

Committee	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date	<b>14 December 2005</b>
Report By	<b>Director of Transport and Environment</b>
Title of Report	<b>Development of the (Transport) Accessibility Strategy</b>
Purpose of Report	<b>To agree the programme for Transport Accessibility Strategy Local Assessments</b>

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Cabinet is recommended to:**

**Approve the following programme for undertaking Transport Accessibility Strategy Local Assessments (ASLA's):**

- **A pilot ASLA for Rye (for inclusion in Local Transport Plan 2, by end of March 2006);**
  - **Hastings & Rother 2006/07;**
  - **North Wealden Towns (Uckfield, Crowborough, Heathfield [+Lewes] 2007/08;**
  - **Eastbourne & Hailsham 2008/09; and**
  - **Southern Coastal Towns (Telscombe Cliffs, Peacehaven, Newhaven, Seaford [+Lewes] 2009/10.**
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### **1. Financial Appraisal**

1.1 The development of the (Transport) Accessibility Strategy and the undertaking of the local assessments are funded from the budget for the development of Local Transport Plan 2 (LTP2) work which is costing £43,000 plus officer time. The work spans 2004/05 and 2005/06.

### **2. Supporting Information**

#### Background

2.1 Accessibility planning can greatly assist in identifying accessibility “gaps”, helping to devise transport schemes to address them and achieving value for money. A countywide accessibility assessment was undertaken in 2004/05. Reality checks on the results of the countywide accessibility assessment were tested through a series of stakeholder workshops in April 2005. In general, the worst accessibility is in the more rural areas of the county. On this basis, it is appropriate to target resources on tackling rural accessibility “gaps” around Rye and in the North Weald. However, it also recognises that larger concentrations of social exclusion exist, coupled with serious economic deprivation in some of the county’s urban centres, such as Hastings, Eastbourne and Newhaven. The countywide assessment was used in the strategy in the provisional LTP2 submitted to government in July.

2.2 The transport accessibility work will also provide information for the planning of other Council and public services. It will also help in informing and attracting developer contributions. Links have been established between the transport work and the Council’s Access project.

#### Next stages

2.3 The next stage is to carry out more local accessibility assessments, in order to identify the accessibility needs and problems of different sections of the community, and barriers associated with different journey purposes at a local level. This will help identify critical “gaps” and possible action.

2.4 Resources dictate that these assessments and action plans cannot all be done at the same time, therefore, a programme needs to be established. The proposed programme has been determined by a combination of social and economic considerations, local and regional planning issues and the results of the countywide strategic accessibility assessment. The programme has also been informed by government guidance on the development of transport Accessibility Strategies, and has sought to reflect an appropriate interaction between both urban and rural accessibility requirements. A brief explanation for the programme is attached in the Annex to this report.

2.5 The approach recommended will provide better value for money by identifying an integrated approach and addressing the “gaps” in the urban areas and rural hinterlands. The proposed programme reflects a range of factors, including wider Council and Community Strategy priorities, emerging Local Area Agreement outcomes, areas of deprivation and regeneration priorities and contribution to LTP2 targets.

2.6 Whilst the programme sets out the order in which accessibility assessments will be carried out, it does not mean that those areas will then receive priority over others for transport funding. Schemes will still be developed to implement the Local Area Transport Strategies across the county, in accordance with LTP objectives and targets. The actions contained in the action plans will be consistent with the implementation of LTP2 but, subject to discussion and agreement, may also relate to service delivery by the Council, and to that of other organisations.

2.7 In further stages, local partnerships, including representatives of other Council and public services, will help establish an action plan of measures to address the local accessibility problems. Partner organisations may also wish to identify how changes to the delivery of their services could help improve accessibility levels. In the final stage, appropriate performance indicators and targets will be established so that the effectiveness of the Accessibility Strategy can be gauged. Whilst this work will all be of benefit to transport planning and is a statutory requirement for LTP2, it has the potential to benefit wider service delivery, including operational efficiency gains.

### **3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendation**

3.1 Local transport accessibility assessments are required to inform the development of transport schemes to address accessibility “gaps” and the development of LTP2. A phased programme is required to make efficient use of resources. The proposed programme would determine the order in which the assessments are done, and local partnerships will be involved in drawing up action plans. The action plans will relate primarily to transport initiatives but may also relate to other non-transport related service delivery. The programme does not imply that areas being assessed earlier in the programme have financial priority over other areas.

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7 December 2005  
C14December-Accessibility Strategy

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### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Provisional Second East Sussex Local Transport Plan (July 2005).  
'Making the Connections': Transport and Social Exclusion (February 2003).  
Department for Transport Guidance on 2<sup>nd</sup> LTP's/Accessibility Planning (December 2004).

## **Development of the (Transport) Accessibility Strategy**

### **Rye pilot ASLA (Dec 05 – Mar 06)**

Rye was identified as a particular area that has poor accessibility and deprivation issues, so the area is appropriate for the pilot local accessibility assessment.

### **Hastings & Rother ASLA (2006/07)**

Hastings & Rother is an urban and rural area which provides the opportunity to address accessibility in an area which exhibits severe deprivation and accessibility problems, and is subject to strenuous regeneration activity.

### **North Wealden Towns ASLA (2007/08)**

The early work on accessibility showed significant problems of access in the rural areas, to key services. As a remote rural area, North Wealden is proposed as the third area for assessment.

### **Eastbourne & Hailsham (2008/09) and Southern Coastal Towns (2009/10) ASLA's**

The Eastbourne & Hailsham, and Southern Coastal Towns areas exhibit similar access issues. However, it is proposed to assess the Eastbourne & Hailsham first, in recognition of the likely levels of development proposed in current plans and the Sussex Coast sub-regional Strategy.