support of the Regional Development Strategy, the Regional Transportation Strategy, the Accessible Transport Strategy and the Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan.

## Structure

7.1.5. This chapter summarises the proposals separately as follows:

- measures in settlements; and
- measures/approach in open countryside.

7.1.6. As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual schemes and measures will be subject to the completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes.

## 7.2 Measures in Settlements

7.2.1. There are a large number of settlements in the Rural Areas, each with its own characteristics and transportation needs. However, our analysis indicated that there were a number of problems that occurred most frequently. Footways with a section missing and bus stops without basic facilities are common examples. Whilst these problems have common solutions, each settlement will need to be considered individually to design appropriate improvement measures.

7.2.2. Rural settlements will, where appropriate, be considered for measures including both highway-based and public transport improvements. Care will be taken in their design to ensure that, where possible, they complement each other. The range of measures are outlined below.

## Walk/Cycle Measures

7.2.3. The Department proposes, as far as practical, to provide missing footway links within the built-up areas of settlements. Special attention will be paid to links, both pedestrian and cycle as appropriate, between schools and residential areas. Delivery of such schemes may be complemented by the 'Safer Routes to Schools' (SRS) initiative.

7.2.4. The Department also proposes to provide continuous pedestrian footways to link residential developments or community facilities on the edge of the settlement to the built-up area. It is noted that this may require an extended length of footway on one side of the road only. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to stop the footway on one side of the road and continue on the other side. In such a case, particular attention will be given to pedestrian crossing facilities. Improvements to walking infrastructure will be undertaken having considered best practice on access to pedestrian and transport infrastructure.

7.2.5. In line with PPS3 and integrated development planning, the Department, through Planning Service, will seek to ensure that developers play their part in providing links from new developments to existing footways and cycle infrastructure within settlements.

7.2.6. There should be more crossing facilities where people normally wish to cross, taking account of safety and the volume of traffic. The facilities should



be appropriate to the individual circumstance and may range from the building out of the kerb to reduce the width of the carriageway to a signal controlled pelican crossing for which the Department's criteria will apply. The recent review of the controlled pedestrian crossing criteria may provide the opportunity to construct further crossings where appropriate.

- 7.2.7. Traffic calming measures to reduce inappropriate speeds and volumes will be considered where demand occurs. Such schemes may provide further opportunities to improve pedestrian crossing facilities where people wish to cross. In addition, in general on main routes through settlements, gateway features with 30mph signing will be appropriate.

## **Highway Measures**

- 7.2.8. As outlined above, it would not have been cost effective to have considered the needs of each settlement and to have produced individual highway and traffic blueprints for each settlement. In practice the measures outlined for the towns and cities will be appropriate for the rural settlements, however, individual locations have not been identified here. It is proposed that the current Roads Service practice of continuous assessment and improvement in conjunction with local consultation will continue. Accordingly Roads Service expects to provide traffic management measures to lessen the effects of increases in traffic flows and, to apply appropriate parking controls in line with local requirements.

## **Bus Measures**

- 7.2.9. The Department proposes that each settlement has at least two principal bus stops equipped to modern standards. These principal stops will be provided with a raised kerb to allow all passengers, including those with buggies and wheelchairs to board fully accessible low floor buses. Each stop will have up-to-date information on the services using that stop and have a convenient shelter and adjacent crossing facilities if appropriate.
- 7.2.10. The Department proposes to introduce new services linking isolated communities to villages and towns. The services will be operated by fully accessible low floor buses. Indicative service standards have therefore been established which set out targets for settlements varied by total population. These have been translated into the minimum levels of service for settlements shown in Table 7.2.
- 7.2.11. The Department is investigating the potential cost of meeting these minimum service levels for rural settlements through the provision of both conventional bus services and flexible-route minibuses using fully accessible vehicles. Taking into consideration these proposed service levels, Translink's Ulsterbus Strategic Review is facilitating the ongoing enhancement of rural transport provision by providing simplified and, where appropriate, more frequent services across Northern Ireland.

**Table 7.2 - Proposed service levels for rural settlements**

Settlement	Population Band population	Service Frequency	Notes
Other Small Towns	4500 - 5000	6	6 return journeys every weekday
Villages and Intermediate Settlements	1000 - 4499	3	3 return journeys every weekday
Small Village	500 - 999	1	1 return journey every weekday

- 7.2.12. For hamlets and small villages with a population of less than 500, a proposed service frequency of 2 return services per week is envisaged. It is unlikely that this will be achieved using conventional bus services alone, but may require the introduction of new DRT initiatives similar to the proposals for the open countryside.
- 7.2.13. The Department has initiated a pilot bus subsidy scheme outside Belfast. As part of the scheme any licensed bus operator can bid for subsidy to support the provision of a new stage carriage transport service which is uneconomic to run but is socially necessary.

### **Rural Transport Fund**

- 7.2.14. Rural bus services are complemented by Rural Community Transport Partnerships with operating areas covering approximately 95% of rural Northern Ireland. The partnerships offer a range of transport opportunities to mobility impaired residents (including the elderly) living in the small towns and the Rural Areas.
- 7.2.15. The partnerships are operated by local community-based groups supported by DRD through the Rural Transport Fund (RTF) and with assistance from Translink to maintain their fleet of buses. The buses are used to provide door-to-door or group hire services for a variety of needs including travel to work, educational outings and health and shopping journeys for any rural dweller who is mobility impaired, including older people.
- 7.2.16. Table 7.3 summarises the number of passengers carried by each Partnership in 2004/05, using either minibus operations or social car scheme<sup>56</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> Social car schemes in Northern Ireland use volunteer drivers to provide transport opportunities for older people and people with disabilities. Volunteer drivers use their own cars to give people lifts and will normally receive a payment to cover petrol costs. The most common journey purposes for people who use these schemes are getting to the doctor or a hospital appointment.

**Table 7.3 - Rural Community Transport Partnership Activities 2005/06**

Partnership name	Passenger journeys		Notes
	Minibus	Social car	
Accessible Community Travel	24845	703	Newcastle area
Armagh Rural Transport	26718	2064	
Coleraine Area Rural Transport	50286	0	
Cookstown Rural CT	27888	3436	
Down Armagh Rural Transport	34227	0	
Down District Accessible Transport	56061	16	
Dungannon & District CT	26301	54	
Easilift	23637	1704	Strabane area
FAST CT	43503	0	Fermanagh & South Tyrone
Foyle Connect	12912	84	Londonderry area
Lagan Valley	902	0	Nov 05 – Mar 06
Mid-Tyrone Accessible CT	27700	2261	
Newry & Mourne Rural Transport	7824	0	May 05 – Mar 06
North Antrim CT	84473	2380	
Out & About	33372	1197	Magherafelt area
Peninsula CT	18604	2968	Ards peninsula
Roe Valley CT	6944	0	
Rural Lift for SW Fermanagh	31409	174	
South Antrim CT	7182	52	

7.2.17. The RTF also provides financial support to Ulsterbus to provide either new or enhanced rural public transport services. These services, which are uneconomic to run, are regarded as socially necessary. There are currently 48 such services (subject to evaluation) receiving support with other route proposals being considered.

7.2.18. These services include both a flexibly routed Rural Rover service from Newcastle to Belfast and an area based Rural Rover service in South West Fermanagh. The South West Fermanagh Rural Rover covers all of the area and is operated by Translink in partnership with the local community transport organisation, Rural Lift.



- 7.2.19. The RTS identified a total spend of approximately £27 million (at 2005 prices) for the Rural Transport Fund during the SRTP period. However, since 2002, a substantial increase in RTF investment has been secured with a current annual budget of £3.75 million
- 7.2.20. The future direction of the Rural Transport Fund is dependent on the ongoing Review (outlined in paragraph 2.6.7).

### **7.3 Measures in Open Countryside**

- 7.3.1. The approach adopted for the assessment and development of measures in the open countryside has been informed by the Regional Development Strategy (RDS) and the Regional Transportation Strategy (RTS). Our approach is supportive of the RDS Strategic Planning Guidance (SPG) RNI4<sup>57</sup> in particular.
- 7.3.2. A flexible transport plan is envisaged for the Rural Areas that is responsive to the distinctive needs of rural communities. Our overall aim is to improve travel opportunities to essential services and facilities and to link to the wider transportation network to secure a reasonable level of accessibility for the Rural Areas. The proposals for highways and public transport based proposals are outlined below.

### **Highway Measures**

- 7.3.3. Through the RSTN Transport Plan (RSTNTP) and the Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland (ISNI), improvements in highway standards will be implemented on the Key Transport Corridors, Link Corridors and Trunk Roads. To ensure that the benefits of these investments are distributed to the Rural Areas, links to the RSTN should themselves be of a reasonable standard.
- 7.3.4. The RDS Strategic Planning Guideline for Rural Northern Ireland RNI 4.2 states that the Department will “continue to invest in maintaining and upgrading the rural road network and particularly local rural roads feeding the Regional Strategic Transport Network”. Roads Service has well established and proven procedures to prioritise maintenance and improvements on the rural road network. The procedures take account of attributes of need such as traffic flows and the strategic importance of routes, as identified by the Protected Route Network designated in PPS3. However, the SRTP proposes that in future the prioritisation procedures take linkage to the RSTN into account as an additional attribute.
- 7.3.5. Therefore those sections of rural road network that link to the RSTN will be afforded additional priority for upgrade and maintenance when being assessed against other sections with otherwise similar attributes of need. This, however, does not mean that all rural funding will be focused on those road sections, rather that will depend on the balance of need demonstrated by the full range of attributes.

<sup>57</sup> SPG RNI4: to create an accessible countryside with a responsive transport network that meets the needs of the rural community.

- 7.3.6. As part of the SRTP Roads Service will continue to identify a range of improvement measures in the Rural Areas through its existing procedures for maintenance, collision remedial and network development.

## **Bus Measures**

- 7.3.7. The RTS acknowledges that the private car plays an important and dominant role in the Rural Areas, and for people with cars that will remain so. However, it is also recognised that public transport is important, not only to offer a more sustainable choice, but especially to provide access to key services for people without cars. In addition it is noted that a mix of different types of public transport service is necessary to improve access from the Rural Areas in a manner affordable to Government and that the mix is likely to vary from location to location.
- 7.3.8. The RTS includes proposals for new innovative Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services for residents living in open countryside areas and for residents with a mobility impairment in rural settlements across Northern Ireland. It identifies a spend of approximately £47.25 million (at 2005 prices) for DRT initiatives during the SRTP period.
- 7.3.9. The Department is investigating the potential cost of providing innovative DRT initiatives including taxibuses, shared taxi and social car schemes. However, current estimates suggest the costs of providing such initiatives will be much larger than those originally identified in the RTS. A decision is therefore required as to what level of service can economically and realistically be afforded by the public purse.
- 7.3.10. To inform that decision, the Department is currently funding a number of innovative DRT initiatives including the flexibly routed Rural Rover service from Newcastle to Belfast, the area based Rural Rover service in South West Fermanagh and the recently introduced Door-to-Door services for mobility-impaired residents in OUA.
- 7.3.11. Following the evaluation of these schemes and the possibility of further pilot studies, the Department will then decide how to progress DRT initiatives. Like all other SRTP proposals, the future roll out of DRT services will be subject to detailed economic appraisal and the availability of funds through the normal budgetary processes.
- 7.3.12. Residents with a mobility impairment in the Rural Areas will continue to benefit from the many travel opportunities offered by Rural Community Transport Partnerships.





## 8. Proposed Cross-cutting Measures and Costs (OUA and Rural)

### 8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1. This chapter confirms the balance of measures which comprise the SRTP. These are measures which cannot be reliably forecast and are not allocated explicitly to either the OUA (see chapter 5) or the Rural Areas (see chapter 7) and are therefore classified as cross-cutting.
- 8.1.2. These measures include highway schemes which will be introduced in a reactive manner in response to localised issues such as traffic calming and collision remedial schemes. They also include highway maintenance programmes which depends on the future structural condition of the road and the future traffic volumes and therefore cannot be allocated explicitly. Similarly it is not practical to sub-divide NI-wide public transport subsidy programmes and they therefore appear in this chapter.
- 8.1.3. For cross-cutting measures future funding will be allocated on the basis of identified future need using established systems. Therefore whilst NI-wide financial totals, based upon RTS controls, can be presented, it is neither possible nor informative to disaggregate these figures on a geographic basis.
- 8.1.4. The structure of the chapter is as follows:
- total costs – Cross-cutting OUA and Rural Measures; and
  - description of cross-cutting measures.

### 8.2 Total Costs - Cross-cutting OUA and Rural Measures

- 8.2.1. Table 8.1 summarises the total cost of the cross-cutting measures covering the plan period 2002 – 2015. The costs are expressed in 2005 prices. As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual measures will be subject to the completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes. The separate measures comprising the modal totals are explained below.

**Table 8.1 - Costs of Cross-cutting OUA and Rural Measures**

Mode	Cross-cutting OUA and Rural Measures (£m)
All Modes	4.5
Walk/Cycle	28.6
Bus	293.1
Rail	0.9
Highways	1707.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>2034.9</b>

### **8.3 Measures - All Modes**

- 8.3.1. Research Monitoring and Review work will seek to ensure that the measures implemented are achieving their desired outcomes and remain relevant. This may require detailed data collection and computer modelling exercises.

### **8.4 Walk/Cycle Measures**

#### **Traffic Calming**

- 8.4.1. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £24.7 million on Traffic Calming in OUA and the Rural Areas. The objective of a traffic-calming scheme is to improve driver behaviour and reduce traffic speed in order to make the environment safer for both pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic calming schemes are normally provided in urban and residential areas where there is community support for their introduction. In addition gateway measures are used in rural settlements to achieve speed reductions. The Local Transport Studies have not attempted to plan traffic calming measures, rather an allowance has been made for future reactive works.

#### **Promoting Sustainable Modes**

- 8.4.2. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £0.2 million on promoting sustainable modes in OUA and the Rural Areas. Schemes aimed at promoting sustainable modes will be targeted at specific audiences to provide information and advice in order to create an understanding, raise appreciation and promote the benefits of using alternatives to the private car.
- 8.4.3. In line with RTS, these audiences would include commuters travelling to and from work by car, parents who take their children to and from school by car and decision makers in industry, commerce, Government and other public sector organisations focussed on car and other vehicle usage in the Other Urban Areas and the Rural Areas.
- 8.4.4. The 'Travelwise' initiative is the mechanism for delivering schemes with employers, commuters and schools. Walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing are the main sustainable transport alternatives promoted within these sectors. The Travelwise Car Share Scheme<sup>58</sup>, which was launched in June 2005, has over 2100 members and continues to grow. A number of important benefits are accruing from the scheme including financial savings and less stressful journeys for its members, as well as potentially creating reductions in road traffic levels. Under the Travelwise Schools programme<sup>59</sup>, schemes are being rolled out to over 40 urban and rural schools annually. These schemes include improvements to walking, cycling and traffic calming infrastructure in the vicinity of schools and education and awareness classes that promote walking and cycling to school. In addition several Local Councils are currently focusing on the Travelwise initiative to assist in the delivery of their local Air Quality Strategies.

<sup>58</sup> Further details available at [www.travelwisenicarshare.com](http://www.travelwisenicarshare.com)

<sup>59</sup> Further details available at [www.travelwiseni.com](http://www.travelwiseni.com)

## **Improved Accessibility**

- 8.4.5. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £3.7 million for improving accessibility in OUA and the Rural Areas. The proposals include dropped kerbs and other measures to assist all users including people with disabilities.

## **8.5 Bus Measures**

- 8.5.1. The principal measures contributing to the cross-cutting bus measures costs are outlined below.

### **Fuel Duty Rebate**

- 8.5.2. The RTS identified a total spend of £48.2 million (at 2005 prices) on Fuel Duty Rebate (FDR) within the OUA and the Rural Areas. FDR is a grant which rebates a proportion of the duty paid by bus operators on fuel used in providing approved stage carriage services. It is a general subsidy towards the costs of maintaining the local (stage-carriage) bus network. Continued use of FDR is assumed in the funding levels of the SRTP.
- 8.5.3. Since 2002 the level of FDR expenditure has substantially increased with a current annual expenditure of over £6 million<sup>60</sup> for the sub-regional area. It should be noted that the increased expenditure can be directly attributed to a growth in the number of 'qualifying' bus services operated in the sub-regional area.

### **Concessionary Fares Scheme**

- 8.5.4. The RTS identified expenditure totalling £102.3 million on the Concessionary Fares Scheme in OUA and the Rural Areas. The Scheme offers free travel on all public transport in Northern Ireland to:
- men and women aged 65 or over;
  - those who are registered blind; and
  - those who receive a War Disablement Pension.
- 8.5.5. The Concessionary Fares Scheme was extended from 1 April 2004 to provide half fare travel for people with disabilities including:
- people who get either mobility component of Disability Living Allowance;
  - those who are partially sighted;
  - people with learning disabilities; and
  - those who have been refused driving licences on medical grounds.
- 8.5.6. Half fare travel is also available to young people in full time education up to the end of the school year in which they become 16.

<sup>60</sup> This figure includes expenditure on inter-urban bus services covered by the Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan (RSTNTP).



- 8.5.7. Since 2002 the level of Concessionary Fares expenditure has increased with a current annual expenditure of over £9 million for the sub-regional area. It should be noted that the increased expenditure can be attributed to a number of reasons including the above scheme extension, an increase in fares and an overall growth in the number of bus services within the sub-regional area.
- 8.5.8. A review of the Scheme is currently underway. Any proposals arising as a result of that review will be published separately.

### **Bus Replacement Programme**

- 8.5.9 The RTS recognised the importance of providing for the transport needs of people with disabilities, who in Northern Ireland make up a significantly higher proportion of the population than elsewhere in the UK. Policies were to be identified within the Transport Plans that would specifically benefit people with disabilities and promote their social inclusion. This has been translated into the provision of accessible public transport vehicles and the necessary infrastructure to allow access. These measures should also benefit older people, and those with dependants.
- 8.5.10. The RTS includes a bus grants programme to help Translink purchase new accessible vehicles and achieve high standards of comfort and accessibility across its stage carriage fleet. The programme also aims to reduce the average vehicle age of Ulsterbus buses (RTS target states “Average age of no more than 8 years – in addition no bus older than 18 years”).
- 8.5.11. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £128.1 million on a Bus Replacement Programme in OUA and the Rural Areas. 180 new Ulsterbus vehicles costing around £20.7 million will be purchased over the next two years as part of the latest order placed by Translink. Plans for the purchase of further vehicles are still being finalised by Translink.

### **Other Bus Measures**

- 8.5.12. The balance of measures making up the bus total include other Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company costs for which the Department is responsible.

## **8.6 Highway Measures**

- 8.6.1. The principal measures contributing to the cross-cutting highway measures costs are highlighted below. As described in the introduction to the chapter, these are measures which cannot be reliably forecast and cannot be allocated explicitly to either the OUA or the Rural Areas.

### **Roads Maintenance (Structural)**

- 8.6.2. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £922.7 million on structural roads maintenance in OUA and the Rural Areas.

- 8.6.3. Structural maintenance involves the upkeep of the surfaces and foundations of the road and footway network. As well as strengthening the foundations of roads to withstand the damage inflicted by heavy vehicles, structural maintenance also improves skidding resistance and makes an important contribution to road safety. Planned maintenance activities, like resurfacing and surface dressing, prevent deterioration and are good value for money. However, if planned maintenance is reduced, additional reactive patching is needed to remove hazardous defects. In the long run, this may result in reconstruction treatments that are more expensive than resurfacing.
- 8.6.4. The public road network in NI is around 25,000 km long – over two times more roads per head of population than GB. The SRTP recognises the importance of maintaining the highway asset and proposes an indicative spend of £922.7 million at 2005 prices for structural maintenance over the 2002-2015 period over the SRTP road network. It is estimated that approximately £740 million at 2005 prices, or over 80% of this sum, is needed for structural maintenance on the rural road network.
- 8.6.5. It is estimated that £95 million (2005 prices) per annum is needed to maintain the network at good practice frequencies. However, spending on structural maintenance, like other Government spending, is subject to the normal budgetary procedures. Whilst NI-wide funding levels increased significantly following the publication of the RTS in 2002 and peaked at around £83 million in 2003/04, current spending for 2006/07 is estimated at around £64 million and falls short of the level recommended in the RTS. Recent assessments of the structural condition of these roads (OUA and Rural) demonstrate that it may be necessary to boost the funding for structural maintenance on the SRTP above the annual investment levels indicated in the RTS in order to maintain the network to an acceptable condition. Roads Service is committed to bid for this additional funding at every opportunity.

### **Collision Remedial Schemes**

- 8.6.6. Most road traffic collisions and resulting deaths or serious injuries are avoidable. The main causes remain excessive speed (inappropriate for the conditions or in excess of speed limit), alcohol (both driver/rider and pedestrian) and failure to wear a seat belt. Continued success in reducing the numbers killed or seriously injured will depend on the combined effects of education, enforcement and engineering.
- 8.6.7. DRD is committed to ensuring that the public road network is developed and maintained to improve road safety. Roads Service has prepared a Road Safety Plan, which sets out the Agency's intent to make a contribution to the Northern Ireland Road Safety Strategy. The Plan proposes a number of 'Actions' aimed at refining and improving Roads Service contribution to improving safety on our roads.
- 8.6.8. The SRTP includes an allowance for spending totalling £27.3 million for specific collision remedial schemes within the SRTP area.

## **Routine Maintenance**

8.6.9. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £301.2 million on routine maintenance in OUA and Rural Areas. Routine Maintenance refers to a wide range of activities such as winter service (gritting and snow removal), bridge maintenance, replacing street lighting bulbs, the maintenance of signs and road markings, cutting grass verges and clearing drainage gullies. Routine maintenance is important both to ensure user safety and to help prevent more significant and costly maintenance building up over time. It is undertaken in line with UK-wide best practice with regards biodiversity and landscape impacts.

## **Bridge Strengthening**

8.6.10. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £67.5 million on bridge strengthening in the OUA and the Rural Areas. The introduction of EU regulations has increased the allowable gross weight of vehicles, using our road network, from 38 tonnes to 40 tonnes. To cater for this increase, Roads Service is continuing an extensive assessment and strengthening programme.

## **Street Lighting Capital Programme**

8.6.11. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £9.2 million on Street Lighting Capital Programmes in OUA and the Rural Areas. Streetlights can help road safety in urban areas, but they also help create the necessary environment to support commercial and leisure activities in urban areas. Well designed lighting may also create better conditions for walking and cycling and aid the uptake of public transport.

8.6.12. Most of the quarter of a million streetlights in Northern Ireland are on urban streets within the speed limit zones. Roads Service has an annual programme of expenditure to upgrade the street lighting stock to provide more energy efficient lamps, reduce light pollution and replace columns that have deteriorated through weathering.

## **Network Management Costs**

8.6.13. The SRTP proposes expenditure totalling £341.0 million for network management costs in OUA and the Rural Areas. These reflect the current operations, with Roads Service as the sole road authority. The 'overhead' costs of managing the road network include staff, buildings and information technology. The costs can be sub-divided into 3 distinct areas:

- forward planning, design, supervision and management of schemes;
- management of the statutory function to maintain roads;
- providing public service, for example processing of public liability claims, development control and Development Plan support, Blue Badge scheme, dealing with the public and elected representatives.

- 8.6.14. Roads Service uses the 'Moleseye' system to streamline communication between asset owners (eg BT, Northern Ireland Water, NIE), workplanners, contractors and local authorities in the maintenance of utilities. The system improves co-ordination of works on the roads and hence reduces disruption to motorists.
- 8.6.15. The balance of measures making up the highway costs total includes car park maintenance and promoting sustainable modes.



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## 9. Total SRTP Costs and Impacts

### 9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1. This chapter outlines the total cost of the SRTP and its estimated impacts. The costs are compared with the relevant RTS spending levels by mode whilst the impacts are assessed against standard best practice objectives as for the RTS.
- 9.1.2. The Technical Supplement presents the proposed measures and associated financial total for each urban area by Council area. It is not possible to disaggregate the rural and cross-cutting financial totals by geographic area. Hence the total SRTP costs are presented in this chapter at NI-wide level only.

### 9.2 Total Costs

- 9.2.1. Table 9.1 summarises the total costs of all the measures proposed in the Sub Regional Transport Plan covering the period 2002 – 2015, using 2005 prices. The first three numerical columns in the tables present the cost of OUA measures, Rural measures and cross-cutting OUA and Rural measures as shown previously in Chapters 5, 7 and 8 respectively. The table also totals the measures in the fourth numerical column and in the final column provides a comparison with the 2002 – 2015 RTS funding comparator. This RTS figure is for 2002-2015 and is in 2005 prices.
- 9.2.2. As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual schemes and measures will be subject to the completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes.

**Table 9.1 - SRTP Costs and RTS Financial Controls**

Mode	OUA Measures (£ m)	Rural Measures (£ m)	Cross-cutting OUA and Rural Measures (£ m)	SRTP Total Measures (£ m)	RTS 2002 – 2015 Spending (£ m)
All Modes	-	-	4.5	4.5	4.5
Walk/Cycle	32.8	16.2	28.6	77.6	77.9 <sup>61</sup>
Rail	5.0	0.0	0.9	5.9	5.9 <sup>62</sup>
Bus	69.5	87.6	293.1	450.2	450.2 <sup>63</sup>
Highways	73.1 <sup>64</sup>	40.1	1707.8	1821	1781.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>180.4</b>	<b>143.9</b>	<b>2034.9</b>	<b>2359.2</b>	<b>2319.9</b>

<sup>61</sup> Includes RTS proposed expenditure for: rail access improvements at/to rail stations; and bus access improvements at Ulsterbus stations 50%

<sup>62</sup> excludes RTS proposed expenditure for access improvements at/to rail stations (£8.7 million)

<sup>63</sup> excludes 50% of RTS proposed expenditure for access improvements at Ulsterbus stations (£2.6 million)

<sup>64</sup> These costs incorporate estimates for urban land values at 2005. Therefore schemes requiring land purchase may be subject to significant cost changes at the detailed design stage.

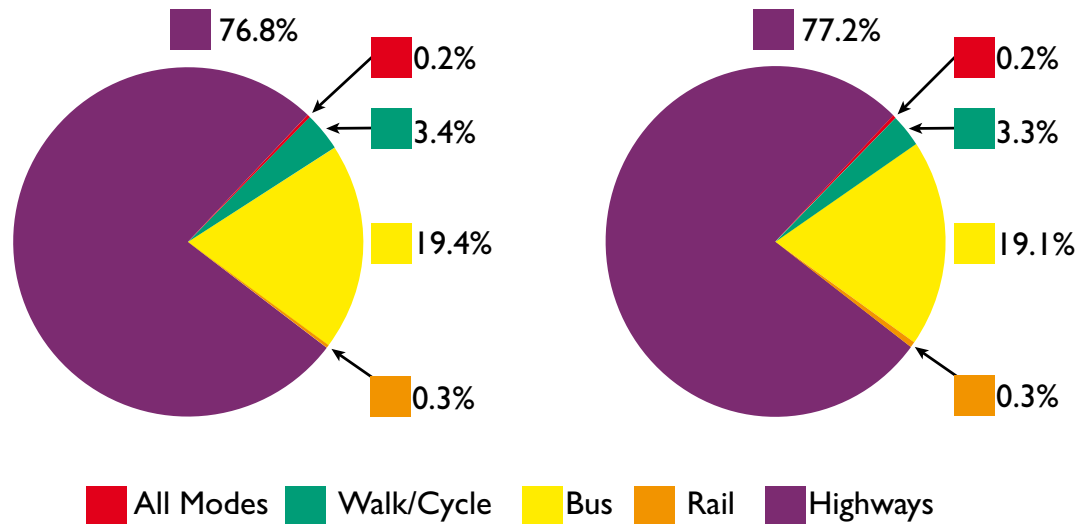


### 9.3 Comparison with RTS Spending Extrapolated to 2015

- 9.3.1. Table 9.1 highlights that in total the SRTP costs are in line with RTS spending. The SRTP includes a small relative increase over RTS spending in Highways. This is a result of the additional proposed funding in ISNI.

RTS 2002 - 2015 Spending

SRTP Total Measures



**Figure 9.1 - Comparison of Total Funding by Mode**

- 9.3.2. Figure 9.1 presents a comparison of RTS and SRTP proposed spending by mode. (In effect the modal shares of the final two columns of Table 9.1) The figure shows that the balance of spend for SRTP proposals is consistent with the RTS.
- 9.3.3. The marginal increase in the highways proportion arises from the additional ISNI funding that is targeted on non-strategic roads.
- 9.3.4. Since the RTS was published in 2002, there have been increases in bus expenditure<sup>65</sup> which exceed the RTS baselines and are not reflected in Table 9.1. These are attributable to increases in the number of bus services and the number of passengers journeys and increases in expenditure on concessionary fares arising out of changes in eligibility and fares. The impact of these increases will be addressed as part of the RTS Review.

### 9.4 Impacts of the SRTP

- 9.4.1. The impacts of all the SRTP measures have been estimated according to best practice<sup>66</sup>. This is consistent with the approach taken by RTS.

<sup>65</sup> Includes Transport Programme for People with Disabilities, Rural Transport Fund, Fuel Duty Rebate & Concessionary Fares.

<sup>66</sup> Guidance gained from WebTAG, the transport analysis guidance website initiated by the Department for Transport (DfT) to provide detailed guidance on the appraisal of transport projects and wide advice on scoping and carrying out transport studies. Available at [www.webtag.org.uk](http://www.webtag.org.uk)

9.4.2. The impacts are described against five objectives and 21 sub-objectives:

- Environment – comprising Noise, Local Air Quality, Greenhouse Gases, Landscape, Townscape, Heritage of Historic Resources, Biodiversity, Water Environment, Physical Fitness and Journey Ambience;
- Safety – comprising Accidents and Security;
- Economy – comprising Transport Economic Efficiency, Reliability and Wider Economic Impacts;
- Accessibility – comprising Option Values, Severance and Access to the Transport System; and
- Integration – comprising Transport Interchange, Land Use Policy and Other Government Policies.

9.4.3. The impacts are presented in an Appraisal Summary Table included as Annex A. In short, the SRTP is estimated to provide significant beneficial impacts across all objectives with the exception of the environmental objective.

9.4.4 Within the environmental objective, until detailed scheme planning and design is undertaken, the impacts cannot be assessed. However, by way of precaution, the appraisal has noted “potential slight adverse impacts” against the Landscape, Heritage of Historic Resources, Biodiversity and Water Environment sub-objectives. It must be noted that during scheme design such impacts will be considered in detail and mitigation measures developed. In addition all relevant schemes will only be processed subject to satisfactory completion of statutory environmental impact appraisals.





## **10. Implementation, Targets, Monitoring and Review**

### **10.1 Introduction**

- 10.1.1. This chapter considers the implementation of the SRTP including the setting and monitoring of targets and preliminary proposals for its first review. It is noted that the SRTP is concerned with local transport to 2015. According to current RPA proposals, beyond 2009 this will be the responsibility of 7 new councils.
- 10.1.2. It will be important to monitor the implementation of the SRTP and the outcomes that result. It cannot be taken for granted that following delivery of the measures on the ground that the desired changes in travel behaviour or transport conditions will necessarily result. In addition the Department will need to be clear at the outset as to how the SRTP will be reviewed in order to ensure that it remains up to date and useful.

### **10.2 Implementation**

- 10.2.1. The proposals in SRTP will be implemented by the Department for Regional Development, Roads Service as the sole roads authority and the other transport agencies such as Translink and independent bus operators, assisted by appropriate consultation with relevant stakeholders<sup>67</sup>. In 2009, in line with RPA, it is proposed that responsibilities for the local roads network and local public transport planning will pass to the 7 new councils. It is proposed that the delivery of public transport services will remain the responsibility of Translink and independent bus operators.
- 10.2.2. This document does not attempt to prescribe how implementation would be undertaken under RPA. However, it should be recognised that as the SRTP is focused on existing Council areas, the Plan should continue to be relevant and will be relatively straight-forward to translate to the new Councils in line with other existing Council responsibilities. Where the Plan does not prescribe measures or disaggregate costs beyond SRTP totals, clearly work may be required to allocate these among the new Councils. However it is stressed that there are practical reasons why that work cannot and should not be undertaken at this stage but left until handover arrangements are being finalised.
- 10.2.3. It is noted that the sharing of responsibilities, with Translink and within the Department, for the delivery of public transport measures and supporting infrastructure brings challenges for efficient implementation. In addition, Council responsibilities for local economic issues also create shared interests with Roads Service for the implementation of local walk, cycle, highway and parking measures. It is important therefore that delivery mechanisms are considered early. It is important too that there is early agreement on the

<sup>67</sup> Relevant stakeholders may include a range of interests including local councils, regeneration companies, Department for Social Development, SUSTRANS, regional cross-border groups and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board.

types of measures that are provided in the first few years of the Plan in order to provide a focus for action and early momentum.

10.2.4. The following proposals are intended to assist the efficient implementation of the Plan in the first few years:

- a generic package of measures covering walk, cycle and bus infrastructure prioritised for delivery in the period 2007/8 – 2009/10, as shown in Table 10.1;
- the creation of a cross-departmental group, to include Translink as the prime bus operator, to oversee consistency in approach in identifying schemes for priority delivery on an annual basis; and
- final decisions on schemes for implementation to be taken by local Roads Service officers in consultation with the local Council.

**Table 10.1 - Generic Measures Prioritised for Delivery**

Mode	Generic Measure	Comment
Walk	Walk network in town/city centre	Ensure minimum standard to encourage economic vitality
	Pedestrian Links to schools	Complements Safer Routes to School programme
	Pedestrian Links to bus and rail stations	Encourages modal switch and complements bus and rail investment
	Pedestrian Links to car parks	Complements DPE initiative
	Missing pedestrian links in rural settlements	Ensures network connectivity
Cycle	Complete networks in priority towns <sup>68</sup>	Provides early experience of rates of return on investment
Bus Infrastructure	Supporting measures for improved local bus services delivered under USR	Encourages modal shift and complements bus and rail investment

10.2.5. The generic measures presented in Table 10.1 have been selected following consideration of the consultation responses received on the Draft SRTP<sup>69</sup> and current progress against the RTS targets. A message from the consultation responses was the support for walking in all towns/cities. The prioritisation of cycle measures is primarily in response to the lack of progress in establishing a complete urban utility cycle network anywhere in NI and hence a lack of evidence as to their popularity and possible value for money. The inclusion of the bus infrastructure measures reflects the need to provide complementary improvements in bus stops, shelters, and bus priority in order to maximise

<sup>68</sup> Towns and cities which appear to have the greatest potential, to be agreed locally. Later investment will be guided by the experience gained in those towns.

<sup>69</sup> See the SRTP Consultation Process Report

the returns on the investment made by Ulsterbus and the Department in improved urban bus services.

- 10.2.6. As discussed, the above arrangements are proposed in order to establish a measure of momentum in the first few years. Beyond this period it is proposed that a wider partnership approach may be advantageous. Whilst the Department or the incumbent roads and public transport authority would continue to lead with assistance from the prime local public transport operator, other bodies responsible for leisure footways and cycleways, local taxi and community transport services, urban regeneration and private development should be included in a partnership approach. The widening of the partnership should ensure that opportunities for the creation of joined up networks and synergies are maximised and that implementation progress is assisted.

### 10.3 Targets and Monitoring

- 10.3.1. It is also important to set targets which relate to key outcomes and are representative of the objectives and the success of the SRTP. The targets need to be capable of direct measurement. The costs of measurement should be proportionate to the costs of the measures themselves.
- 10.3.2. The targets will complement and contribute appropriately to the RTS targets which will remain in force, namely:

#### **Bus**

- Average vehicle age of no more than 8 years;
- 100% of buses accessible;
- New route networks in all towns; and
- Comply with Translink Passenger Charter.

#### **Highway**

- Contribute to and, where possible, demonstrate progress towards the achievement of long-term road casualty reduction targets – a one-third reduction (from the average for the period 1996-2000) in the number of people killed or seriously injured each year, and within this one third a 50% reduction (from the average for the period 1996-2000) in the number of children killed or seriously injured each year;
- Cycle trips to increase in line with the Northern Ireland Cycling Strategy – to quadruple the number of trips by cycle (on 2000 figures) by the end of 2015;
- Walking trips to increase in line with the action plan for walking for Northern Ireland – to increase the number of short walking journeys (less than one mile) by 20%, and increase the average distance walked per person per year by 10%; and
- New public transport services to serve isolated communities and mobility impaired residents in the Rural Areas across Northern Ireland.



- 10.3.3. It is also important to monitor the rate of implementation of the measures proposed in the SRTP. Clearly where measures have not been implemented the desired outcomes are unlikely to result. For cross-cutting measures, existing Departmental financial and output monitoring schemes provide the appropriate monitoring regime. Examples include the financial monitoring of Fuel Duty Rebate and Concessionary Fares undertaken by Public Transport Performance Division and the monitoring of Structural Maintenance and Collision Remedial scheme expenditure. It should be noted that, in general, many of these items will be monitored regularly NI-wide as part of the Annual RTS Monitor<sup>70</sup>.
- 10.3.4. For towns and cities it will be important to monitor the implementation of the Blueprints proposed for walk, cycle and traffic networks and the additional supporting infrastructure for bus and taxis.

## 10.4 Additional SRTP Targets

- 10.4.1. Table 10.2 summarises the additional targets proposed by the SRTP.

**Table 10.2 - SRTP Proposed Targets**

Area	Objective	Measure	Target
Other Urban Areas	Bus network accessibility	Proportion of population within 400 metres of an hourly bus service to town centre	More than 90% (established by demographic and timetable analysis)
Rural Settlements	Bus network accessibility	Frequency of weekday bus service to nearest Other Urban Area	1 to 6 return journeys / day as detailed in Table 7.2

- 10.4.2. The urban objectives for bus network accessibility would be monitored using a computer model of relevant bus services linked to detailed census data.
- 10.4.3. The objective selected for rural settlements relates to bus network accessibility which is proposed to be monitored using timetable analyses.
- 10.4.4. It is also proposed that, in due course, once detailed parking strategies have been confirmed and implemented, appropriate parking performance indicators will be developed. It is likely that these indicators will be aimed at maintaining availability and turnover of on-street short stay parking.

## 10.5 Review

- 10.5.1. The targets outlined above will be relevant and attainable only if the measures identified in the Transport Plan are implemented. As for all Transport Plans, the implementation of individual schemes and measures will be subject to the

<sup>70</sup> See the RTS Annual Monitoring Report 2004/5 found at <http://www.drdni.gov.uk>

completion of appropriate economic and environmental appraisals and the normal budgetary processes.

- 10.5.2. Like the other two Transport Plans (BMTP and RSTNTP) the SRTP will cover the period to 2015. It is understood that a review of the RTS 2002–2012, will commence in 2007. The review of the RTS is considered to be the appropriate opportunity to consider the potential effect of new emerging national ‘drivers’. The findings of that review could potentially have direct effects on the Other Urban Areas and the Rural Areas and would therefore trigger an update or review of the SRTP. However, in order to avoid continuous change and potential confusion, it is recommended that the first planned review of the SRTP should not take place before 2010.
- 10.5.3. Most importantly it should also be noted that the Other Urban Area component of the SRTP has been constructed from separate Transport Blueprints for each of the towns and cities. These Blueprints are presented in the Technical Supplement and may contain highway schemes or other measures with land use implications that must be confirmed by statutory Development Plans or other examinations in public. Clearly in the event that these processes reject or modify the schemes or measures then the Blueprint and, in effect, the SRTP would need to be amended.
- 10.5.4. In essence the Transport Blueprints must be regarded as ‘working documents’ representing a best estimate of the transport needs to 2015 as forecast from today’s assumptions and planning projections. The Transport Blueprints will need to be reviewed, when assumptions or planning projections change, in order to remain useful.



## **11. Other Assessments**

### **11.1 Introduction**

11.1.1. In order to fulfil our statutory requirements, and in line with best practice, a number of other assessments have been considered during the development of the SRTP. The following assessments are outlined below:

- Sustainability;
- Rural Proofing;
- Good Relations;
- Human Rights;
- Lifetime Opportunities – Government’s Anti-Poverty Strategy; and
- Health Impact Assessment.

11.1.2. In addition further strategic environmental and equality impact assessments have been undertaken. These are published separately as:

- SEA Statement ; and
- Equality Impact Assessment Report.

### **11.2 Sustainability**

11.2.1. The Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland<sup>71</sup> published in May 2006, outlined specific objectives and targets for sustainable development. This strategy has been followed up by an implementation plan<sup>72</sup>. The plan seeks to begin to put in place specific actions to meet the objectives and targets as set out by the sustainable development strategy, and starts to underpin the principles of sustainable development across the full range of Government business.

11.2.2. In developing the SRTP the Department has had regard to the above documents and as far as reasonably practicable, in view of the controls handed down by the RDS and RTS, the principles of sustainable development have been applied.

### **11.3 Rural Proofing**

11.3.1. Rural Proofing is a process which ‘ensures that all relevant policies are examined carefully and objectively to determine whether or not they have a different impact in rural areas from that elsewhere, because of the particular characteristics of rural areas: and where necessary, what policy adjustments might be made to reflect rural needs and in particular to ensure that as far as is possible public services are accessible on a fair basis to the rural community’<sup>73</sup>.

<sup>71</sup> Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland ‘First Steps toward sustainability’, Department of Environment, May 2006.

<sup>72</sup> “A Positive Step – Northern Ireland - a sustainable development implementation plan”, OFMDFM, November 2006

<sup>73</sup> Rural proofing policies across the Northern Ireland Civil Service: Annual Report 2004-2005.

- 11.3.2. The Department is committed to ensuring that consideration is given to any likely impact that a policy might have on rural areas or communities.
- 11.3.3. In accordance with good practice guidelines, DRD has undertaken a rural proofing exercise in relation to the SRTP. This proofing exercise has been informed by the use of the Rural Development Council's (RDC) pilot checklist, as a tool to identify and consider a series of issues in order to assess the impact of the SRTP in rural areas. The findings of this proofing exercise are presented in narrative, as not all issues in the RDC checklist are relevant to the SRTP.

### **Rural Proofing Assessment**

- 11.3.4. Generally, measures included in the SRTP should provide improvements for all people using the transport network. Below is an assessment of measures that potentially will have a direct impact on those people living in the rural areas.

### **Walk / Cycle**

- 11.3.5. Continuous footway links within the built-up areas of settlements, with special attention being paid to links, both pedestrian and cycle as appropriate, between schools, residential areas and community facilities, will potentially be beneficial to all pedestrians and cyclists in those rural areas.
- 11.3.6. Appropriate pedestrian crossing facilities in settlements, which will be provided taking into account traffic speeds and volumes, will be of benefit to rural dwellers.
- 11.3.7. Measures to reduce inappropriate speeds will be provided in settlements taking into account the different priorities of pedestrians and vehicular traffic as observed locally. In general, gateway features including 30mph signing will be appropriate on the main through route. This will have the effect of reducing severance and potentially improving safety for people in rural areas.

### **Public Transport: Bus**

- 11.3.8. Improved bus routes, serving settlements, arising from accessibility analyses in conjunction with Ulsterbus Strategic Review will lead to an overall improvement for bus users. Similarly, bus stop user facilities in settlements which will include service information and kerb build-outs to facilitate ease of access will be beneficial for all bus users.
- 11.3.9. New or enhanced Park and Ride sites serviced by inter-urban buses and improved public transport information will be particularly beneficial to people living in rural areas.
- 11.3.10. Innovative Demand Responsive Transport will improve accessibility and public transport opportunities for people living in rural areas, particularly those living in 'open countryside'.



## Highways

- 11.3.11. Highway maintenance is, and will continue to be, carried out in accordance throughout the SRTP area. This will be of benefit to people living in rural areas.
- 11.3.12. The provision of additional priority for the maintenance and upgrading of highway links to the Regional Strategic Transport Network, in accordance with RDS RNI 4.2<sup>74</sup> will be beneficial for people living in rural areas.

## 11.4 Good Relations

- 11.4.1. Under Section 75(2) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Department is under a duty to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or race. It is considered that the proposals in the SRTP will not impact on good relations.

## 11.5 Human Rights

- 11.5.1. The Department is committed to ensuring that its policies, legislation and procedures comply with the Human Rights Act 1998. It is considered that the proposals in the SRTP have no implications for human rights.

## 11.6 Lifetime Opportunities – Government’s Anti-Poverty Strategy

- 11.6.1. The Lifetime Opportunities Strategy was launched on 13 November 2006. The strategy replaces New Targeting Social Need and has two explicit commitments; to end child poverty by 2020 and work towards eliminating poverty and social exclusion in Northern Ireland by the same year. The strategy has been made one of the key cross-cutting priorities within the current Comprehensive Spending Review. Consequently, departmental spending plans and resources will be directly linked to the delivery of the commitments in the strategy.
- 11.6.2. The SRTP works towards reducing social exclusion by improving access to the transport system and key services for all members of society. The following measures are particularly relevant:
- new innovative Demand Responsive Transport services for rural residents;
  - new improved accessible local bus services as implemented as part of the Ulsterbus Strategic Review;
  - new door-to-door transport services implemented as part of the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities;
  - continuation of the Concessionary Fares Scheme for free and half price travel on all public transport;
  - increased provision of Taxi Stands;
  - improved walking networks in towns/cities and rural settlements, linking to public transport stops/termini and key services such as shops and schools;
  - improved cycling networks in towns/cities.

<sup>74</sup> Shaping Our Future- Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2025. Available at <http://www.drdni.gov.uk>



## **11.7 Health Impact Assessment (HIA)**

- 11.7.1. The measures contained in the SRTP have been developed within the context of the RTS. A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) was carried out as part of the development of the RTS, and was applied to the Proposed RTS. This approach was confirmed by the senior management inter-departmental group on public health, supported and serviced by Investing for Health Team in Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety.

**Annex A – Appraisal Summary Table**

Objective	Sub-objective	Qualitative Impacts	Assessment
Environment	Noise	New highway link roads in urban areas and throughpasses / bypasses of rural settlements would result in decreased traffic noise levels for properties adjacent to routes relieved, and increased traffic noise levels for dispersed properties adjacent to the new road links.	Neutral
	Local Air Quality	New highway link roads in urban areas and throughpasses / bypasses of rural settlements would result in improved air quality for properties adjacent to routes relieved, and worsened air quality for dispersed properties adjacent to the new road links. On-line widening and junction improvements, which relieve congestion in urban areas, would result in significantly changed air quality level adjacent to schemes and on any routes relieved.	Neutral
	Greenhouse Gases	Greenhouse gases are, in general, proportional to private vehicle kilometres travelled.	Neutral
	Landscape	Rural schemes that require significant land take may have an impact on the landscape. No urban schemes within AONB.	Potential slight adverse impact
	Townscape	Well-designed pedestrian infrastructure and urban cycle network may improve townscape character. Road widening would impact on townscape character, though there would be no impact on a designated area. Environmental improvements and reconfiguration of traffic management systems could enhance townscape character.	Potential slight beneficial impact
	Heritage of Historic Resources	No urban highway link schemes in designated areas. Detailed designs may identify impact.	Potential slight adverse impact
	Biodiversity	No urban highway link schemes in designated areas. Rural schemes that require significant land take may have an impact on the biodiversity.	Potential slight adverse impact
	Water Environment	Highway schemes contribute to an increase in impermeable surfaces and in runoff of pollutants. Proposed bridgeworks would pose the most direct risk to the water environment both during construction and in operation.	Potential slight adverse impact
	Physical Fitness	Additional pedestrian infrastructure and cycle network, and improved environment, would lead to increases in the numbers of people walking and cycling, and therefore in their level of physical fitness.	Moderate beneficial impact
	Journey Ambience	Modern bus designs with good heating, ventilation, seating, luggage space and ride qualities would improve traveller care for existing users. Expansion of town bus services would provide improved traveller care for a number of new users. The introduction of demand responsive transport in rural areas would provide a door-to-door service which would reduce stress and uncertainty for a large number of users in sparsely populated areas. Walking and cycling infrastructure additions and improvements would produce quality environments which enhance journey ambience. Extensive structural maintenance on all roads would provide more comfortable bus and car journeys. New highway link roads and junction improvements would reduce congestion frustration and improve traveller care.	Moderate beneficial impact
		Effective management of public car parking would reduce frustration and fear of accidents for all road users including pedestrians and hence improve journey ambience.	

Objective	Sub-objective	Qualitative Impacts	Assessment
Safety	Accidents	<p>Traffic calming schemes would produce significant accident savings.</p> <p>Collision remedial measures would produce significant accident savings.</p> <p>Improved skid resistance and drainage as a result of structural maintenance would reduce the number of collisions.</p> <p>Additional pedestrian and cycling facilities, particularly crossing points, would reduce collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Bypasses of settlements would result in through traffic diverting onto more strategic routes thus reducing potential for pedestrian casualties within the settlement.</p> <p>On-line widening and realignment of the vertical and horizontal profile on rural roads may reduce road collisions.</p>	Moderate beneficial impact
	Security	<p>Demand responsive transport schemes in rural areas would provide a door-to-door service which would address issues of personal safety and vulnerability for users.</p> <p>Well designed and used walking and cycling routes would improve feeling of security for users.</p> <p>Public transport station improvements would result in a more secure environment whilst provision of new illuminated waiting and boarding areas at bus stops would increase feeling of security.</p>	Moderate beneficial impact
Economy	Transport Economic Efficiency	<p>Principal User benefits would be journey time savings resulting from highway link schemes, increased highway structural maintenance, junction improvements and traffic management.</p> <p>Public sector costs would be those borne by Roads Service and would comprise primarily of capital costs. This capital cost would be reduced by the large savings forecast in reconstruction costs arising from investment in highway structural maintenance.</p> <p>Other Government costs reflect investment and subsidy payments to public transport operators.</p>	Large beneficial impact
	Reliability	<p>Junction improvements, and highway link schemes would contribute to the removal of bottlenecks within settlements and therefore would permit more reliable journey times for public transport, private vehicles and freight movement.</p> <p>Extensive structural maintenance would reduce disruption caused by more frequent responsive maintenance.</p> <p>New replacement buses would decrease possibility of mechanical breakdowns affecting journey times by public transport.</p> <p>Implementation of parking strategies would improve reliability of journey times to town centres by reducing variability of car parking search time and walking time.</p>	Large beneficial impact
	Wider Economic Impacts	<p>Improved transport infrastructure, short-stay parking availability and public transport services would contribute to the development and reinvigoration of designated regeneration areas.</p>	Slight beneficial impact

Objective	Sub-objective	Qualitative Impacts	Assessment
Accessibility	Option Values	<p>Expansion of town services would provide a large number of residents with the option of a service to town centres during working and leisure hours.</p> <p>Demand responsive transport services would provide rural car-dependant population with the option of using these services for exceptional trips.</p>	Large beneficial impact
	Severance	<p>Provision of bypasses would cause some severance along new alignments but would reduce severance for residents by removing through traffic from urban areas.</p> <p>Signalisation of junctions would facilitate pedestrian crossing facilities however the introduction of roundabouts would provide a less safe environment for pedestrians.</p> <p>The introduction of well designed traffic management and environmental improvement schemes together with traffic calming and pedestrian footways and crossings in both urban and rural areas would reduce severance for large numbers of people.</p>	Moderate beneficial impact
	Access to the Transport System	<p>The bus replacement programme would provide modern vehicles conforming to the latest standards for accessibility which would improve access to the transport system for many potential users including those with disabilities. All new buses/coaches would satisfy the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.</p> <p>Expansion of urban town bus services using low floor buses would improve access to the transport system for many potential users including those with disabilities.</p> <p>The introduction of demand responsive transport operating a door-to-door service in rural areas would have a highly significant impact on access to the transport system for many potential users including those with disabilities.</p> <p>Major refurbishment at bus stations at Antrim, Ballynahinch, Banbridge, Coleraine, Downpatrick, Dungannon, Kilkeel, Larne, Limavady, Newry, Portrush and Strabane would improve facilities for disabled people.</p> <p>Improvements to routes, stations, stops and public transport information would remove some of the barriers for people wishing to use public transport.</p> <p>Improvements to bus stops, including seating and raised boarding areas, would remove barrier for mobility impaired persons.</p> <p>Provision of Park &amp; Ride sites in other urban areas would facilitate access to the transport system for car users in areas without a bus service.</p> <p>The introduction of pedestrian and cycling facilities would enlarge the public transport catchment area, including for persons with disabilities.</p> <p>The introduction of the Transport Programme for People with Disabilities provides a door-to-door service in urban areas and would have a highly significant impact on access to the transport system for many potential users.</p>	Large beneficial impact



Objective	Sub-objective	Qualitative Impacts	Assessment
Integration	Transport Interchange	<p>New rail interchanges at Newry, Portadown and Ballymena and station improvements across the rail network would enhance the waiting environment and passenger facilities. Improved parking at stations would enhance passenger interchange between car and rail.</p> <p>Major refurbishment of bus stations at Antrim, Ballynahinch, Banbridge, Coleraine, Downpatrick, Dungannon, Kilkeel, Larne, Limavady, Newry, Portrush and Strabane would improve the waiting environment and the interchange and passenger facilities.</p> <p>Taxi stands in all towns and cities would improve interchange opportunities.</p> <p>Greatly improved access to public transport timetable and route information with real time information at stations and stops would facilitate improved transport interchange.</p> <p>Park &amp; Ride would explicitly facilitate transport interchange from car to bus. Interchange from walking and cycling to bus would also be facilitated.</p> <p>Improved facilities at bus stops would further enhance interchange opportunities.</p>	Moderate beneficial impact
	Land Use Policy	<p>The Regional Development Strategy concept of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>urban hubs promoting sustained urban renaissance would be supported by: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public transport infrastructure and service additions and improvements;</li> <li>reduction in the impact of traffic through management of highway infrastructure, including car parks; and</li> <li>making it easier to walk and cycle in urban areas.</li> </ol> </li> <li>promoting balanced and integrated growth across the network of cities, hubs and their rural hinterlands to enhance the equality of opportunity would be further supported by the substantial provision of and improvements to rural bus services, significantly improved highway maintenance and making it easier to walk and cycle in rural areas.</li> </ol>	Moderate beneficial impact

Objective	Sub-objective	Qualitative Impacts	Assessment
Integration (cont'd)	Other Government Policies	<p>Department of Agriculture and Rural Development Key Aim 4 of DARD's Rural Strategy 2007-2013 'Strengthening the Social and Economic Infrastructure of Rural Areas' would be supported by demand responsive public transport systems.</p> <p>The Department of Culture, Arts &amp; Leisure objective to foster a confident, creative, informed and vibrant community would be supported by high levels of road structural maintenance, bus fleet replacement, making it easier to walk and cycle, public transport infrastructure and service improvements and demand responsive public transport services in rural areas.</p> <p>The Department of Enterprise, Trade &amp; Investment objective to encourage growth of the economy would be supported by high levels of road structural maintenance and road infrastructure improvements.</p> <p>The Department of the Environment objectives for the environment would be supported as indicated by impacts against the Environment sub-objectives. The objectives for land use planning and road safety would be supported by traffic calming, other traffic management schemes and collision remedial works, making it easier to walk and cycle, innovative public transport and bypasses relieving urban areas of through traffic. Against the Landscape sub-objective, road widening would have an adverse impact on the environment.</p> <p>The Department of Finance &amp; Personnel objective to prioritise the use of resources available to Northern Ireland and ensure that these are used efficiently would receive some support by the schemes which improve efficiency including high levels of road structural maintenance and public transport infrastructure and service improvements.</p> <p>The Department of Health, Social Services &amp; Public Safety's objectives to develop policies that will lead to good health and wellbeing, and to ensure the delivery of high quality health and social care, would gain support from public transport timetable information, making it easier to walk and cycle, traffic calming and collision remedial and other works which would reduce collisions, improved urban bus services and road infrastructure improvements which would facilitate access to health and social care and improved emergency services response times.</p> <p>The Department for Employment &amp; Learning objectives promoting improved living standards via accessible high quality learning and skills training and employment opportunities would be supported by public transport timetable information, bus replacement, town bus services and demand responsive public transport services in rural areas.</p> <p>The Department of Education objective to effectively support learning would be reflected by improved, affordable and sustainable arrangements for transporting pupils from home to school.</p> <p>The Department for Social Development and Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister objective related to tackling disadvantage would be supported by making it easier to walk and cycle, Bus Split Cycle Optimisation of Timings, new and improved public transport interchanges, small vehicle and demand responsive public transport services and improved town bus services (including bus stop facilities).</p>	Moderate beneficial impact

## **Annex B – Glossary of Terms**

AST	Appraisal Summary Table.
ATS	Accessible Transport Strategy.
Blue Badge Parking Scheme	Scheme open to motorists with certain disabilities that allows them to park on-street, close to facilities and services.
BMA	Belfast Metropolitan Area – includes the District Council areas of Belfast, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh, Lisburn, Newtownabbey and North Down.
BMTP	Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan.
Clockface Operations	In terms of bus services, departure times are the same every hour e.g. 08.20, 09.20, 10.20, 11.20 etc.
Development Plans	Development Plans are prepared by the Department of the Environment to cover the development and use of land in Northern Ireland. Each Development Plan sets out detailed policies and specific proposals for land allocations needed to support the life of the local community and social and economic progress.
DOE	Department of the Environment.
DPE	Decriminalised Parking Enforcement  On 30 October 2006 DRD assumed Responsibility from the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) for the enforcement of on-street waiting and loading restrictions and permitted parking regulations. The introduction of decriminalised parking enforcement allows the Department to reduce traffic congestion impacts and improve highway and pedestrian safety by reducing incidences of illegally parked vehicles. Enforcement is carried out by issuing Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), non-payment of which may result in vehicles being clamped or removed.
DRD	Department for Regional Development.
DRT	Demand Responsive Transport - a transport system which provides services, according to prebooked demands only. A dial-a-ride scheme providing door-to-door transport following a telephone booking is a common example. This contrasts with a fixed system on which services run at predefined times and to a predefined route (i.e., as specified in a timetable).
DSD	Department for Social Development.
Eastern Seaboard Corridor	Road and rail links between BMA and Dublin and northward to Larne, improving access to Warrenpoint and Rosslare.
EQIA	Equality Impact Assessment.

GOMMMS	Guidance On the Methodology for Multi-Modal Studies.
ISNI	Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.
LAQMA	Local Air Quality Management Area.
Local Hubs	Towns of 5,000 -10,000 population located on the Regional Strategic Transport Network.
Main Hubs	Towns with a population of between 10,000 - 30,000.
National Cycle Network (NCN)	Network comprising traffic free, traffic calmed or lightly trafficked routes for cyclists and pedestrians.
New Start to Public Transport	Consultation paper on proposals to reform and included the increased involvement of the private sector in the public transport market.
NI	Northern Ireland.
NI Railways	Northern Ireland Railways.
NISRA	Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency.
NITHCo	Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company – statutory body established by the Transportation Act (NI) 1967.
Northern Corridor	Links the BMA to Antrim, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Coleraine, Limavady and Londonderry by road and rail.
Optimism Bias	Systematic tendency for project appraisers to underestimate the cost and works duration of infrastructure schemes.
Other Urban Areas	Other Urban Areas – Those towns described as main or local Hubs in the RDS and other towns outside the BMA with a population greater than 5000. Includes Antrim, Armagh, Ballycastle, Ballyclare, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Ballynahinch, Banbridge, Coleraine, Comber, Cookstown, Craigavon, Downpatrick, Dungannon, Enniskillen, Kilkeel, Larne, Limavady, Londonderry, Lurgan, Magherafelt, Newcastle, Newry, Newtownards, Omagh, Portadown, Portrush, Portstewart, Strabane, Warrenpoint.
PPS	Planning Policy Statement.
PPS 13	Planning Policy Statement on Transportation and Land Use.
PPS 3	Planning Policy Statement on Access Movement and Parking.
RDS	Regional Development Strategy.
RPA	Review of Public Administration.
RSTN	Regional Strategic Transport Network – is made up of the rail system, five Key Transport Corridors, along with the remainder of the Trunk Road network.



RSTNTP	Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan - Proposals for the maintenance, management and development of the RSTN up to the end of 2015.
RTS	Regional Transportation Strategy.
The Rural Areas	Areas within NI excluding the six council areas within the BMA and OUA.
Rural Transport Fund	Package of additional funding to increase accessibility and mobility by public transport in the countryside.
Safer Routes to School (SRS) Initiative	Policies which will help reduce the need for children to be driven to school by providing and promoting the use of safer routes for walking and cycling to schools.
South-Western Corridor	Links the BMA to Craigavon, the Fermanagh Lakeland, the Sperrins and to important cross-border routes.
Spatial Development Strategy	An overarching strategic planning framework, with supporting Strategic Planning Guidelines (SPGs) to guide the future development of the Region toward achievement of sustainable and balanced development.
Strategic Planning Guidelines (SPG)	These provide long-term policy directions from a spatial perspective in the form of strategic objectives, set out by topics, each with an accompanying range of measures.
S RTP	Sub Regional Transport Plan.
Taxi Review	Comprehensive and wide-ranging review of taxi regulation in Northern Ireland.
TPPD	Transport Programme for People with Disabilities.
Traffic Calming Schemes	Schemes normally provided in urban or residential areas with the objective to improve driver behaviour and reduce traffic speed in order to make the environment safer for pedestrians and cyclists.
Translink	Translink is the joint Trading name used by the three transport operating companies Northern Ireland Railways, Ulsterbus and Citybus.
Translink Bus Network Review	Translink's strategic review of bus operations within the greater Belfast area.
Ulsterbus Strategic Network Review	Translink's strategic network review of bus operations outside of the greater Belfast area.
Western Corridor	Links west of Lough Neagh between Donegal, Londonderry, Strabane, Omagh, Monaghan and Dublin.



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