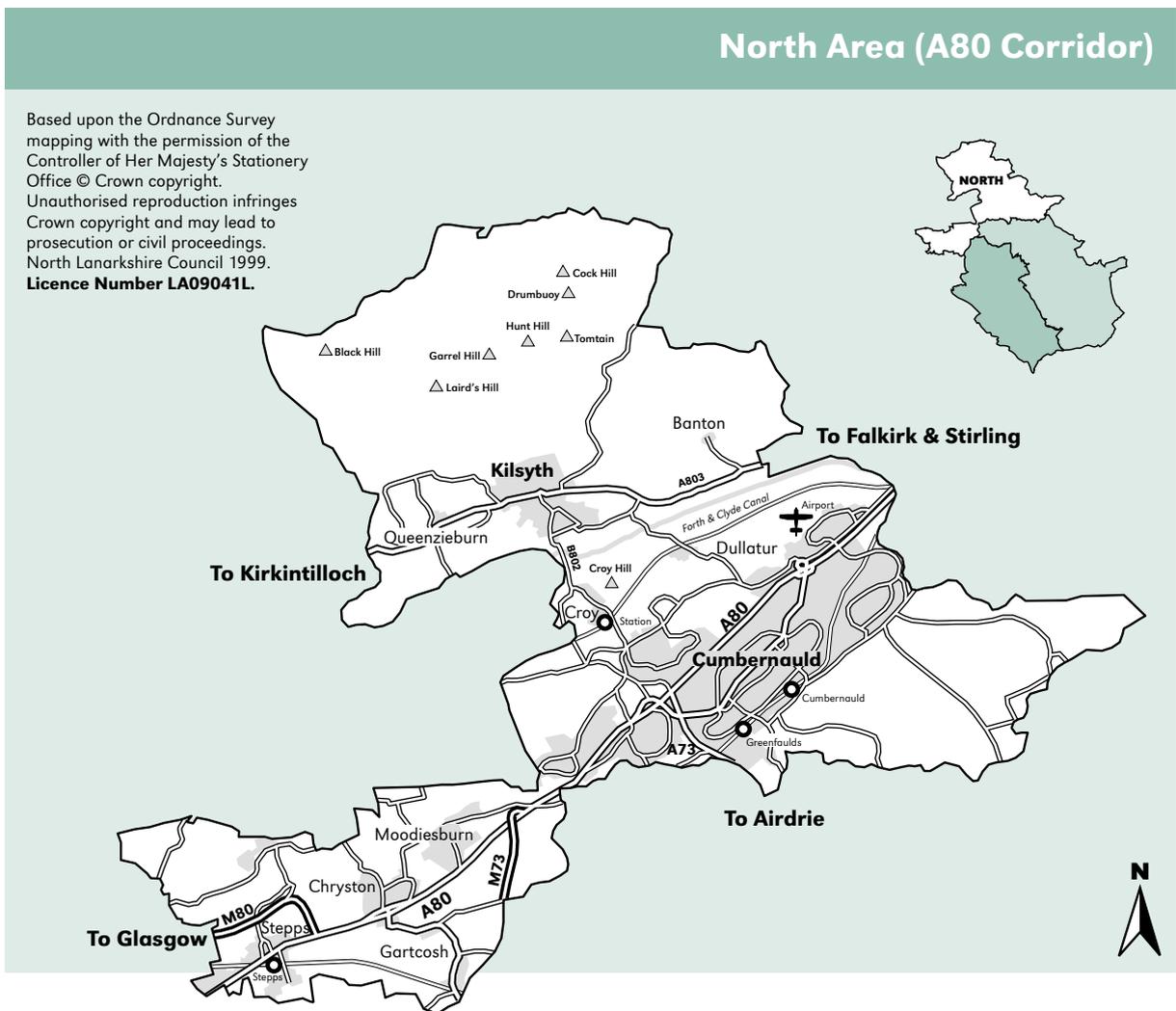


Transport Delivery Locally in North Lanarkshire

The North Area

3.1 The two main urban centres are Cumbernauld and Kilsyth, with the surrounding farms, villages and towns of the Kelvin Valley. The main transport routes are from east to west, reflecting the topography. The A80 Trunk Road and A803 are the major east to west roads. The B802 between Kilsyth and Cumbernauld is substandard. The main route from Cumbernauld to Airdrie is formed by the A73 which was a Trunk Road until 1996 and still carries traffic more suitable for strategic than local roads. The Glasgow to Edinburgh and Glasgow to Cumbernauld and Falkirk railways form the rail routes. The Millennium Canal Link and the Glasgow to Cumbernauld cycle route add to the east to west pattern.



- 3.2** This part of North Lanarkshire has the highest provision of walking facilities, made up from formal and informal walking routes, footway networks and the Millennium Link. This is partly a reflection of the New Town philosophy in Cumbernauld. Cycling routes are more restricted, though there is considerable potential for expansion. Bus routes serve the A803 corridor, Kilsyth town itself and the Kilsyth to Cumbernauld link. Express and local bus services are extensive on the Cumbernauld to Glasgow corridor. They are much more limited, however, around Gartcosh and Glenboig. Road traffic is dominated by movements to and from the A80, M73 and A803 from Kelvinhead to Queenzieburn.
- 3.3** The North Area is subject to many development pressures. Cumbernauld is expanding as new housing and industrial areas are developed. The Town Centre will be redeveloped and new investment will take place at the Gartcosh regeneration site. New housing is being built in and around Kilsyth, while the Kelvin Valley will adopt a greater recreational use as the Millennium Link is developed. Each of these will introduce new travel demands and place burdens on the existing infrastructure.

Issues & Objectives

- 3.4** Two thirds of respondents in the transport survey indicated that congestion on main roads is a concern. A similar proportion wanted to see early action taken to upgrade motorways or provide new Trunk routes. The A80 corridor is regularly congested, particularly between the Crowwood and Auchenkilns roundabouts. Traffic flows at peak periods are high, and daily incidents can cause enormous difficulties. This reflects the A80's role as a national distributor, taking traffic from the north and east of Scotland to the south and west. When congestion on the A80 occurs, traffic diverts onto local roads, creating safety, access and environmental problems for surrounding communities. This traffic adds to the maintenance costs on the Council roads, and restricts the flow of vehicles on local routes.

CONGESTION ON THE A80 CORRIDOR WILL BE ADDRESSED URGENTLY BY THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE. IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENTS SHOULD BE PURSUED WHERE THESE DO NOT RULE OUT LONGER TERM SOLUTIONS AND THE COUNCIL WILL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP TO ACHIEVE THIS.

- 3.5** Movement from Kilsyth to Cumbernauld is restricted by the quality of the roads from Kilsyth to Croy and Dullatur. The presence of bus services and improvements taking place through the Millennium Canal Link cannot disguise the fact that it is often easier to travel east or west from Kilsyth to Falkirk or Kirkintilloch than it is to reach other parts of North Lanarkshire.

MOVEMENT FROM KILSYTH TO CUMBERNAULD MUST BE IMPROVED. WALKING, CYCLING AND BUS LINKS WILL BE IMPORTANT IN MEETING THE WIDEST NEEDS.

- 3.6** Almost 60% of survey respondents would use buses or trains if they had suitable choices. Over 60% see park & ride as beneficial in moving them towards train services, however rail capacity in the north has some restrictions. The park & ride facility at Croy has been expanded several times. It remains congested, reflecting the success in attracting passengers onto the rail services. The increase of direct services to Edinburgh is likely to create more demand. Peak hour capacity on trains into Glasgow is limited, and congestion towards Lenzie and Bishopbriggs is common.

INCREASED PARK AND RIDE CAPACITY NEEDS TO BE MATCHED BY INCREASES IN TRAIN CAPACITY.

- 3.7** This problem is compounded by the lack of direct rail access to Kilsyth, Queenzieburn and Banton. Croy has the nearest station, but is beyond reasonable walking distance and requires bus interchange, cycling or car journeys to reach it. Opportunities to access the rail services are, therefore, limited.

ACCESS TO THE STATION AT CROY NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED FROM THE SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES. THIS WILL FORM PART OF WIDER ACTION ACROSS THE A80 CORRIDOR TO IMPROVE TRANSPORT BY ALL MODES.

- 3.8** Bus services in the North Area reflect the east to west focus of the roads network. Services are available from Cumbernauld and Kilsyth to Glasgow, Stirling and Falkirk. Cumbernauld is further served by strategic coach services from more distant locations. Services also run between Cumbernauld and Kilsyth. There are fewer services, however, from Queenzieburn or Banton to Kilsyth and none which link these settlements to Cumbernauld, increasing costs for those wishing to make this journey. Importantly, many of the buses using the A80 are delayed by general road traffic, reducing their attractiveness as a transport choice.

GREATER INTEGRATION OF BUS SERVICES ACROSS THE NORTH AND IMPROVEMENT ON THE A80 CORRIDOR IS REQUIRED.

- 3.9** Access to the Kilsyth Hills and Carron Valley is limited by poor road links. These locations are valuable resources and offer substantial potential for recreation and tourism. There is scope for encouraging walking and cycling, though the concerns of landowners must be recognised in any proposals.

THE RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL OF THE KILSYTH HILLS SHOULD BE PURSUED BUT IS DEPENDENT ON IMPROVED ACCESS.

- 3.10** There are few passenger capacity problems on the Cumbernauld to Glasgow line. The development of the Gartcosh station and multi-modal access should increase patronage on this line. Current signalling limitations on this route means that it will be difficult, however, to carry forward additional station proposals without more improvements. This includes our aspirations for a station at Abronhill.

GARTCOSH STATION WILL BE BUILT BY LATE 2001. CONSIDERATION NEEDS TO BE GIVEN TO FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS ON THIS LINE IN CONJUNCTION WITH SPT AND RAIL OPERATORS.

- 3.11** Demands for movement are reflected in demands for parking. Parking in Cumbernauld Town Centre is not currently a problem, though the redevelopment of the shopping area will increase demand. Kilsyth, by contrast, has localised parking problems, with some car parks congested while others have spaces. Kilsyth has a local catchment including Queenzieburn, Banton and Kelvinhead, in addition to the housing areas around the town.

PARKING WILL BE MONITORED TO SUPPORT TOWN CENTRE FUNCTIONS. IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS, A BALANCE IS REQUIRED BETWEEN PARKING PROVISION AND IMPROVED ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS.

3.12 Walking and cycling in the North Area is well served by urban and rural paths networks. The Millennium Link, Paths for All network and links to Gartcosh will add to these facilities. The Central Scotland Forest also has a crucial role to play. Cumbernauld, especially benefits from the separate footway and road networks, which improve pedestrian safety considerably.

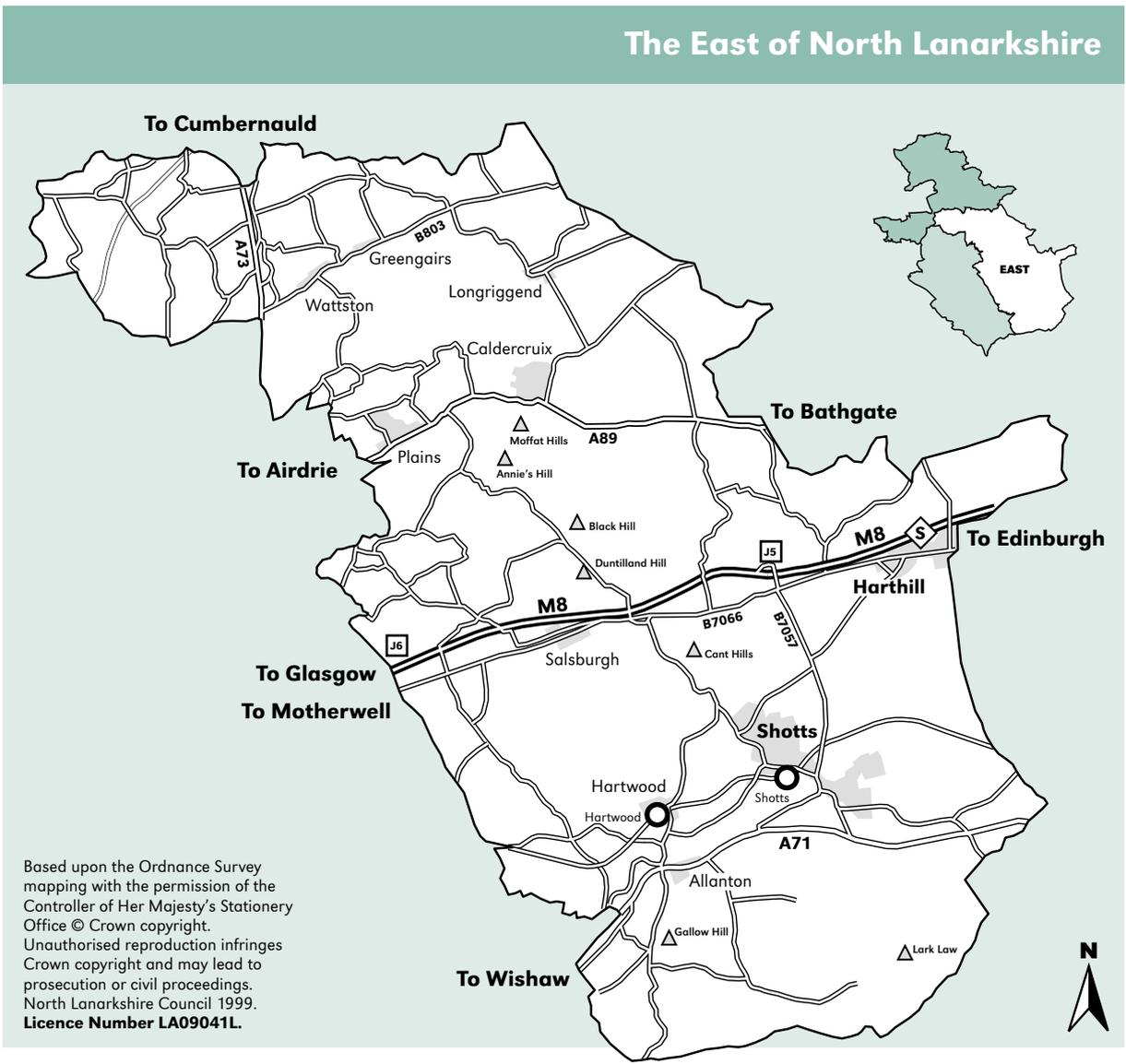
OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEW WALKING AND CYCLING NEED TO BE PROMOTED WHENEVER POSSIBLE IN FURTHERANCE OF THE COUNCIL'S ACCESS AND ROAD SAFETY STRATEGIES.

3.13 In delivering Transport for the North Area, the Council, therefore, intends to:-

1. Link the Kelvin Valley to Kilsyth, Croy and Cumbernauld by enhanced walking and cycling routes developed under the access strategy.
2. Improve road and bus links from Kilsyth to Cumbernauld as resources become available.
3. Maintain and improve links to Croy, Cumbernauld and Greenfaulds with an emphasis on walking, cycling and public transport developments.
4. Seek a substantial improvement to bus facilities in Cumbernauld as the Town Centre is redeveloped.
5. Pursue bus priority measures within the A80 corridor in conjunction with the Scottish Executive and bus operators.
6. Complete the construction of Gartcosh Station and transport interchange by the end of 2001.
7. Work with the Scottish Executive, other bodies and neighbouring Councils to move forward the multi modal study for the A80.
8. Limit parking provision for new non-residential developments to a maximum level.
9. Require developers to submit a transport assessment / transport plan to illustrate the methods proposed to ameliorate this demand, where the proposed development is likely to generate a significant demand for movement.

The Rural East

3.14 The area to the east of the A73 is largely rural in character. The largest town is Shotts, with communities such as Caldercruix, Harthill and Longriggend, and extensive areas of farmland, forestry or open moorland. The area is crossed by the B803, A89, A71 and M8 routes, the Glasgow to Edinburgh cycle route and the Glasgow to Edinburgh via Shotts railway. All of these routes run from east to west. Much of the area lies over 200m (600ft) above sea level, which has implications for winter maintenance.



- 3.15** Movement from north to south is very poor, and relies on the A73 to a very large extent. Travel tends to take the form of movements to or from larger centres in the west, including Airdrie, Bellshill, Wishaw and Motherwell. Walking, cycling and horse-riding routes do exist, though their coverage is fragmented. Bus routes, similarly, do not present an effective network, with many operators competing in different areas. Timetables, fares and information are not co-ordinated. Much of the bus network in the east also operates on a subsidised basis. Over 30 services in North Lanarkshire are supported from SPT's subsidised bus budget. This budget is limited, and comes under increasing pressure as commercial operators concentrate on more lucrative services. There is a strong case for greater regulation in bus service provision. This would benefit both the travelling public, and operators from short term commercial practises of competitors.
- 3.16** Connections by train to Glasgow and Edinburgh are currently available from Hartwood and Shotts stations. It is hoped that the rail link from Airdrie to Bathgate can be reopened, providing additional capacity for travel between Glasgow and Edinburgh, and linking the communities of Plains and Caldercruix to more extensive transport networks. Growth around the A8 corridor is high, and increased demands for travel around Junction 6, Newhouse, have been taking place. We must also recognise that development around Shotts and Harthill will place new demands on the transport infrastructure. The roads in the most remote rural areas are coming under pressure from vehicles associated with open cast coal operations.

Issues & Objectives

- 3.17** This part of North Lanarkshire shares many of the problems of adjacent areas in Falkirk or West Lothian and other remote communities. The issues focus mainly on the dispersal and remoteness of the population and effects of the limited choices available in the transport network.
- 3.18** In the transport survey, over 40% of respondents indicated that they do not have bus or train services for most of their journeys. It is difficult to provide public transport where relatively few people live. Recent years have seen a fragmentation of bus service provision. Currently, different bus operators provide services to the villages in the east. Timetabling and fares connections with services further west are poor. Often, services do not connect or two fares are required for one journey. In other cases, buses do not run frequently, or in the evenings. This increases time and costs, reduces choices, and makes public transport less attractive.
- 3.19** Together, these features combine to produce a much higher degree of car dependence than generally seen in larger towns. The car offers the flexibility to reach many destinations in a relatively short time. The costs associated with owning and running a car are often seen as essential and unavoidable, given the limited travel choices on offer.
- 3.20** For those without cars, however, this flexibility is not available. The travel choices of a large group in the population are restricted. This group includes many who most need to travel, including people seeking employment or travelling to school or hospital. Often, many people are effectively isolated when the available public transport services stop running early on in the evening.

FRAGMENTATION OF EXISTING BUS SERVICES MUST BE ADDRESSED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SPT TO REDUCE EXCLUSION AND PROMOTE ACCESS.

- 3.21** West Lothian Council and the South East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRANS) have aspirations for the reopening of the Airdrie to Bathgate rail link. This would have significant benefits for Plains and Caldercruix, where new stations would be required. Links between employment and population centres along the route would be improved.

THE COUNCIL SUPPORTS THE PROPOSALS TO REOPEN THE AIRDRIE TO BATHGATE RAIL LINK, AND WILL WORK WITH PARTNERS TO DELIVER THIS PROJECT.

- 3.22** Walking and cycling distances are longer where the population is dispersed. While routes do exist, they are not suitable for everyone, or for all journeys. Rights of Way and other footpaths are fragmented, and often do not offer a network meeting the needs of the community.

THERE IS A NEED TO DEVELOP A NETWORK OF FOOTWAYS, CYCLEWAYS AND BRIDLE PATHS TO INCREASE ACCESS AND RECREATIONAL POTENTIAL.

- 3.23** The east is the focus of many projects which combine to promote access, training, inclusion and environmental themes. Many of these are taking place under the Central Scotland Forest initiative. Over 40km of footpath have been provided as part of the project across North Lanarkshire, with much of it in the east.

THE CENTRAL SCOTLAND FOREST OFFERS A MEANS BY WHICH WIDER ACCESS PROGRAMMES CAN BE PRIORITISED AND CO-ORDINATED.

- 3.24** The east offers wider recreational and environmental opportunities for the population of the central belt. Much of the work can be delivered under the Central Scotland Forest programme. Care must be taken to ensure that recreational, environmental and economic objectives are balanced at all times.

PROMOTING THE “GREEN HEART” OF THE CENTRAL BELT REQUIRES A BALANCED APPROACH TO ACCESS, FARMING, FORESTRY AND RECREATION.

- 3.25** The dispersal of population and diversity of travel requirements in the east makes the planning of transport delivery difficult. Experience suggests that smaller, localised projects, meeting specific themes are more likely to be successful than larger, less focussed projects. Using smaller projects also allows greater community involvement and flexibility in approach. The Central Scotland Forest is an example of a large strategic project made up of many more localised initiatives.

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS TO COMMUNITY PROBLEMS WILL BE VERY IMPORTANT IN THE EAST.

3.26 Shotts is the largest community in the east, with almost 9,000 people. It has one of only two railway stations in the east with access to Edinburgh, West Lothian, Bellshill and Glasgow. Commuting to these destinations is significant, giving Shotts many of the characteristics of towns in the north and west. There are also opportunities to enhance the nature and rule of the Shotts railway route.

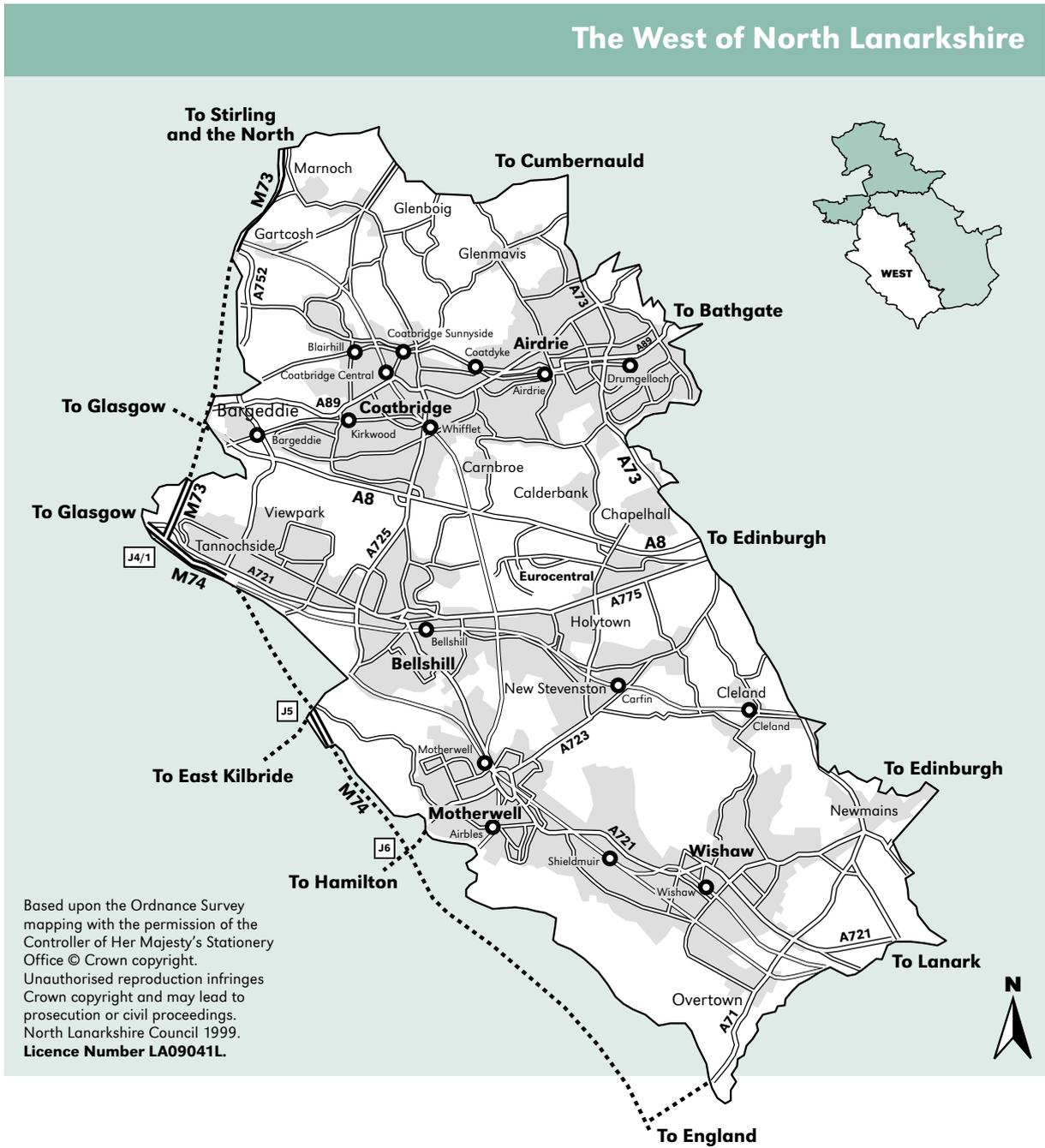
TRANSPORTATION DELIVERY FOR SHOTTS AND ITS COMMUNITY WILL REQUIRE SPECIAL CONSIDERATION. THE ROLE OF THE M8 AND GLASGOW TO EDINBURGH RAILWAY ARE IMPORTANT.

3.27 In delivering Transport for the east, the Council therefore intends to:-

1. Work with SPT to provide a more coherent network of rural public transport services involving both bus and rail services.
2. Promote walking and cycling both as recreational and travel facilities.
3. Liaise with individual communities to identify and promote specific transport solutions.
4. Promote road safety initiatives where appropriate in villages and rural communities.
5. Work with transport operators, the CSCT and local communities to support the development of the Central Scotland Forest.
6. Work with the Scottish Executive, other bodies and Local Authorities to carry forward the multi modal study for the A8/M8, and the parallel rail routes.
7. Support the proposed reopening of the Airdrie to Bathgate rail line.
8. Limit parking provision for new non-residential developments to a maximum level.
9. Require developers to submit a transport assessment / transport plan to illustrate the methods proposed to ameliorate this demand, where the proposed development is likely to generate a significant demand for movement.

The Urban West

3.28 There is a concentration of urban development in the west of North Lanarkshire, with two thirds of the population living in this area. The area is bounded by the A73 to the east, the M73 and M74 to the west and the River Clyde to the south. The attached plan shows this in greater detail.



- 3.29** Trunk roads and motorways play an important part in the transport network of the west. The M73, M74, A725 and A8 / M8 corridors link the urban west to Scotland and the rest of the UK. They form the core of the national roads network, but impinge on the local communities by attracting and channelling large volumes of traffic. Local roads, such as the A89, A71 and A73 connect the urban centres to each other and the Trunk Roads. They also link manufacturing and distribution centres to the Trunk Roads, and carry significant volumes of through-traffic generated outwith North Lanarkshire. The nature and quality of the strategic roads network has been instrumental and continues to be critical in the economic regeneration of North Lanarkshire.
- 3.30** Development pressures in the urban west are extensive. Both Gartcosh and Ravenscraig will strongly affect future travel patterns. The demand for growth along the A8 corridor has been high, with developments such as Eurocentral and the Bellshill Business Park. Extensive areas of new housing and commercial and industrial development have added to the demand for travel.
- 3.31** Bus and rail services are extensive, reflecting the concentration of population. These services provide a comprehensive network serving the town centres and main road corridors. They are less effective in meeting the needs of outlying housing areas, where the burden falls on subsidised services or Dial-a-Bus operations. Problems of remoteness can occur even in the towns, particularly affecting the elderly, mobility impaired and those without access to alternate modes of transport.
- 3.32** The west has a large number of walking routes, mainly at the side of roads. These do not always provide effective networks. The Glasgow to Edinburgh cycle route provides strategic cycle links to Glasgow, South Lanarkshire and the east.

Issues & Objectives

- 3.33** Over 200,000 people live in the towns and villages of this area. Unlike the New Town of Cumbernauld, these towns have older, more traditional designs. They are not suited to high traffic flows, and problems arise as pedestrians, cyclists, drivers and service vehicles compete for space. Almost 50% of respondents in the survey indicated that they are concerned about local congestion. Work is currently going on to remedy localised congestion and safety problems. Further action is needed in many other locations to improve traffic management, safety and access.

ADDRESSING THE EXISTING ACCESS AND SAFETY PROBLEMS IN TOWN CENTRES WILL CONTINUE TO BE VITALLY IMPORTANT.

- 3.34** The west has the most extensive network for travel to the rest of the Glasgow Conurbation. Historic links to Hamilton, East Kilbride and Glasgow are retained in many current travel patterns. Bus, rail and road networks reflect many of these features. This historic pattern is not always suited to modern journey styles, which tend to be longer and more varied than previously.

THE BUS AND RAIL NETWORKS ARE EXTENSIVE, BUT DO NOT MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL TRAVELLERS.

- 3.35** Links to hospitals are very important. Several hospitals are found here, including Monklands and the new Wishaw hospital. The facilities must be linked to their catchment areas by the widest choice of transport modes. This is particularly true for those travelling greater distances or without access to cars.

EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT LINKS NEED TO BE DEVELOPED TO HOSPITALS AND OTHER COMMUNITY AND HEALTH FACILITIES.

- 3.36** This area has the bulk of the Council's vacant and derelict land. Much of this stems from now vanished manufacturing and minerals industries. The vacant land presents problems and opportunities for the Council area. Reusing this land often has environmental benefits, and reduces travel demand by keeping new building close to existing centres with their transport networks. Ravenscraig and Gartcosh are important sites in the vacant land resource.

USING BROWNFIELD SITES IS CRITICAL IN SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO LIMIT TRAFFIC GROWTH AND PRESERVE LAND RESOURCES.

- 3.37** Over 50% of survey respondents indicated that they find difficulty in parking in North Lanarkshire's town centres. In many cases, there is high demand for some town centre car parks. Other car parks are not so well used, however, and there is potential to make more efficient use of the space available. Signing, information on car park locations and effective walking links to car parks are important in supporting their use.

CAR PARKS WILL BE MANAGED TO SUPPORT TOWN CENTRE FUNCTIONS. THE USE OF CARS NEEDS TO BE BALANCED BY WALKING, CYCLING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT DELIVERY.

- 3.38** The A8 is typically congested, with its main carriageway failing to offer a reasonable level of service for users. The junctions along its length create problems, given their design and the high volumes of traffic using them. Similar congestion problems arise on the A725 and M74 at the Shawhead, Raith and Hamilton junctions. The A8 has been very important in recent years, forming the focus for much of the inward investment along its route. The growth of economic centres at Mossend and Eurocentral illustrates both the role the Trunk Roads can play, and the difficulties congestion on these routes creates for long term prosperity.

ACTION BY THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE TO IMPROVE THE TRUNK ROAD NETWORK IS ESSENTIAL FOR BOTH LOCAL AND NATIONAL BENEFIT.

- 3.39** Motherwell station has excellent links for rail services. It could serve as a significant hub station given its position on the main lines to Edinburgh, England, the Hamilton circle, Glasgow and the rest of Scotland. In this role, it could support significant office and commercial developments in the town, and offer links for Ravenscraig. Improved bus, walking and cycling links would also be needed to support this.

THE POTENTIAL OF MOTHERWELL STATION CAN ONLY BE REALISED BY CREATING A SUPPORTING NETWORK OF FEEDER TRANSPORT ROUTES.

- 3.40** Links from Wishaw to Motherwell and the motorway network are restricted by the road network between them. Garrion Bridge to the M74 will be improved under South Lanarkshire's proposals (currently under construction). The A721 to Motherwell is regularly congested at peak hours. There is potential to improve movement along this corridor, possibly as part of a bus priority and traffic management scheme.

MOVEMENT TO AND FROM WISHAW NEEDS TO BE IMPROVED, WITH A PACKAGE OF MEASURES FOR BUSES, FREIGHT AND CYCLISTS. THIS WILL BE MOST EFFECTIVELY DELIVERED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE RAVENS CRAIG REDEVELOPMENT.

- 3.41** The Ravenscraig proposals will significantly alter traffic patterns in the west. Local impacts will be felt as traffic is generated or diverted. There is scope to create improvements throughout the local area for walkers, cyclists, public transport users and drivers from the Ravenscraig proposals.

THE RAVENS CRAIG REDEVELOPMENT MUST BE PREDICATED ON THE CREATION OF A SUSTAINABLE, INTEGRATED TRANSPORT NETWORK.

- 3.42** The rural / urban fringe areas of the towns are very important areas for many communities. These are used for informal recreation, and form the link between the town and countryside. Again, the Central Scotland Forest has a role to play, in addition to wider regeneration initiatives and localised schemes including the South Airdrie and East Wishaw paths projects. Community involvement in these initiatives has been, and will continue to be, very important.

ENHANCED FOOTWAY, CYCLING AND BRIDLEWAYS PROVISION IS REQUIRED UNDER THE ACCESS STRATEGY.

- 3.43** Access within each of the towns is very important. The demands of competing travellers, such as pedestrians, drivers, delivery vehicles, cyclists and bus users create pressures. There is limited space on footways, parking or service areas and roads. Local improvements can be made, but it is impossible to provide enough space for everyone. Experience suggests, for instance that new road space is often filled by new vehicles.

A HIERARCHY OF ROUTES NEEDS TO BE IDENTIFIED TO PROTECT VULNERABLE GROUPS AND AREAS, WHILE ALLOWING LEGITIMATE ACCESS.

3.44 In delivering Transport for the west, the Council, therefore, intends to:-

- | | |
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| 1. | Work to increase walking, cycling and public transport links between Social Inclusion Partnership Areas and development sites along the A8 corridor. |
| 2. | Develop walking and cycling networks linking urban and rural areas under the access strategy. |
| 3. | Complete the Glasgow to Edinburgh cycle route to the highest standard practical. |
| 4. | Work with the Scottish Executive to improve capacity along the A8 corridor, with priority given to the Shawhead Junction. |
| 5. | Seek improvements by the Scottish Executive to Raith Interchange on the M74. |
| 6. | Carry forward the ongoing works to improve access in Wishaw Town Centre. |
| 7. | Promote Motherwell station as a hub, with improved links to the wider community. This will be linked to improvements for the Motherwell - Ravenscraig - Wishaw corridor. |
| 8. | Ensure proposals to accommodate Ravenscraig's travel demand incorporate sustainable, integrated solutions. |
| 9. | Limit parking provision for new non-residential developments to a maximum level. |
| 10. | Require developers to submit a transport assessment / transport plan to illustrate the methods proposed to ameliorate this demand, where the proposed development is likely to generate a significant demand for movement. |