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Ryde Transport Strategy

Baseline Report

February 2003

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Ryde Transport Strategy

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1 Introduction

A Public Realm strategy for Ryde is currently be developed and will provide an agreed overall vision for Ryde that can be used to set out the design framework, based on the special aesthetic, economic and social characteristics of the town. The strategy should inform all design decisions made in the public realm of Ryde. The extent of the Strategy area is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

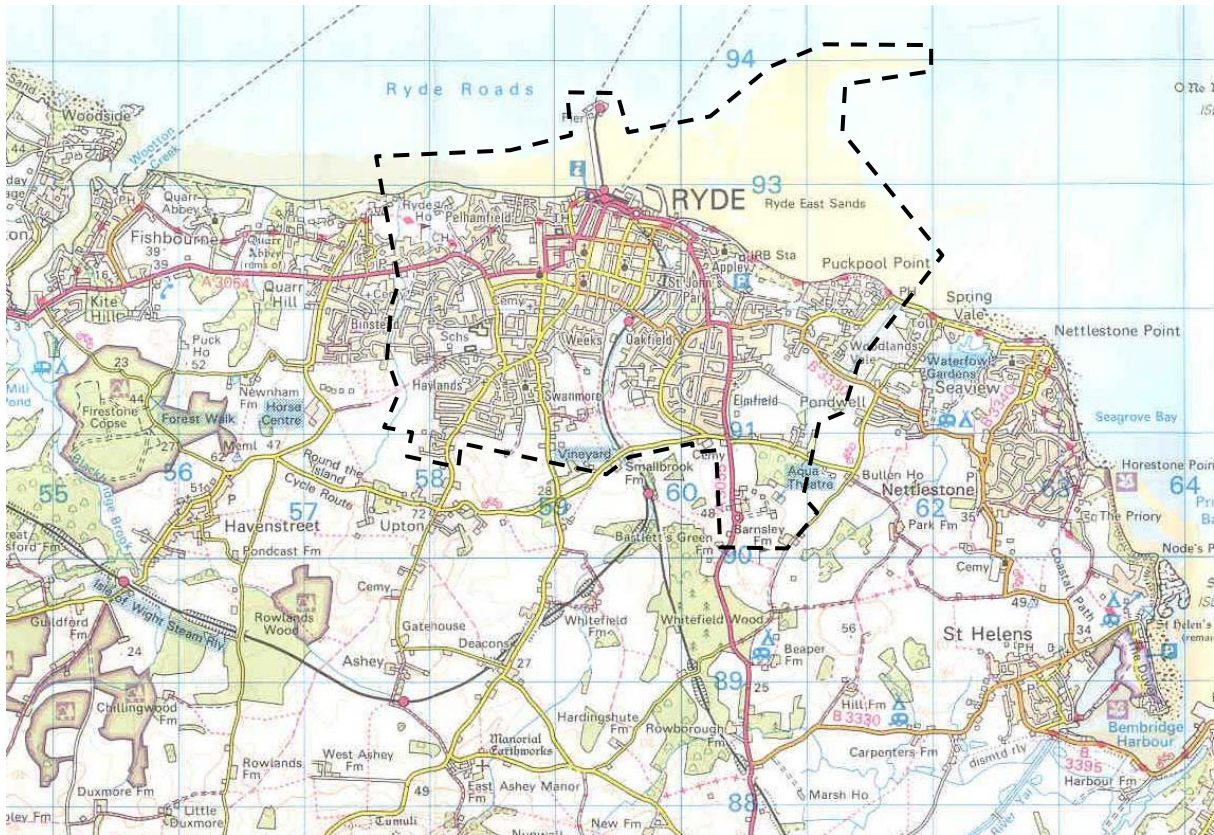


Figure 1.1 – Ryde Public Realm Strategy Area

The strategic working group is made of key officers from the local authority departments, Ryde Development Trust, SEEDA, English Heritage and Portsmouth University and are working on a number of aspects including, Policy Background, Townscape structure and character, Public Realm framework, Public Realm guidelines, Phasing and priorities.

The strategy aims to tackle the pattern of social deprivation that is apparent within the town. It is estimated that one fifth of the Island’s population (22,000) live within Ryde, and 27% of the population are over the pensionable age. Three of Ryde’s wards (Ryde East, Ryde West and Ryde St John’s) are within the 12% most deprived wards in the South-East, and the average weekly gross earnings are 19.2% below the national average.

This economic condition is reflected by car ownership rates within Ryde, with 40% of all households having no access to a private car. With a significant percentage of households also only having access to one car, it is evident that the majority of adults living within Ryde do not have a car readily available for their own use.

It is important, therefore, that non-car modes of travel are encouraged and facilities are provided to halt the decline in public transport use. With potential economic growth in Ryde, it will be important that those who currently use non-car modes do not feel it is essential to own a car in the future, even if their personal financial situation improves.

2 Existing Transport Arrangements

2.1 Highway Network & Hierarchy

The main routes to Ryde are the A3054 (from Newport) and A3055 (from Sandown). The historic nature of Ryde means that there are a limited number of roads which can cater for through traffic. A summary of the existing local road hierarchy is provided in **Table 2.1**.

A Roads	B Roads	Local Distributor
Queen's Road	Alexandra Road as far as St John's Hill	St Thomas Street
East Hill Road	St John's Hill	Pellhurst Road
Esplanade	St John's Road	Argyll Street
George Street (north)	Melville Street	West Street
Union Street		High Street
Binstead Road		Green Street
West Street (between Queen's Rd and Lind Street)		Park Road
Lind Street		George Street (south)
John Street		Dover Street
Victoria Street		Monkton Street
Garfield Road (between Victoria Street and High Street)		Great Preston Road
Cross Street		
High Street (between Garfield Road and Lind Street)		

Table 2.1 - Road Hierarchy

Binstead Road and Queen's Road form the A3054 to the west of the town centre, whilst Brading Road, Marlborough Road, Appley Road, East Hill Road and the Esplanade form the A3055 to the east. The town centre operates as a one way system between the Five Ways junction and the Esplanade. Traffic heading west to east is routed from the Five Ways junction, along West Street, Lind Street and Union Street to the Esplanade. From the opposite direction, traffic travels along George Street, Cross Street, part of the High Street, part of Garfield Road, Victoria Street and John Street, emerging at the Five Ways junction.

The existing signing strategy within Ryde does not reflect the road classifications as described above, as through traffic is not signed via the A3055 / A3054 route within the town centre. In an attempt to keep through traffic out of the town centre, traffic from the south and east is routed via St John's Hill, St John's Road, Green Street, Argyll Street and Pellhurst Road, as shown in **Figure 2.1**.

Signing from the west of the town centre attempts to direct traffic along this route also (although in an opposite direction). However, signing at the Binstead Road / Queen's Road junction confuses matters as traffic heading to 'Sandown' is signed towards the town centre along Queen's Road. No other signing for through traffic is given at this location, and there is a general lack of strategic signing within the town centre. It is considered that this inconsistent signing strategy would cause considerable inconvenience to motorists as they would easily become lost within the town centre.

Traffic visiting Ryde is signed towards the Town Centre and the Esplanade but there is no mention of the beaches. There is no consistent signing for car park locations and public transport terminals are not signed from the strategic network.

2.2 Highway Trip Patterns

In February 1997, roadside interview surveys were carried out on traffic approaching Ryde on the two main radial routes:

- A3054 Binstead Road from the west
- A3055 Brading Road from the south

Classified counts of traffic were carried out in both directions. 85-90% of vehicles were cars, with 7-10% light goods vehicles and the remainder (2-5%) were heavy goods vehicles.

Flows on Binstead Road were about 50% higher out of Ryde (900 vehs/hour) than into Ryde (600 vehs/hour) in the AM peak, with the reverse in the PM peak. Flows into and out of Ryde on Brading Road were balanced in the AM peak but were much less than on Binstead Road, at around 320 vehs/hour. In the PM peak, outbound traffic was higher than inbound on Binstead Road but this is attributable to the Tesco's superstore attracting trips in the evening peak (the interview site was north of Tescos).

On both roads over a third of the traffic into Ryde was from local origins (Fishbourne/Wootton and Bembridge/Brading) with the most of the remainder coming from Cowes/Newport on Binstead Road and Sandown/Lake/Shanklin on Brading Road.

The destination of traffic in the AM peak is shown below:

Destination	Binstead Road	Brading Road
Ferry terminals	5%	6%
Ryde town centre	24%	36%
St John's / Pellhurst Road	29%	13%
Binstead	12%	6%
Swanmore / Haylands	1%	5%
Oakfield / Elmsfield	15%	22%
Seaview / St Helens	5%	3%
Through traffic	4%	3%

Table 2.2 - Destination of Traffic into Ryde (AM peak, Jan 97)

It is interesting to note that on a winter weekday, through traffic forms a small proportion of all traffic in the AM peak period. In the summer, the proportion is likely to rise with tourist traffic travelling between the Fishbourne ferry and the coastal resorts of Sandown, Shanklin and Ventnor but no data are available to substantiate this assumption.

Trips to Ryde will be made up of the following categories:

- trips made by Ryde residents
- commuting trips from other areas on the Island
- tourist trips
- other trips by local shoppers/visitors

The roadside interviews indicated that there was a net outflow of commuting trips, with around 200 more home-based work trips away from Ryde than into Ryde in the AM peak period.

Traffic flows within Ryde are shown in **Figures 2.2** and **2.3** for the AM and PM peak hours respectively.

2.3 Public Transport

2.3.1 Ferry

The ferry service between Ryde and Portsmouth is operated by Wight Link and consists of a fast Catamaran passenger craft. In 2000, 1.4m passengers used the Fast Cat, with a peak demand of up to 9,000 passengers/day in the summer. The service operates from Ryde Pier Head and terminates at Portsmouth Harbour, with the journey taking under 20 minutes. At weekday AM and PM peak times, the service operates at half hourly intervals although the service is hourly for remainder of the day. The Saturday service is half hourly, whilst the Sunday service is hourly.

The ferry connects to rail stations at both terminals: Ryde Pier Head on the Ryde-Shanklin line and Portsmouth Harbour station. The Pier is over ½ mile in length and 50% of ferry passengers use the rail link from the Esplanade to the Pier Head.

Both rail stations integrate with local bus services, so the ferry gives a public transport link between numerous potential mainland and Island origins/destinations. In practice, around 7% of ferry and hovercraft passengers use rail or bus to reach the terminals on the Island, with 14% walking, 7% cycling and the remainder by private car/motorcycle (AM peak survey, January 1997).

In the PM peak there are high concentrations of vehicular traffic associated with each ferry arrival in Ryde. On a weekday in February 2003, 54 vehicles arrived at the Pier Head during the half-hour period 15 minutes either side of the 17:35 ferry arrival. After the passengers had disembarked from the ferry, 56 vehicles left the Pier Head in the following five-minute period. This concentration of traffic causes significant queuing back along the Pier from the exit onto the Esplanade.

Around 40% of Island ferry/hovercraft passengers are from Ryde but significant numbers travel from Newport, Cowes, Sandown, Shanklin and Bembridge/Seaview.

The current cost of a standard day return ticket from Ryde to Portsmouth is £9.20 (price correct at February 2003).

2.3.2 Hovercraft

Hovertravel operate a passenger hovercraft service between Ryde Esplanade and Southsea Clarence Pier that was used by nearly 700,000 passengers in 2000. Peak demand is nearly 4,000 passengers/day in the summer. The service operates at 30-minute intervals throughout the week, although services are limited in the evenings and all services are dependent on weather conditions. The journey time is approximately 10 minutes. The hovercrafts used for the service are shown in **Figure 2.4**.



Figure 2.4 - Hovercraft departing Ryde

The Ryde terminal is located within close proximity of the bus and rail interchange, and the Southsea Clarence Pier terminal is linked with the rest of Portsmouth (including Portsmouth & Southsea rail station) by regular bus services. The terminal building is currently being extended, and is due to be completed during 2003. The location of the terminal is shown in **Figure 2.5**.

The current cost of a standard day return ticket from Ryde to Southsea is £7.95 (price correct at February 2003).

2.3.3 Rail

The Isle of Wight has one commercial railway line operating from Ryde Pier Head to Shanklin, via Ryde Esplanade, St Johns Road, Brading, Sandown and Lake. The service is run by Island Line (a subsidiary of Stagecoach) under contract to the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA). The journey between Shanklin and Ryde Pier Head takes approximately 25 minutes. There is a frequency of two trains per hour on the weekdays and Saturday, with an hourly service on Sundays. At peak tourist times, three trains/hour run on Saturdays. It is estimated that around 1 million passengers/year use the rail service.

A steam railway also operates between Smallbrook Junction and Wootton but as a visitor attraction that does not run all year. When the steam railway is running, trains on the Ryde-Shanklin line also stop at Smallbrook Junction station.

The timing of the rail services are scheduled to serve the Wightlink Catamaran ferry which operates from Ryde Pier Head. The timings of the services are constrained by the lack of a passing loop on the

line, meaning that trains run at intervals of 20 and 40 minutes (instead of every 30 minutes). Typical connection times for the ferry and train are given below:

Arrival of ferry	15:55	Arrival of train	15:59
Departure of train	16:08	Departure of ferry	16:10
Arrival of ferry	16:35	Arrival of train	16:41
Departure of train	16:45	Departure of ferry	16:50
Arrival of ferry	16:55	Arrival of train	16:59
Departure of train	17:08	Departure of ferry	17:10

Table 2.3 – Typical Ferry and Train Connections

The service on the Island is noted to be one of the most reliable in the UK. Of the passengers that board the train at the Pier Head, 60% only travel to the Esplanade with the majority of the remainder continuing on to Sandown or Shanklin.

The Esplanade rail station is shown in **Figure 2.6**, which also shows the link between the rail line and bus services. The ferries depart from the end of the Pier, whilst the hovercraft terminal is to the right of the picture.



Figure 2.6 - Ryde Interchange

The current cost of a standard day return ticket between Ryde Pier Head and Shanklin is £3.70 (price correct at February 2003).

The ferry and hovercraft services provide a link with the rail stations located in Portsmouth (Portsmouth Harbour and Portsmouth & Southsea). The rail services from these stations link directly to London Waterloo and numerous destinations throughout the south of the UK, including Southampton and Gatwick airport.

Ryde St Johns Road station is served by all Island Line trains and is located approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile inland to the south west of the town centre. The location is shown in **Figure 2.5**. There are approximately 60 free car parking spaces provided at the station for rail users, although the existing parking arrangements are disorganised and are not considered attractive. There are also car parks at Sandown and Shanklin stations, each with 50 spaces, for which there is a charge of £4.80/week.

2.3.4 Bus

The majority of bus services on the Isle of Wight are operated by Southern Vectis. The bus station in Ryde is located on the Esplanade, within close proximity to the Esplanade rail station and Hovercraft terminal. The bus routes throughout Ryde are shown in **Figure 2.7**, and a summary of the services is provided in **Table 2.3**.



Figure 2.7 – Existing Bus Routes

Number	Route	Weekday / Saturday Service	Sunday Service
1	Ryde-Wootton Bridge-Newport	Half Hourly	Hourly
4	Ryde-Wootton Bridge-East Cowes	Half Hourly	Hourly
7 (clockwise)	Ryde-Brading-Shanklin-Ventnor	Half Hourly	Hourly
7 (anticlockwise)	Ryde-Wootton Bridge-Newport-Yarmouth-Freshwater	Half Hourly	Hourly
8	Seaview-Nettlestone-Ryde-Oakfield-Tesco	Half Hourly	Hourly
12	Ryde-Bembridge-Sandown	4 buses per day	One bus
33	Ryde-Havenstreet-Newport-Gurnard-Cowes	Two Hourly	Limited Service
34	Ryde-Haylands-Swanmore-Ryde	Half Hourly	Hourly

Table 2.3 – Bus Services to/from Ryde

The existing services provide a good network of public transport for residents living in and around Ryde. The nature of the bus services within Ryde means that most households are within 400 metres of the nearest bus route.

It is estimated that around 92,000 bus journeys were made from Ryde in January 2000, which increased by 50% in August, with an annual patronage of around 1.3m passengers.

The main facility for buses in Ryde is provided at the Esplanade Interchange, where there are 8 bus stands and 5 layover bays. A Southern Vectis ticket office and staff rest/changeover facilities are provided at the Interchange, making it a key part of bus operations.

The quality of the bus infrastructure throughout Ryde is variable. Some bus stop locations have relatively new infrastructure, however many waiting facilities are below an acceptable standard. Due to the nature of the highway within the town centre, there is little room available for bus infrastructure (i.e. lay-bays and shelters). Where pavements are narrow, stops are simply marked by a pole and flag. It is apparent that some of the bus infrastructure has been vandalised, this type of poor quality infrastructure is shown in **Figure 2.8**.



Figure 2.8 - Poor Quality Bus Infrastructure

2.3.5 Coaches

There is a dedicated coach park located within the public car park at Quay Road on the Esplanade. There are currently 30 spaces available for coaches to park. The existing arrangement is shown in **Figure 2.9**. Coaches are also permitted to drop off passengers at the Bus Station and there are two set down/pick up bays along the Esplanade.



Figure 2.9 - Coach Parking on Seafront

2.3.6 'Dotto' land train

The main tourist beaches at Ryde are located approximately 800 metres to the east of the town centre. A 'Dotto' land train runs through most of the year which connects the beaches to the town centre, although the level and frequency of the service depends on the month. The train stops in George Street, Union Street and on the Esplanade.

Although not a formal mode of public transport, the land train provides a vital role in linking the town centre with one of Ryde's best tourist attractions.

2.3.7 Taxis

At present the infrastructure for taxis within Ryde is limited. There are 19 waiting bays on the Esplanade adjacent to the bus terminal, and one located at St John's Road railway station. Prior to the works to the terminal building, 7 taxi bays were provided at the Hovercraft terminal.

There are no other taxi facilities within Ryde town centre and the current facilities are not very well located, being in front of the bus turning area.

2.4 Vulnerable Road Users

The main shopping areas within Ryde are located either in the High Street, Union Street or Cross Street. Within these roads, pedestrian movements are considered to be their greatest within the town centre. A pedestrian only zone has been implemented within a section of the High Street (between Garfield Road and Star Street), however service / delivery vehicles can access this area at all times. In addition, there are pedestrian crossing facilities on Cross Street to provide a linkage between the main shopping streets. Union Street also provides the primary route for pedestrians between the Esplanade and the rest of Ryde. Union Street benefits from wide footways on either side of the highway, however there are no pedestrian crossing facilities.

The public transport interchange located on the Esplanade is linked with the rest of the town by a controlled pedestrian crossing. This ensures that there is a safe and convenient route to the bottom of Union Street.

The walk between the Esplanade and the rest of the town may prove difficult for some pedestrians due to the topography of the area. The town rises steeply from the seafront area, and the mobility impaired may struggle to cope with such a change in levels.

There are numerous car parks located within Ryde, however, pedestrian signing for these facilities is virtually absent. There is also a lack of pedestrian signing to major tourist facilities and attractions within Ryde (i.e. rail stations and ferry terminal).

The Isle of Wight Council have developed a Cycling Strategy and the Island's cycleways are illustrated in **Figure 2.10** below.

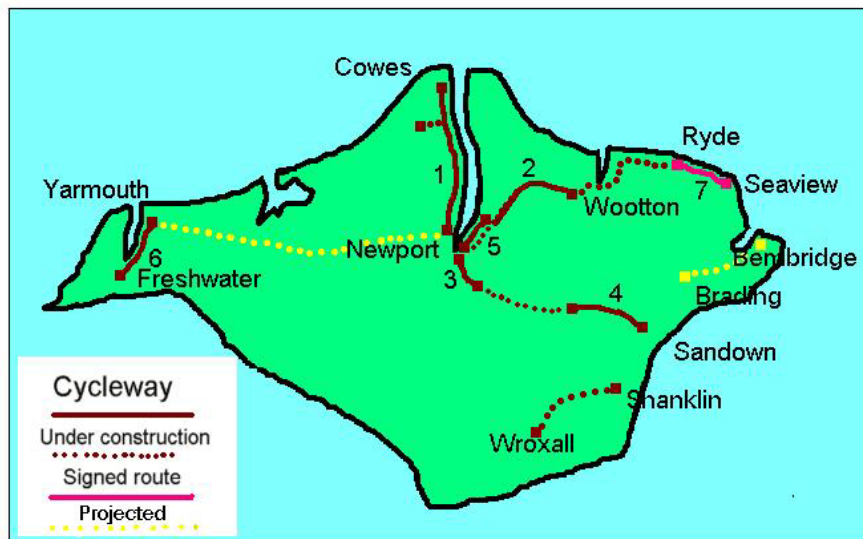


Figure 2.10 - Cycleways on the Island

A signed cycle route is provided between Ryde and Seaview, via North Walk and Puckpool. A route is currently being constructed between Ryde and Wootton that will connect into the existing route to Newport and onto Cowes.

No formal cycle parking facilities are provided at Ryde Esplanade Station and there are a limited number of cycle stands in the town centre. It should be noted that cycles can be taken on Island Line trains free of charge.

2.5 Road Safety

Over the last two years a total of 190 road traffic accidents involving personal injury has occurred in the Ryde area as detailed below:

Casualty	Serious	Slight	Total
Pedestrian	7	45	52
Cyclist	5	14	19
Driver/passenger	14	105	119
Total	26	164	190

Table 2.4 – Road Traffic Accidents (01/01/2000 to 31/12/2002)

Accidents involving injury to a pedestrian or cyclist account for 37% of all accidents but 46% of all serious injury accidents.

Analysis of the location of the accidents revealed a number of areas of concentration:

- St Johns Road & St Johns Hill – 23 accidents, including 4 serious and 9 involving pedestrians
- Binstead Road - 14 accidents, including 1 serious and 1 involving pedestrians
- Bottom of Union Street and St Thomas Street - 10 accidents, including 1 serious and 3 involving pedestrians
- Queen’s Road/ Binstead Road junction - 7 accidents, including 3 serious and 3 involving pedestrians
- Esplanade – 6 accidents, all involving pedestrians
- Five ways junction - 4 accidents, all slight

2.6 Parking

2.6.1 Off-street Parking

There are around 700 Pay and Display parking spaces in Ryde. Use of the car parks was surveyed in August 2001 as part of the Isle of Wight Parking Study undertaken by Mott MacDonald. The results of the surveys for a typical weekday are shown below:

Type	Car Park area	Usage (vehs/day)	Average Stay (hrs)	Capacity	Max Occupancy	
					Aug 01	Jan 97
Long stay	Garfield Road	77	4.5	43	42	23
	Green / Station Street	136	2.2	40	38	45
	Lind Place	71	4.4	55	44	24
	Quay Road	727	2.6	281	244	193
	St Thomas Street S	292	3.2	163	138	66
	St Thomas Street N	241	2.2	83	69	25
	Appley Park (free)	272	1.5	118	56	-
Short stay	Victoria Street	180	1.6	46	46	26
Total	excluding Appley Park	1816	2.6	711	621	402

Table 2.5 - Use of Off-street Car Parks

There was little spare capacity in the car parks nearest the town centre, but spare capacity was available along the seafront at St Thomas Street N and S and Quay Road.

The above table also shows the maximum occupancy observed for each of the car parks during surveys carried out in January 1997. Apart from Green Street, which became full, all car parks had significant spare capacity in January 1997.

In 1997, the George Street site (now Somerfields) was still a Pay and Display car park and the survey showed that it was the busiest car park with over 1,000 users, the majority of which stayed for one hour or less. Somerfield car park was not surveyed in August 2001 but observations and anecdotal evidence suggest that this car park is busy all year round with a high turnover of spaces and few spaces available.

From the list of car parks above, it should be noted that Victoria Street is the only car park classified as short stay i.e. stays of over 4 hours are discouraged with increased parking charges.

Quay Road has 30 coach spaces that were used by a total of 20 coaches during the day in August 2001, with an average stay of 2.7 hours and maximum occupancy level of 8 coaches.

170 parking spaces are also available on the Pier Head for ferry passengers. The Pier and its car park are owned and operated by Wight Link. The charge for long stays at the Pier car park is higher than the equivalent cost of parking elsewhere in Ryde, such as at Quay Road. The fact that these spaces are well used and that there are generally very few spaces available after the morning peak period, demonstrates that ferry passengers are willing to pay a premium for convenient parking.

2.6.2 On-street Parking

Along the Esplanade and seafront to the east, there is seasonal charging for on-street parking from April–September, with higher charges from July–September. Charges apply from 10:00 – 18:00 every day of the week.

In August 2001, these areas of on-street parking were also surveyed, with the results given below:

Type	Car Park area	Usage (vehs/day)	Average Stay (hrs)	Capacity	Max Occupancy
On-street	Canoe Lake Road	98	1.1	48	30
	Esplanade	299	1.4	77	66
	North Walk	454	1.7	163	140

Table 2.6 - Use of On-street Parking

There were on-street spaces available along the seafront all day, although it should be noted that on the day of the Ryde surveys the weather was overcast with light rain. Therefore, the survey results may not be typical of a summer day.

There are a limited number of Residents' Parking Schemes operating in Ryde at Nelson Street, Nelson Place, Yelfs Road, East Street and George Street.. At these locations parking is restricted to those with residents' permits during certain times of the day.

Surveys of on-street parking carried out in January 1997 identified significant levels of commuter parking along the Esplanade, The Strand and Bellevue Road area, which could be associated with mainland commuters. Commuter parking was also recorded in the Barfield, Dover Street and Belvedere Street area and Prince Street/Edward Street area, suggesting use by people working in Ryde town centre. This was supported by the views of local residents in these areas.

In the town centre itself, a number of free on-street parking areas have limited waiting times (up to 1 hour) e.g. John Street.

2.6.3 Variation in Parking Demand

As part of the Isle of Wight Parking Study data on car park ticket sales was collected for April–August 2001. **Figure 2.11** shows a general trend of increased parking use between April and August for long stay, short stay and on-street parking. Long stay and on-street parking also show increased use at Easter and May half term time.

Significant numbers of long stay tickets are sold for stays of over 4 hours but the majority of long stay users actually pay to park for 1-4 hours. At the busiest times of the year, the increase in ticket sales is mainly for stays of 1-4 hours, for both long-stay and on-street parking.

Nearly all on-street parking is for under 4 hours, which corresponds well with the August surveys which has relatively low average duration of stay.

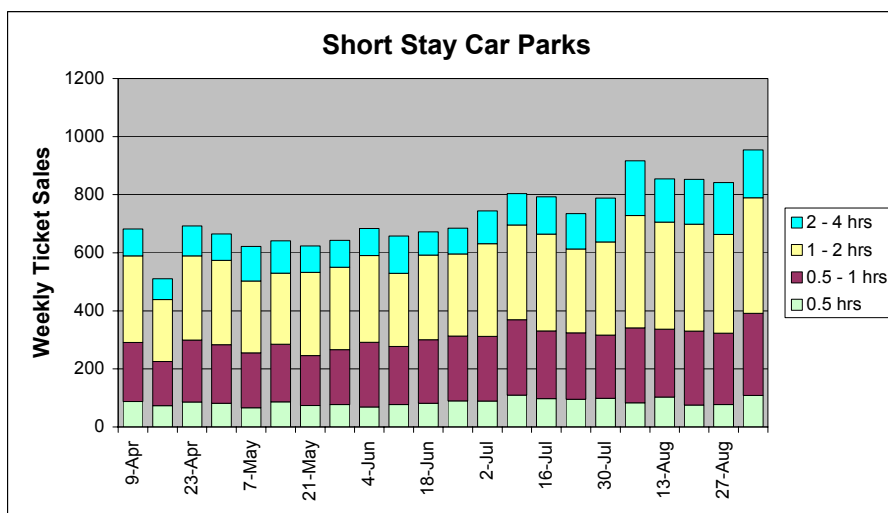
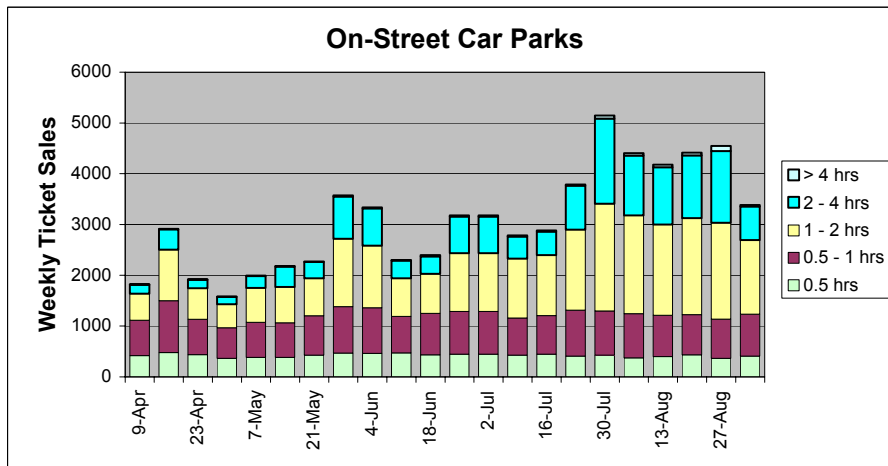
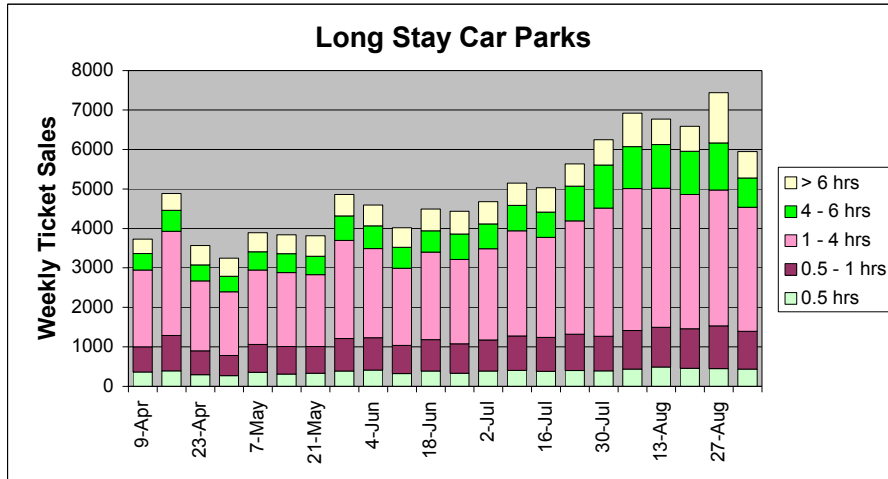


Figure 2.11 - Variation in Car Park Ticket Sales for 2001

3 Policy Background

3.1 National Policy

3.1.1 The Transport White Paper: 'A New Deal for Transport - Better for Everyone' (1998)

The publication of the White Paper set the framework for the development of new transport planning policy. The Paper developed the legalisation for the implementation of Local Transport Plans and the development of an integrated transport policy, where integration means:

- Integration within and between different types of transport
- Integration with the environment
- Integration with land use planning
- Integration with policies for education, health and wealth creation

The White Paper signalled a new direction for transport planning with a clear commitment to target setting and developing long-term objectives.

3.1.2 Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 13: Transport

The updated Planning Policy Guidance 13: Transport, was released by the then Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) in March 2001. The guidance aims to integrate planning and transportation at all levels, to promote more sustainable transport choices and to reduce the need to travel, in particular by private car.

The guidance makes clear the need to critically appraise accessibility by non-car modes, namely pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. In the case of walking, local authorities should review existing pedestrian provision, links between key land uses and should ensure that new development promotes walking as a prime means of access. Trips made by cycle are identified as having most potential for replacing car trips of up to 5 miles (8 kilometres) in length. Local authorities are invited to review existing provision and seek to influence cycle access to new developments and facilities at trip ends, such as the provision of cycle parking facilities. In the case of public transport, travel-intensive development should ideally be located close to major interchanges and furthermore, local authorities should seek to maximise the potential for public transport to provide a realistic travel choice.

3.2 Local Policy

3.2.1 Local Transport Plan

The Isle of Wight Local Transport Plan (LTP) was originally submitted in July 2000, and sets out policies for transport on the Isle of Wight with an implementation programme for the five-year period to 2006.

The approach to developing the future transport strategy for the Island has been in accordance with the principles established by central government. To implement the Local Transport Plan, the Island has divided into specific strategic regions. Ryde is located in the North East Triangle strategy area, and this is identified as the main location for residential and commercial development, with the main links to the mainland. Within this strategy area there are specific transport targets which will be continually monitored to evaluate the success of the strategy. These strategy objectives include:

- To limit the growth of traffic to an average of 1% per annum over the period 2000-2010 on roads within the North East Triangle Strategy Area;
- To achieve a 20% reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured in road accidents on the Isle of Wight;
- Increase the proportion that walk to work from 17.8% to 20%;
- Increase the number of trips made by bicycle in line with the National Cycling Strategy (1991 figure of 3.6% travel to work);
- To increase the use of public transport by 20% by 2010;
- To improve existing passenger facilities and provision at interchanges, bus stops, shelters, ferry terminals and stations so as to ensure easy travel and changes of travel mode.

To implement the strategy at a local level, the existing transport infrastructure in the town has been assessed within the LTP and strengths / weaknesses identified. These are summarised below:

Strengths

- Strong links with mainland by ferry or hovercraft.
- Two railway stations
- Active Park & Ride site
- Opportunity for interchange
- Comprehensive bus services

Weaknesses

- Existing parking arrangements cause inconvenience to local residents
- Local topography may discourage walking and cycling
- Existing Interchange facility is of poor quality
- Limited scope for public transport priority measures

3.2.2 Local Transport Plan Annual Review Report 2002

The Isle of Wight Council has published their second Annual Progress Report, which reviews the delivery of the strategy and assesses the success in achieving the transport targets. The Report summarises that the majority of targets have been met (or are on course to be), although bus passenger patronage has fallen and road accidents have increased as compared with previous data.

The Ryde Interchange is identified as a separate Major Scheme Bid, as it is considered that the cost of the development would ‘severely hamper the Council’s ability to deliver the capital programme’ if it had to be met from the LTP single pot allocation. The scheme should seek to:

- Reduce social exclusion
- Improve access for pedestrians, cyclists and the mobility impaired
- Create better access to ferry and hovercraft services
- Increase public safety
- Create better links with the town centre and residential areas
- Protect nature conservation interests

3.2.3 Unitary Development Plan 1996-2011

The Unitary Development Plan (UDP) provides a comprehensive land use plan for the Isle of Wight. The UDP provides the framework for planning all new development and protecting the local environment. The Plan was adopted in May 2001 and covers the period 1996-2011.

The transport related objectives of the plan are to promote the development of an integrated transport network. These policy objectives include:

- The reduction in the need to travel, especially by car
- To promote alternatives to car use
- To encourage the provision of improved public transport facilities
- To make the best use of the existing highway network
- To increase the opportunities for cycling and walking
- To encourage the improvement of cross-Solent ferry links

The UDP details policies to ensure that all new development proposals accord with the overall objectives for the Island, and states that sustainable modes of travel (including ferry / hovercraft) will be promoted above the requirements of the private car. The existing highway network will be managed to ensure that road safety is enhanced.

3.2.4 Community Strategy 2002-2012

The Community Strategy was launched in 2002 and establishes a set of themes for continual improvement of the local environment and quality of life on the Island. A key theme is to improve the access to local services, and actions for the key partners are identified. These actions include:

- Making travel by bus more attractive (including low floor buses and provision of real time information);
- Promoting competition between bus operators and encourage better fares;
- Make walking safer and more convenient.

3.3 Planning Constraints

There are a number of planning constraints which are present within Ryde, and require consideration when new development is proposed.

The tidal zone along Ryde seafront is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), and there are several examples of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which surround the built up area. These areas are shown in **Figure 3.1**.

Much of Ryde is scheduled as a Conservation Area, this includes virtually all of the town centre and Esplanade. The extent of the Conservation Area is shown in **Figure 3.1**.

Ryde also has a number of listed buildings and it should be noted that the Pier is a listed structure.

4 Existing Transport Problems & Issues

4.1 Highway Network

4.1.1 Seasonal Congestion

Having consulted local residents it apparent that at certain times of the year, there is highway congestion within some areas of Ryde. The Union Street /Cross Street junction and Five Ways are generally busy but congestion worsens in the summer. Similarly, St Johns Road experiences delays in the summer.

4.1.2 Signing

The traffic signing within Ryde is considered a problem. There appears to be no comprehensive strategy for traffic routing and the standard of the highway signs varies greatly, with many old and undersize signs.

Traffic approaching the town can be defined as falling into one of three main groups:

- (a) through traffic
- (b) traffic heading towards the Esplanade, seafront and beaches
- (c) traffic heading towards the town centre.

The existing signing attempts to direct ‘through traffic’ along the route shown on **Figure 2.1**, with traffic heading towards the town centre and seafront routed together as shown. However, the signing is inconsistent and within the town centre signing is virtually non-existent, with the consequence that visitors can easily become confused and lost.

There are several car parks within Ryde, however the signing for these facilities is regarded as being extremely poor. In most instances, the car parks are not signed from the adjacent highway, and it is considered that visitors would find it difficult to locate suitable parking.

Strategic signing is also an issue as all traffic travelling between the Fishbourne car ferry and Sandown/Shanklin is directed via Ryde. The possibility of directing this traffic via the Park Road, Briddlesford Road, Downend Road route between Palmers Brook and Arreton Cross (which is defined as part of the Island’s strategic road network) has been raised.

Pedestrian signing within the town centre is limited and no signing within the town centre is obvious, making it difficult to locate the key attractions. Similarly there is very limited signing to/from the car parks. Some pedestrian signing is provided on the seafront, although the standard of the signs varies, and some are badly weather worn.

4.1.3 Town Centre

Although improvements have been implemented within the town centre to improve the environment for pedestrians, there is an impression that vehicular traffic still dominates.

The section of the High Street between Garfield Road and Start Street has been ‘pedestrianised’. However, there is no restriction relating to the time of day that service vehicles can enter this area and, due to the majority of the shops having no rear access, numerous service vehicles are often within this area. Other private vehicles also enter the High Street for loading, as shown in **Figure 4.1**



Figure 4.1 - High Street Pedestrianised Area

This situation within the High Street is not ideal as pedestrians feel threatened by the movement of the service vehicles, many of which travel too fast for the location, and there is doubt with regard to who has priority. The full potential benefits of having a pedestrian area at this location are not being achieved within the current arrangement.

Elsewhere in the town centre some footways have been widened. However, there is a high level of on-street parking and the pedestrian crossing facilities within some roads are limited. An example of this situation is Union Street, as shown in **Figure 4.2**. Although the footways are sufficient in width, there are no crossing facilities along the entire length of the road (300m). Pedestrians crossing the road also have to negotiate parked cars as parking is permitted on both sides of Union Street. This type of arrangement does not provide for a pedestrian friendly area and it is likely that the mobility and visually impaired will be put off from entering such an environment.



Figure 4.2 - Union Street (looking north)

The high level of activity on Union Street is increased as it is a key part of the bus route network and many shops are serviced from the road. Double parking (which occurs regularly) and general parking manoeuvres can cause localised congestion and delay to bus services.

The existing road system causes severance problems for pedestrian movements between High Street and Union Street due to the traffic on Lind Street and Cross Street cutting across the main pedestrian desire line. As a result there is very little pedestrian activity on the west side of the High Street between Lind Street and Garfield Road. As mentioned earlier, this area and the top of Union Street has a road safety problem, with six accidents involving pedestrians in the last two years.

On the southern part of the High Street pedestrian movements are hindered by Star Street and Newport Street traffic.

4.1.4 Through Traffic

All traffic travelling through Ryde has to pass through the built up area. The result is that there is a detrimental impact on the local population, as traffic has to travel through the town centre or residential areas.

4.1.5 Bridges

The road network crosses the rail line at four locations in Ryde:

- St John's Road – strengthening works are required for this overbridge
- Park Road – strengthening works are required for this overbridge
- Rink Road – currently has a 3T weight limit and no improvement works are planned
- Rail tunnel – the rail line passes below Monkton Street and the Esplanade. The northernmost section of the tunnel is of cast iron construction and needs replacing.

This maintenance work will require considerable investment and in the case of the St John's Road bridge, temporary closure of the road could cause a significant impact on the local residential roads as traffic flows are diverted.

4.2 Public Transport

4.2.1 Ferry

The ferry service between Ryde and Portsmouth Harbour is an excellent asset for the local community. There is a limited number of car parking spaces available on the Pier itself (170 spaces) and it is known that these spaces are generally fully utilised after the morning peak period.

For those parking elsewhere, arriving by bus or walking to the ferry there is the option of walking along the Pier or catching the train. Walking along the Pier is not a pleasant experience as pedestrians are exposed to the elements, are not segregated from traffic and there is pedestrian/vehicle conflict at either end of the Pier. In addition, during wet weather the boards on the Pier become slippery.

With the majority of ferry users travelling to/from the ferry by car (either parking at the Pier Head or dropped off/picked up) there are high volumes of traffic leaving the Pier in a short space of time after ferry arrivals in the PM peak. As a result queues develop back along the Pier from the exit onto the Esplaande.

Whilst buses are not co-ordinated with the ferry times, transfer times are generally acceptable but can rise to 30 minutes for some bus services. It should be noted that the lack of co-ordination of services is in contrast to the Cowes passenger ferry which is integrated with the No. 1 bus service.

Adverse weather can delay the ferry service and this can lead to missed connections with the rail service (the train will only wait for a limited period after its scheduled departure time).

4.2.2 Hovercraft

Although the frequency of service is every 30 minutes throughout the day, services do not extend into late evening. The last trip from the Island leaves at 20:30, with the last service from the mainland leaving to the Island at 20:45 (times taken from 2002/3 winter timetable).

Due to the route of the rail line, the pedestrian access from the Interchange to the Hovercraft terminal is via a footbridge. The footbridge is unsheltered and as there are no ramps, so the mobility impaired would struggle to use this facility, although vehicular access to the terminal can be gained directly from the Esplanade and Quay Road car park.

Hovercraft arrivals/departures are not co-ordinated with the train service, giving waiting times of up to 40 minutes for the train. Similarly, bus and hovercraft times are not co-ordinated.

4.2.3 Rail

There are a limited number of destinations available on the rail line, and many of the Island's communities cannot be reached by this mode. It has been identified that the rail line provides an

excellent alternative to the private car, but there is some frustration that the service and number of destinations is so limited.

It is noted that although ferries start to operate early in the morning (04:30) and run through to 01:00 at night, there are no rail services at these times. Depending on the day, there are 3 or 4 ferry arrivals and departures that are not linked with a rail service. With no train service available at these times, passengers are required to either walk along the Pier or drive to the car park.

St John's Road rail station provides free car parking spaces for rail users but the existing condition and layout of the car park is very poor, as shown in **Figure 4.3**. However, improvements to the P&R facility are part of the Public Transport Interchange Major Scheme bid that was approved for funding by GOSE and DfT in December 2002 .



Figure 4.3 - St Johns Road Station Car Park

Whilst the trains are generally punctual and reliable, the overall perception of rail on the Island is poor due to a number of reasons:

- rolling stock comprises pre-war London Underground units
- the existing track limits train speeds to around 45mph
- the track is in need of investment in maintenance, resulting in a poor ride quality
- poor quality stations and associated facilities

4.2.4 Bus

Comments received from local residents expressed frustration that the bus routes are limited and some sections of the town do not benefit from a regular service. It is known that a local service did run a 'figure of eight' route through the town, however this service is no longer operated by Southern Vectis.

Residents have expressed their concern that the cost of the local bus services are high and may preclude some sections of the community using this mode of transport.

The existing bus terminal is located on the sea front and although bus connections at this location are considered a vital asset, the space used by the terminal arrangements is significant. Residents have commented that the space could be better utilised by moving the terminal elsewhere in Ryde, with the need to retain high quality bus stop infrastructure and frequent services on the Esplanade.

4.2.5 Coaches

The existing coach parking facility is located in the heart of the seafront area. The coach parking undoubtedly uses valuable space, and the Isle of Wight Council are currently considering proposals to move the facility out of the town centre, perhaps to the Westridge area. However, it is important that a convenient dropping off and picking up point is retained on the seafront.

The possible site at Westridge could be in conflict with other potential development of the area, such as a fitness centre being promoted by IOW Leisure.

4.2.6 Taxis

At present the taxi firms within Ryde operate independently from the other public transport providers and the taxi facilities are also restricted to the existing Interchange on the Esplanade. To improve access to the rest of the town centre, scope to introduce taxi waiting areas within the town centre could be investigated.

Certain taxi firms refuse to take passengers for short trips within Ryde and this can be problematic for passengers using the late night ferries when the train service is not available.

4.2.7 Esplanade Interchange

The visual appearance of the Interchange/Pier and layout of facilities give a very poor perception of the services on offer and do not form an attractive 'gateway' to Ryde for tourists and visitors. Similarly, vehicular traffic appears to dominate the main pedestrian routes between the Interchange and town centre and along the Esplanade, with limited crossing facilities. Links to nearby car parks are also poorly defined and the route to the hovercraft and Quay Road is not easily accessible being via a railway bridge.

The layout of the Esplanade causes delays to buses as they have to U-turn at the Dover Street roundabout to return to travel up George Street. A separate study has looked at the Interchange in detail (WS Atkins May 2002) and describes many more of problems and issues which are not repeated here.

4.3 Vulnerable Road Users

There are several schools located within Ryde. Due to the nature of the highway network and apparent lack of pedestrian and cycle facilities throughout the town centre, there is considerable scope to improve safe access to the schools.

New pedestrian facilities have been incorporated within the traffic signals at the Argyll Street / Green Street / West Street junction. However, the available time for pedestrians to cross the roads is less

than desirable at only five 5 seconds. Such timings may leave pedestrians (especially the mobility impaired) stranded in the road when vehicles are given priority.

At present the pedestrian zone is limited to the section of the High Street between Garfield Road and Start Street and, as noted earlier, problems remain on this section.

Existing cycle facilities are very limited and the nature of many roads within Ryde creates the perception that cycling is unsafe due the limited width, high vehicle speeds and presence of heavy goods vehicles and buses.

4.4 Road Safety

Due to the nature of the highways within Ryde, concerns have been raised regarding the safety of some junctions / locations within the town centre.

4.4.1 Five Ways Junction

The highway arrangement at the Five Ways junction is not considered a safe environment for road users and pedestrians alike. There are five arms to the junction and limited pedestrian crossing facilities available, in the form of central refuge islands only. The proximity of the Ryde School and Five Ways Nursery to the junction also means that a number of school children have to cross one or more of the arms at least twice a day.



Figure 4.4 - Five Ways Junction (looking west from John Street)

4.4.2 Town Centre

Some areas within the town centre lack appropriate pedestrian and cycle facilities. In addition to a lack of facilities, some of the existing crossing infrastructure is old and in a few instances poorly maintained. This poor quality and inconsistent infrastructure does not encourage pedestrians to walk throughout the town centre and motorists are not clearly informed where pedestrians do have priority.

4.5 Parking

Due to a lack of parking restrictions within some residential areas close to the centre of Ryde, it is evident that incoming commuters park in these areas for long periods of the day. This impacts on local residents as many of the spaces become unavailable for their own use. At present there are a limited number of residents' parking schemes within Ryde to restrict this type of commuter parking.

Comments have been received from local residents that long-term parking within the town centre is too expensive. It is considered that the cost of long-term parking will encourage commuters and town centre workers to park in local residential areas to avoid these charges.

There are several parking facilities within Ryde, however it is evident that the highway signing for these facilities is of poor quality and the standard varies throughout the town centre. Although the lack of signing would not inconvenience local residents, visitors may find it difficult to locate suitable parking.

As observed on a visit to Ryde, there appeared to be a lack of enforcement regarding illegal on-street parking. The parking of vehicles in restricted waiting areas causes problems for motorists and pedestrians alike as the carriageway and footways can be obstructed.

5 Future Travel Demand

5.1 Historic Trends

The LTP Progress Report 2002 used a comprehensive set of traffic data to continually monitor traffic growth across the Island's roads. Data collected from 2000 to 2001 for the 'North East Triangle' is presented within **Table 5.1**.

2000	2001	Increase
123,083	122,086	-0.80%

Table 5.1 - Traffic Growth Pattern

The results of total trips made demonstrate a slight reduction in total vehicle numbers within this strategy area over the previous year.

In addition to monitoring traffic, the Council are required to assess all other modes. The mode of transport used to make the journey to and from work on the Island has been monitored by the IOW Council. The results of the surveys are demonstrated in **Table 5.2**.

Mode	1991 Census	2000 Skills Audit
Rail	1.4	1.6
Bus	4.7	9.4
Car Driver	52.8	38.3
Car Passenger	6.6	6.3
Motorcycle	2.8	3.1
Bicycle	3.6	3.9
Walk	17.8	24.2
Work at Home	6.8	9.4
Not stated	3.5	3.9

(Source : LTP Progress Report 2002)

Table 5.2 - Journey to Work by Mode

The results show that there has been a reduction in car use for commuter trips over the previous decade.

5.2 Travel Demand Targets

The LTP aims to limit traffic growth within Ryde to the following target:

TRT1 - To limit growth of traffic to an average of 1% per annum over the period 2000-2010 on roads within the North East Triangle Strategy Area.

This limiting of car use will be reflected in a corresponding increase in the use of alternative transport modes. The key targets attached to these sustainable transport modes are reviewed within Section 3.2.1.

6 Programmed Improvements

6.1 Introduction

The Local Transport Plan identifies a number of schemes for implementation in Ryde, of which the main ones are described in the following sections of the report.

6.2 Ryde Esplanade Transport Interchange

A Major Public Transport Scheme Bid has been submitted to GOSE and DfT, for funding for major improvements to the interchange, as part of the Council's Local Transport Plan. In December 2002 it was announced that the bid had been successful so progress on the interchange can be made. Completion of the Interchange and P&R improvements is currently programmed for 2006.

No design for the Interchange has been fixed to date but the principles laid out in the Functional Specification are that it should:

- provide for basic bus and rail movements
- cater for the peak of the peak demand in summer
- recognise the importance of rail as key access to the Pier
- create easy access from bus/rail to hovercraft
- cater for pedestrian and cycle access
- incorporate a range of other appropriate uses for operations and users
- develop a strong identity which can be actively promoted
- use a positive project management approach to develop and implement the scheme

6.3 Park & Ride

Improvements to Park & Ride (P&R) facilities at St Johns Road Rail Station are an integral part of the Major Scheme Bid. A significant improvement in the standard of facilities is required, along with more parking spaces, if the site is to attract more P&R users. It is suggested that accessibility by non-car modes is also considered, with a view to encouraging local residents to use rail for trips to Sandown/Shanklin for example.

6.4 Home Zones or 'Traffic Quiet Cells' Projects

The 'Traffic Quiet Cells' concept is based around reducing the impact of traffic in residential areas, through a number of different methods:

- Discouraging through trips from using the residential roads
- Traffic calming features to reduce the speed of traffic and improve pedestrian crossing points

- Rationalisation of on-street parking, including banning of parking in inappropriate areas and by non-residents

Home Zones take the Traffic Quiet Cells concept a stage further, with more work to improve the environment of residential areas, making them more attractive and safer places to live, with the aim of reducing traffic speeds down to 10mph.

Traffic Quiet Cells are proposed for two areas of Ryde in the LTP:

- (a) South of St Johns Road, bounded by Quarry Road, Well Street and Prince Street
- (b) North of St Johns Road, bounded by Warwick Street, Park Road and Daniel Street.

A Home Zone is proposed for the Oakfield area, bounded by Great Preston Road, St Johns Hill and Oakfield High Street.

Within the first two areas surveys revealed that around 80% of the available on-street parking was occupied in the evening. Therefore, significant reduction in parking capacity is not proposed. In the last 5 years, 41 personal injury accidents occurred on the roads in the area, many of which were at the junctions with St Johns Road.

Within the Oakfield area around 55% of the available on-street parking was occupied in the evening, so significant reduction in parking capacity could take place as part of improvements. Road safety in the Oakfield area is not such an issue as for St Johns but there were 17 personal injury accidents in the last 5 years.

Rat running is seen as a problem in the Oakfield area, with traffic using Harding Road and Oakfield High Street in preference to the signed route of Great Preston Road and St Johns Hill. Within the Oakfield area, there is scope to improve the open space available and provide a central children's play area. The Council is also investigating a 'green walking route' from Oakfield to the town centre.

It is anticipated that funding for the schemes could be from a combination of sources:

- Local Transport Plan allocation
- SRB VI funds
- Challenge Bid for additional funding, to include improved hard and soft landscaping to complement the engineering measures.

6.5 Safe Routes to Schools

Improvements to pedestrian and cycle routes to schools aim to achieve two goals:

- Reduce the number of school children involved in road accidents
- Promote the use of walking and cycling to school

Safe Routes to School for Ryde are proposed in the LTP, to supplement the work already carried out. The Five Ways junction, with Ryde School and the Five Ways Nursery nearby, has been identified as in need of urgent attention with regard to road safety for pedestrians and vehicles alike.

Routes to other schools should be audited and schools/parents consulted, with a view to identifying pedestrian and junction improvement schemes.

6.6 Extensions to Residents' Parking Areas

There are a limited number of existing residents' parking schemes in Ryde. It is proposed in the LTP to extend the coverage of residents' parking schemes on a zonal basis to include more streets affected by commuters using the cross-Solent services. The focus group identified that parking by town centre workers is also a problem for residential streets further inland. Therefore, further investigation into the extent of the commuter parking problem should be undertaken, including consultation with residents in a wide area of the town centre.

Residents' Parking Schemes are currently enforced by Traffic Wardens who do not have the resources to adequately monitor illegal use. Extending the schemes would place even greater demands on Traffic Wardens. For the schemes to be effective in terms of deterring illegal use, a greater level of enforcement would be required. This would best be achieved by using the Council's Parking Attendants (whose duties are currently restricted to monitoring use of Council-run car parks). With Decriminalised Parking Enforcement, Parking Attendants are able to issue penalty notices that should minimise illegal use of restricted parking areas.

The 1997 surveys suggested that there were around 150 commuters using the on-street parking in residential areas, which would be displaced with Residents' Parking Schemes. Outside of the summer period, there is adequate capacity for this parking either along the Esplanade (which is free from October – March) or in the off-street car parks at St Thomas Street and Quay Road. In the summer, the available spare capacity is reduced and an assessment of potential demand versus available capacity is needed, taking into account any other changes, such as reduced parking on the Esplanade or Pier and additional capacity at St Johns Road P&R.

7 Other Identified Options

7.1 Introduction

In addition to the schemes in the LTP, a number of other potential schemes have been identified from a number of sources:

- Review of previous studies undertaken
- Discussions with Council officers and RDT staff
- Consultation with the focus group

Previous work is discussed below, followed by a number of other options that have been suggested. These ideas are discussed below by topic area, with a brief outline of potential benefits, disadvantages, feasibility and funding issues.

7.2 Previous Studies

7.2.1 Traffic and Parking Plan

A previous assessment has been undertaken to review the existing traffic patterns and parking arrangements in Ryde (Maunsell 1997). The report recommended several alterations to the existing transport situation within the town:

Pedestrians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extension of the pedestrian area to St Thomas Square Improvement of pedestrian facilities at junctions
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of cycle route network Cycle priority features at junctions Improved cycle parking at strategic locations
Home Zones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of Home Zones in some residential areas Controlled residential parking where necessary
Esplanade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in road space Reworking of existing junction arrangements
Local Roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposed changes to the operation of local residential roads Improvements to St John's Road junctions Alterations to one way system to accommodate proposed extension to pedestrianised zone (including contra flow bus lane on West Street) Improve parking enforcement Introduction of traffic signals (including pedestrian phasing) at Five Ways Junction
Bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of new bus routes Development of Quality Bus Partnership

Taxis	Relocate existing taxi rank at Interchange Introduce a taxi rank in the town centre
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7.2.2 Ryde Esplanade

A Comprehensive Development and Improvement Plan has been produced for Ryde Esplanade (WS Atkins, November 2001). In addition to proposals for the Interchange, a number of other possible improvements were suggested:

The Pier	commercial/leisure development on the end of the Pier, with improved 'arrival space' for the ferry new shelter to railway station replacement of the train with tram or travelator floating moorings to provide for historic craft or party boat and yachts refurbished promenade deck for pedestrians central section of the Pier reconstructed for vehicular use
Western Esplanade	dual carriageway section converted to single carriageway, with widening of footways improved pedestrian crossing point between Union Street and Interchange/Pier bandstand at the Western Gardens, with planting, seating and public art. Possible landmark building refurbished Rose Garden, with more tree planting
Quay Car Park	raised viewing terrace around the perimeter, with possible landmark lookout tower potential to extend Ice Rink and provide glazed restaurant improved walkway and planting alongside the Esplanade road relocated fountain feature and possible market area
North Walk	reconfigured junctions to create more open space possible reversal of one-way system leisure pool complex walkway raised and repaved alongside beach traffic calming to improve link between beach and lake

7.2.3 Extension of Pedestrianised Area

The Council has investigated a scheme to refurbish the High Street and 70-80% of shop managers were interviewed as part of the consultation process. The following findings are extracted from the Report on Consultation (Evans Grant, May 2002).

Garfield Road to Star Street Section

- Section already pedestrianised but access for deliveries allowed
- Most shops serviced from the front i.e. High Street
- Strong support for speed control
- Strong support to remove brick flower beds and provide marked loading bays, so deliveries do not block the street
- Almost unanimous support to refurbish the alleyways connecting to Somerfield car park
- Strong opposition to losing any on-street parking in John Street (scheme to reposition bus stop and provide cycle parking and landscaping)

Star Street to Green Street Section

- Section open to all traffic, with on-street parking on one side
- Some support for widening the footways near the Green Street traffic lights (with traffic lanes reduced from two to one)
- Possible bus stop at Green Street end of High Street but concern that it would obstruct traffic flow
- Unlikely to be wide support for reduced on-street parking
- Some support for full pedestrianisation but only if parking replaced elsewhere and deliveries allowed at any time
- Marked on-street loading bays would be of benefit but would reduce parking
- Option proposed to split on-street parking (on both sides of the street) with improved crossing points

In a recent survey of retailers in Ryde undertaken by RDT, 63% of those surveyed would support a scheme to limit the timing of deliveries from large vehicles in the pedestrianised area.

7.2.4 Queen's Road / Pellhurst Road Bus Priority

A study by Mott MacDonald (April 2002) concluded that a bus-only link could be provided for buses travelling from Mayfield Road to Queen's Road, through the Pellhurst Road signal junction (currently one-way into Mayfield Road). The improvement would alter the signalised layout and would mean that Service 1 would not need to divert down to Pell Lane because of the current one-way operation of Mayfield Road.

The improvement could also encourage more buses to serve Binstead and would include pedestrian facilities for the crossing of Queen's Road and Pellhurst Road.

7.2.5 Rail Studies

The Council has commissioned studies to assess the need to replace the existing rolling stock (GIBB Transport Planning, September 2001) and to review the possibilities for extending the rail line to other destinations on the Island (Jacobs Consultancy, October 2001). The reports summarised that:

Rolling Stock	<p>SRA should consider replacing the current rolling stock (of 1938 vintage) by newer tube rolling stock. The existing rolling stock has an operational life up to 2014.</p> <p>The standard of ongoing track maintenance should be reviewed by the Strategic Rail Authority.</p>
Line Extensions	<p>Ryde – Newport is considered economically viable. A full detailed feasibility should be undertaken.</p> <p>Extension to Ventnor demonstrated a slight negative economic case. Further work required to refine cost estimates.</p> <p>Newport-Cowes extension with an on-road light rapid transit system gave a weak economic case and doubtful advantage over road-based public transport.</p>

The first report considered replacement of rolling stock with a light rapid transit (LRT) or light rail system and concluded that it would have serious cost implications, over and above the cost of simply providing newer LUL stock. It is believed that the Council's view is that the provision of high quality rolling stock is essential to maintain and promote rail use on the Island and should be pursued.

The reports also point out that construction of a passing loop at Brading is required if the service frequency is to be improved and a 'clockface' timetable introduced.

If a LRT scheme was introduced, with the passing loop, there would be the potential to extend the system by introducing on-street running. Such a scheme could then provide a direct link from the Pier Head to the town centre, for example, with on-street running along Union Street. Other possibilities of LRT include running along the Esplanade to link the town centre with the beaches and linking into car parks away from the town centre.

Such a high quality system would increase the attraction of Ryde for visitors and tourists (put 'Ryde on the map') and would also provide substantial benefits for local residents.

7.3 Other Schemes Suggested

7.3.1 Ryde Southern Relief Road

In the past there was a potential scheme to provide a Southern Relief Road to Ryde. The scheme has been removed from the UDP as it is no longer considered viable. Traffic surveys show that outside of the summer peak the proportion of through traffic is very low (3-4%) so the economic case for a relief road would be difficult to demonstrate. More importantly, Government policy on transport has moved away from the 'predict and provide' approach to catering for traffic growth, to an integrated transport policy with demand management measures.

Benefits	Removal of through traffic in Ryde
Disadvantages	Expensive scheme Possible negative environmental and landscape impacts
Feasibility	Feasible but against current transport policy
Funding	LTP funding not appropriate

7.3.2 Spencer Road Link

The possibility of opening up Spencer Road has been raised to provide a route to the Esplanade area from the west. Spencer Road currently has no vehicular access from Binstead Road and is a private road for its southernmost section, although it forms a public right of way. The existing road is narrow, as shown below, and constrained by properties either side.



Figure 7.1 - Spencer Road (looking east)

Whilst it would be feasible to link Spencer Road into the strategic network with a new junction on Binstead Road, it would require land take from the properties to provide a two-way carriageway and maintain a suitable footway. Ideally, property owners along the private part of Spencer Road would give permission for the road to be adopted by the Council for use as a public highway, but they would be unlikely to do so. Complicated legal procedures would be needed to take the scheme forward and a Public Inquiry would be likely.

A more important consideration is the suitability of the remainder of Spencer Road and route to the Esplanade for increased traffic volumes. Spencer Road passes through a residential area for much of its length until it joins St Thomas Street. In other parts of Ryde, there are proposals for Home Zones to reduce the impact of traffic in residential areas and it would not seem appropriate to introduce new traffic and severance problems to the Spencer Road area.

Benefits	Reduction of traffic through the town centre
Disadvantages	Introduces more traffic and severance problems into a residential area. Would require purchase of land from private properties.
Feasibility	Feasible but procedures and orders etc would be difficult and time consuming
Funding	LTP funding probably not appropriate

7.3.3 Monkton Street Link

Monkton Street could be signed as the main route to the Esplanade and beaches for traffic approaching from the west, via Argyll Street, Green Street and St Johns Road. The objective of this would be to reduce the level of traffic in the town centre, possibly in conjunction with a scheme to increase the extent of pedestrianisation. To complete the link to the Esplanade, a new section of road has been suggested from the Strand through an existing public garden, shown in the background below:



Figure 7.2 - Monkton Road (looking north)

Whilst the new road link is feasible (albeit with the loss of a public amenity, which are sparse in Ryde), a more important issue is whether traffic should be encouraged to use Monkton Street in preference to other routes. Monkton Street has residential properties on both sides and is a main access route for larger residential areas to the west of it one of which is a proposed Home Zone.

In traffic engineering terms, Monkton Street is wide enough play a more important role in distributing traffic but it would probably require the loss of the majority of on-street parking along its length.

The increase in traffic on Monkton Street would have to be weighed against the benefits that would be achieved from removing traffic from other areas. The effect on Monkton Street could be reduced if traffic to the beach were signed to continue along St Johns Road and East Hill Road to reach the North Walk area.

Benefits	Reduction of traffic through the town centre
Disadvantages	Introduces more traffic and severance problems into a residential area, loss of public amenity area.
Feasibility	Feasible but may require replacement parking areas to be provided
Funding	Possible LTP funding if an essential part of the Transport Strategy

7.3.4 Dover Street Route to Esplanade

Dover Street has been suggested as an alternative to the Monkton Street scheme described above for the signed route to the Esplanade, as it is a wider road that may be more suitable to through traffic. However, there is not a direct link from Dover Street to St Johns Road and to create one would require land acquisition and demolition of properties. The route to St Johns Road could be completed by using Park Road and one of the other north-south roads, such as Bennett Street.

Such a scheme would be in conflict with the proposed Traffic Quiet Cells scheme for the area north of St Johns Road (bounded by Warwick Street and Daniel Street) as it would introduce more traffic into an area where the aim is to reduce traffic levels.

Benefits	Reduction of traffic through the town centre
Disadvantages	Introduces more traffic and severance problems into a residential area which is a planned Traffic Quiet Cells scheme
Feasibility	Feasible but in conflict with other LTP scheme
Funding	LTP funding probably not appropriate

7.3.5 Strategic Signing

Signing in and around Ryde is in need of improvement, the starting point for which should be a review of the strategic signing, including that associated with the Fishbourne ferry. At present all traffic between the ferry and Sandown/Shanklin is directed through Ryde. This traffic could be directed via Wootton Bridge to join the A3056 at Arreton Cross.

Benefits	Removal of through traffic in Ryde (and Brading)
Disadvantages	Additional traffic through Wootton Bridge Could reduce trade in Ryde from passing traffic
Feasibility	Feasible but would need assessment of road/junction improvements that may be needed on diverted route
Funding	Potentially through LTP

Whilst changes to signed routes on the strategic network would need to be assessed further, general signing improvements, such as in clarity and continuity, would be beneficial with no adverse effects and should be progressed regardless of the final strategic routes adopted.

Strategic signing for ferries should be considered on an Island-wide basis, with a consistent approach e.g. should signing be to Fishbourne or to Portsmouth car ferry? A system similar and complementary to that used in Portsmouth, where coloured symbols are used for different ferries, should be considered.

7.3.6 Local Traffic Routes and Signing

Within Ryde, traffic routes to three main areas need to be defined:

- town centre (and car parks)
- Esplanade and beaches
- through traffic

Once the routes have been agreed, a detailed signing strategy needs to be developed that guides traffic through the road network in an unambiguous and ‘legible’ way. It is essential that signing to appropriate car parks in the first two areas is included, together with pedestrian signing from the car parks to the main trip attractors. The strategy must be developed from the viewpoint of a first-time visitor to the Island who is unfamiliar with the area.

The standard of road and junction arrangements on designated routes must be appropriate to the level of traffic anticipated. For example, if traffic on Lind Street was encouraged to use St Thomas Street to access the car parks at the bottom of the road, changes may be required at the top of St Thomas Street due to the restricted width available. One way traffic down the hill may be required or a short section of single lane running could be introduced with a ‘give-way to on-coming traffic’ arrangement.

Benefits	Removal of traffic from inappropriate areas and ‘lost’ circulating traffic minimised
Disadvantages	None
Feasibility	Implementation possible in a short timescale, once routes have been defined and agreed
Funding	From LTP

7.3.7 Five Ways Junction

The Five Ways Junction has been identified as a dangerous location for both motorists and pedestrians alike. Due to the number of arms at the junction, motorists could be easily confused and certain manoeuvres are difficult to achieve in a safe manner. Pedestrian facilities at the junction are lacking, and at present crossing the junction arms is inconvenient, and this may prove difficult and possibly dangerous for some sections of the community.

There is scope to improve road user and pedestrian safety at the junction, possibly through signalisation, although the exact scale and format of the improvements required can only be determined within a more detailed study.

Benefits	Increased road and pedestrian safety. Could allow the right turn movement of traffic from Queen’s Road to West Street.
Disadvantages	Could reduce capacity for straight ahead traffic.
Feasibility	Feasible but further study required.
Funding	From LTP

7.3.8 Queen’s Road / Argyll Street One-way System

Mott MacDonald has carried out an initial feasibility study of creating a clockwise one-way system from the following links:

- Queen’s Road eastbound only
- West Street southbound only
- Argyll Street westbound only
- Pellhurst Road northbound only

The study concluded that a one-way system would probably create new traffic problems on the road network, some of which could be resolved through junction improvements or alterations. However, by its nature, a one-way system will lead to an overall increase in distance travelled by vehicles. For certain movements, e.g. Binstead Road to Pellhurst Road, this could result in drivers finding alternative routes and additional traffic on unsuitable roads. Using the same roads to create an anti-clockwise one-way system would create similar problems

Benefits	Could allow the right turn form Queen’s Road to West Street
Disadvantages	Likely to result in increased distance travelled and additional traffic on other roads
Feasibility	Feasible but subject to junction capacity being adequate
Funding	From LTP if considered appropriate

7.3.9 West Street and Lind Street Two-way

Currently, West Street is one-way northbound from the Queen’s Road junction and Lind Street is one-way eastbound into the town centre. Making these roads two-way would have a number of benefits:

- Would allow the pedestrianisation of the High Street to be extended to Lind Street
- Traffic to/from the St Thomas Street car parks and Esplanade could be signed via West Street, Spencer Road and St Thomas Street
- Traffic in the town centre (Lind Street, Union Street and George Street) could be reduced

- There would be less severance for pedestrian movements between High Street and Union Street and junction arrangements could be simplified

However, an initial view of the feasibility of making these roads two-way has raised the following issues:

- West Street is relatively narrow (see below) and the swept path of buses or HGVS moving between Queen’s Road and West Street would impinge on traffic travelling in the opposite direction
- The Queen’s Road junction would need to be signalised with the stopline for West Street northbound set back from the junction
- West Street would probably need to be widened just south of Lind Street to allow two-way movement around the bend. This would mean loss of a strip of the Lind Street car park and demolition of its existing boundary wall.
- A suitable facility for traffic to U-turn at the eastern end of Garfield Road would need to be provided if the High Street pedestrianisation scheme was extended



Figure 7.3 – West Street (looking south to Queen’s Road junction)

Benefits	Reduced traffic in the town centre, with improved environment for pedestrians. Simplification of the road network would help tourists find their way around.
Disadvantages	Likely to require part of the Lind Street car park to widen West Street. Would require reduction in on-street parking on Lind Street.
Feasibility	Should be feasible but detailed design and capacity work required.
Funding	From LTP

7.3.10 Use of Smallbrook Lane Encouraged

Currently traffic on Great Preston Road is signed to Havenstreet and Newport along Smallbrook Lane. It has been suggested that more traffic could be signed to use Smallbrook Lane e.g. traffic from Brading Road to the town centre and/or to the car ferry. The aim of the scheme would be to reduce traffic passing through the Oakfield area and using St Johns Road. Such a scheme raises a number of issues:

- Smallbrook Lane has hump-back bridge over the railway (see below), with a blind bend for eastbound traffic that creates a road safety hazard
- With increased traffic on Smallbrook Lane, it may be necessary to install traffic signals and shuttle working at the bridge to slow traffic down and to minimise the potential for accidents
- Most of the lane is around 6m wide and bounded by hedgerows on both sides. Widening to provide for more traffic and improve visibility would mean the loss of much of the hedgerows.
- Traffic on Ashley Road would be increased, possibly requiring the removal of the recent traffic calming works
- If traffic to the town centre were signed along Smallbrook Lane, it would result in more traffic on Swanmore Road and West Street (residential areas). On-street parking on West Street is already problematic and might have to be removed.
- If traffic to the car ferry were signed along Smallbrook Lane, it would result in more traffic on Pellhurst Road (residential area) and past Ryde High School



Figure 7.4 – Railway Bridge on Smallbrook Lane

Benefits	Reduced traffic through the Oakfield area and on St Johns Road
Disadvantages	Increased traffic in other residential areas. Likely to require shuttle working at the railway bridge. Improvements to Smallbrook Lane would mean the loss of many hedgerows.
Feasibility	Feasible
Funding	From LTP if considered appropriate

7.3.11 Car Parking

There is a perception that the car parking within Ryde town centre is not being utilised to its full potential. Whilst car parks around the High Street area can get full at busy times, there are usually some spaces available in the St Thomas Street and Quay Road car parks.

There is also scope to improve the parking facilities and the pedestrian links to the town centre.

(i) Extension to Car Parking

There may be the opportunity to expand some of the existing car park facilities (this may include introducing multi-storey parking):

- St Thomas Street
- Seafront Parking

The possibility of removing some of the parking from the end of Ryde Pier was raised in the Ryde Esplanade report by WS Atkins to allow development of the Pier Head. It could also allow improvement to the environment for pedestrians and the development of the Pier as a visitor attraction, as it used to be years ago as shown below:



Figure 7.5 – Ryde Pier circa 1925

Replacement of these 170 spaces could be achieved through decking of the some of the St Thomas Street North and Quay Road parking areas. The table below illustrates the approximate construction cost of providing new parking spaces. It should be noted that land costs are excluded which can be substantial and as much as £8,000-£10,000/space for prime sites.

Construction method	Cost (£/space)
Surface car park	£1,500
Single storey steel frame	£1,500
Multi-storey	£6,000
Underground	£15,000+

Table 7.1 – Approximate Car Park Costs

Whilst multi-storey car parks are very expensive, and underground ones even more so, a single extra deck can be achieved relatively easily through a steel framed structure. Even so, to provide 170 spaces would cost at least £0.25m.

Commuter parking in residential areas (both by those working in Ryde and on the mainland) has been raised as a problem. Surveys undertaken by Maunsell in January 1997 indicated that around 150 commuters parked in residential streets around the town centre and near the seafront. Surveys in 2001 revealed that even in August, there should be capacity in the St Thomas Street and Quay Road car parks to cater for around half of these commuters. Expansion of the P&R facility at St Johns Road Station would make up for the remaining shortfall of spaces.

In terms of transport policy, if parking on the Pier was removed it would be preferable to replace it with additional spaces at the P&R site. Whilst reducing the length of trips made by car, this would also reduce traffic volumes on the seafront.

Ryde Pier is owned by Wightlink who receive substantial revenue from the parking spaces on it (the parking charge on the Pier is higher than that of other long stay parking in Ryde). Wightlink insist that the parking revenue generated is a critical source of income for the ferry operations. A possible alternative source of income for Wightlink would be a development at the end of the Pier, such as a casino.

Any major changes to parking provision would need to be part of, and consistent with, the wider transport strategy for Ryde e.g. in relation to traffic routes, links to the main shopping area and pedestrianisation schemes. A net increase in long stay parking in the centre would be against current transport policy (unless associated with a new development) and would be unlikely to be granted planning permission.

The summary below is for a scheme to replace parking on the Pier by decking on one or more off-street car parks:

Benefits	Traffic removed from the Pier (which is a listed structure) giving a much better environment for pedestrians Reduced traffic on parts of the Esplanade The Pier could be developed as a visitor attraction
Disadvantages	Could increase traffic volumes and congestion on other local roads High cost Would need to be linked with a better transfer service between the Esplanade and Pier Head
Feasibility	Feasible but there could be some visual intrusion impacts for nearby properties
Funding	Would have to be funded by developers unless considered essential to the Transport Strategy

(ii) Pedestrian Links to Car Parks

Although there are several car parks local to Ryde town centre, the pedestrian links between these facilities and the shopping areas are not always obvious or direct e.g. from St Thomas Street. There is the opportunity to improve the standard of the routes and the signing for the links that currently exist.

Benefits	Potentially more efficient use of car parks Easier for visitors to find their way around Potential economic benefit to local businesses
Disadvantages	None
Feasibility	Feasible
Funding	From LTP

(iii) Lighting

Comments were received regarding the level of lighting within the town centre car parks. Sub-standard lighting may lead to occurrences of crime and result in public anxiety regarding personal safety. Good lighting, both within car parks and on pedestrian routes, should be a key component of any high quality public car park, and there may be the need for this lighting to be reviewed within all parking facilities throughout Ryde.

Street lighting levels are also cause for concern and should be assessed, with a view to improving conditions and encouraging walking within the town centre.

Benefits	Improved perception of personal safety Potential reduction in crime Walking encouraged within Ryde
Disadvantages	Impact on local residential dwellings requires consideration
Feasibility	Feasible
Funding	From LTP

7.3.12 Wider Pedestrianisation

Discussions with the focus group suggest that wider ranging pedestrianisation proposals need to be considered, including extending the existing scheme north to St Thomas Square and/or a Union Street scheme. Such significant schemes would need to be considered as part of an overall strategy for traffic routes, with detailed assessment using a traffic model to assess impacts throughout Ryde.

(i) Union Street

The possibility of pedestrian improvements within Union Street warrants consideration. The street links the High Street shopping area with the seafront and provides the main pedestrian route between these areas. Although the existing footways on the street are of an adequate width, there are no crossing facilities and parking occurs along the entire length of the street on both sides. The pedestrian facilities within the street could be improved to enable safe and easy crossing of the road and a comprehensive pedestrianisation scheme is one option.

A good pedestrian route will be essential to serve the improved Interchange on the Esplanade. One option could be a high level walkway running from Union Street linking into the Interchange at first floor level. Such a scheme would avoid vehicle/pedestrian conflict on the Esplanade and could form an attractive route with good views out over the Solent.

The summary overleaf is for a scheme to pedestrianise Union Street:

Benefits	<p>Would provide an excellent pedestrian route between seafront and town centre</p> <p>Potential economic benefit to local businesses</p> <p>Could be linked with a ‘people mover’ running between the Pier and High Street</p>
Disadvantages	<p>Possible difficulties in servicing shops / local businesses</p> <p>Access to other uses (e.g. hotels) could be severely restricted</p> <p>Traffic will need to be re-routed, resulting in increased volumes on other roads</p> <p>On-street parking would be lost and this could be a contentious issue with local businesses</p> <p>Potential negative impact on local businesses</p> <p>Possible accessibility issues for the mobility impaired and elderly (partly due to gradient of Union Street)</p>
Feasibility	<p>Feasible but further study required, including detailed consultation with local businesses / residents</p>
Funding	<p>Potentially from LTP but likely to require enhanced funding from other sources</p>

If a comprehensive pedestrianisation scheme is not deemed to be acceptable within Union Street, there are smaller scale alternatives which would benefit pedestrians. Such improvements include designated crossing locations, controlled crossing arrangements, reduction in carriageway width and widening of pavement at strategic locations.

(ii) Improvements to Existing Scheme

At present, the High Street is pedestrianised between Star Street and Garfield Road. Comments have been received with regard to the number of vehicles which use this area (not just delivery vehicles), and the speed at which they travel. A reduction in the number of vehicles present is deemed necessary to create a pedestrian friendly environment. Such a reduction could be achieved by implementing a restriction (in the form of a Traffic Regulation Order) on the times that servicing can occur within this area e.g. before 9am or after 5pm.

Benefits	<p>Enhances pedestrian friendly environment</p> <p>Potential economic benefit to local businesses</p>
Disadvantages	<p>Some inconvenience to local businesses and</p>
Feasibility	<p>Consultation with local residents / businesses required</p>
Funding	<p>From LTP</p>

7.3.13 Bus

(i) Local Services

Although there are numerous bus services which are routed through Ryde, there is a perception that the local communities are poorly served and the cost makes bus travel prohibitive to some residents. There may be scope for improvements to the local services, which would provide local residents with a frequent and cost effective bus service throughout Ryde. A community owned and run bus service has been raised as a possibility, with funding raised through the sale of bus ‘passes’ to residents (revenue could be supplemented with normal fares for other users).

Benefits	Better access throughout Ryde Cheaper travel within Ryde for local residents Possibly beneficial to the local economy
Disadvantages	Potentially difficult to develop a financially viable or high frequency service
Feasibility	Need to co-ordinate with local council and bus operators Financial viability may be difficult to achieve
Funding	From local community Potential to be supplemented with some form of grant

Local authorities elsewhere in the UK, e.g. Wiltshire County Council, have developed ‘demand responsive’ bus services whereby the public can ring up to book a pick up. These services usually have flexible routes and are often used to improve access to the wider public transport network for rural communities. Whilst this may not be appropriate for Ryde’s urban area, there may be scope for the Council to develop an innovative service using similar principles.

(ii) Bus Terminal

The existing bus terminal is located on the Ryde Esplanade and provides for bus layover associated with terminating services and staff changeovers. Although it forms part of the interchange at present, the need for the terminal to be located in this area could be questioned. The Esplanade is one of Ryde’s key attractions, and to have a bus terminal located here could be regarded as a waste of valuable space at a key location. Relocation of the terminal away from the seafront could prove to be beneficial, although high quality bus stop infrastructure would need to be introduced at this location in replacement.

The bus terminal would need to be relocated within Ryde for operational purposes, and due to the access requirements and size of land needed, prospective sites are severely limited. The site would also need to be located close to the existing bus routes and staff facilities would have to be provided. Potential sites include St Johns and Westridge.

Benefits	Release of land on the Esplanade Scope to improve the appearance of the Esplanade
Disadvantages	Difficult to find suitable replacement site Need to retain bus infrastructure at Esplanade Interchange
Feasibility	If site available Need to consult with bus operators, local council and land owners
Funding	Potentially as part of Public Transport Interchange scheme

(iii) Bus Stop Infrastructure

It was noted that the existing bus stop infrastructure throughout Ryde is of a varying quality. It is apparent that there are some new bus stops within the town centre, although stops in residential areas are of a poorer standard. The varying quality of the bus stop infrastructure may deter prospective bus users from waiting for services.

Benefits	Possible increase in bus patronage Decrease in reliance on private car Improved street environment.
Disadvantages	Erecting shelters in some parts of the town centre may be contentious
Feasibility	Feasible
Funding	From LTP

(iv) Guided Bus to Replace Railway

It has been suggested that rather than replacing existing rail rolling stock with ex-LUL stock again, the railway could be replaced with a guided bus system. The main benefit of doing this would be to introduce maximum flexibility in terms of the routes of services at either end at either end of the railway and stops along the corridor. For example a direct route could be provided between Wootton and Ventnor, using the rail corridor for most of the journey. More stops would also be possible within the built up areas of Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin.

Whilst bus journey times between Ryde, Sandown and Shanklin would be reduced and more reliable, a high frequency service would be needed to provide a similar level of capacity to the existing rail service.

The SRA has indicated that options involving closure of the railway are not on their agenda for the foreseeable future. With transport policy aimed at encouraging public transport, removal of the rail service (albeit replaced with a quality bus service) would seem to be a retrograde step.

Benefits	Opportunity for more services to take advantage of better journey times and reliability afforded by dedicated corridor Wider range of origins/destinations could be served
Disadvantages	Reduced capacity of line Loss of rail service against current policy
Feasibility	Technically feasible but unlikely to be approved by SRA
Funding	Not without full backing from Council and SRA

7.3.14 'People Mover' System

As mentioned earlier, the pedestrianisation of Union Street would allow the possibility of some form of 'people mover' system, running between the Esplanade and High Street. The possibility of replacing part or all of the existing rail rolling stock with light rail or tram has also been considered. With a tram system, on-street running would be possible, so the existing track along the Esplanade and Pier could be extended to serve the High Street area.

Union Street has a gradient of up to 7.5% but this is approaching the capability of a tram system (generally maximum gradient of 8% but can be up to 10%). It could also be possible to extend the system eastwards along the Esplanade to give a high quality link to the beach and Appley Park.

A large proportion of the cost of a tram system is taken up by the rolling stock, so extending the existing system could only be justified if it was part of a scheme to replace the existing rolling stock. Nevertheless, new trackway would be very expensive and would require higher revenue to be generated to justify the additional operating costs that would be incurred.

Other forms of people mover are available but these would not be able to run on the existing rail track. However, another system could replace the existing rail line along the Pier, giving a high frequency service between the Pier Head, Esplanade and High Street. The Parry People Mover is an example of a track based system, smaller in scale than a usual tram, that used flywheel stored energy technology. Other systems can be cable driven, such as the system used in Llandudno, with cables under track level. A recent development (the Soule SK Guideway) is cable driven but allows vehicles to move between different routes, as opposed to the usual cable systems that operate between two fixed points.

Another recent development is the Ultra Light Rapid Transit (ULTRa) system that is being trailed in preparation for implementation in Cardiff. This system uses small, driverless vehicles that are computer controlled and would not be suitable for on-street running unless totally segregated from pedestrians.

The following summary applies to a scheme to have on-street tram running on Union Street, as part of a scheme to replace all existing rolling stock with light rail:

Benefits	<p>High quality link between the Pier, Esplanade and High Street</p> <p>May make pedestrianisation of Union Street more acceptable</p> <p>Would make Ryde more attractive for tourists and visitors</p>
Disadvantages	<p>Very expensive scheme</p> <p>Would require major alterations to traffic movements in the area</p> <p>Lengthy and expensive planning and approval procedure</p>
Feasibility	<p>Detailed study needed to confirm technical feasibility but initial view is that it should be feasible</p>
Funding	<p>Reliant on funding for replacement of rolling stock with light rail</p> <p>Extension of track would be very expensive</p>

7.3.15 Future of Ryde Pier

Ryde Pier is already an important gateway to the Island and there is scope to develop further its transportation role by the introduction of facilities to load and offload light vehicles onto car ferries. Depending upon the intensity of such use, this could have a significant impact on the highway network and town of Ryde itself, and whilst it may offer some relief to other congested areas and demonstrate a long term commitment to maintaining the use of the Pier careful planning would be necessary to mitigate any negative impacts.

Whilst significant private sector investment would be required on the pier structure itself, consideration would have to be given to traffic management and network capacity as well as options for marshalling traffic. Should a firm proposal come forward, the development of a traffic model for Ryde will be essential to fully evaluate the impact of such a scheme, which may also impact upon the options for Ryde Interchange.

Benefits	<p>Increased capacity for vehicular cross-Solent movements</p> <p>Potential reduction of traffic at Fishbourne</p> <p>Continued viability of Ryde - Portsmouth ferry link</p>
Disadvantages	<p>Potential increases in traffic on the highway network</p> <p>Environmental impact issues</p>
Feasibility	<p>Subject to further detailed study</p>
Funding	<p>Private funding for structural works on the Pier</p>

8 Evaluation of Potential Improvements

The potential schemes described earlier have been assessed in terms of their ability to contribute to achieving the transport objectives of the Unitary Development Plan. **Table 8.1** summarises the assessment. It should be noted that this is an initial assessment, assuming that the schemes could be implemented successfully. A number of the schemes potentially have a range of impacts depending on the details of the scheme. For example, it has been assumed that Esplanade improvements would include measures to improve facilities for buses, walking and cycling. Certain schemes would also be dependant on other schemes to realise their full benefits e.g. the Monkton Road link could allow improved pedestrian/cycle facilities by removing traffic from other roads in the centre.

Depending on the scale of scheme, a full New Approach to Appraisal (NATA) assessment would be required (or using NATA principles) before any of the schemes could be progressed.

KEY	Reduce the need to travel, especially by car	Promote alternatives to car use	Encourage improved public transport facilities	Make best use of existing highway network	Increase opportunities for cycling and walking	Encourage the improvement of cross-Solent ferry links
✓✓ Large beneficial impact						
✓ Beneficial impact						
- Neutral						
✗ Negative impact						
Ryde Esplanade improvements	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-
Extension of High St Pedestrianised Area	-	✓	-	-	✓✓	-
Queen's Road / Pellhurst Road Bus Priority	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	-
Replacement of Rail Rolling Stock	✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	✓
Rail infrastructure improvements	✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	✓
Ryde Southern Relief Road	✗	✗	✓	-	-	-
Spencer Road Link	-	✗	-	-	-	-
Monkton Road Link	-	-	-	✓	✓	-
Dover Street Route to Esplanade	-	-	-	✓	✓	-
Strategic Signing	-	-	-	✓✓	-	✓
Local Traffic Routes and Signing	-	-	-	✓✓	✓	-
Five Ways Junction improvement	-	-	-	✓	✓✓	-
Queen's Road / Argyll St One-way System	-	-	-	✗	-	-
West Street & Lind Street Two-way	-	-	-	✓	✓	-
Use of Smallbrook Lane Encouraged	-	-	-	✓	-	-
Extension to Car Parking	✗	✗	-	-	-	✓
Improved Pedestrian Links to Car Parks	-	-	-	-	✓	-
Improved Car Park & Street Lighting	-	✓	-	-	✓✓	-
Wider Pedestrianisation	✓	✓	-	-	✓✓	-
Restricted Delivery Times in High Street	-	-	-	-	✓	-
Improved Local Bus Services	✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	-
Relocate Bus Terminal	-	-	-	-	-	-
Improved Bus Stop Infrastructure	✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	-
Guided Bus to Replace Railway	-	-	-	-	-	-
Light Rail to Replace Railway	✓	✓✓	✓✓	-	-	✓
Use of Pier for Car Ferry	✗	-	-	✗	✗	✓

Table 8.1 – Initial Appraisal of Potential Schemes

9 Priorities for Improvements

A number of schemes have been identified as ones that should be considered for early implementation, and are listed below:

- Improvement of Five Ways junction, including pedestrian facilities
- Bus gate to give access to Queen's Road from Mayfield Road
- Home Zone schemes for St Johns and Oakfield
- Signing strategy for routes through and within Ryde
- Extensions to Residents' Parking Scheme areas, including assessment of effect of displaced parking and possible provision of replacement parking
- Pedestrian and cycle improvements as part of Safe Routes to Schools
- High quality pedestrian/cycle route ('green corridor') alongside the railway – possible short term measures prior to railway bridge works

The majority of the schemes are part of the LTP strategy for Ryde and it is considered that they would give significant benefits. It is also considered that the schemes would not prejudice the development of the wider Transport Strategy and other future schemes, such as those associated with further pedestrianisation or the Interchange and Esplanade.

Whilst some of the schemes would require consultation with those affected locally, they should not be controversial within the wider Ryde community. Therefore, widespread consultation that would delay the implementation of the schemes should not be required.

Possible major schemes in the longer term should, however, have widespread consultation. Three major schemes have been identified as being the most important to resolve for the future of Ryde and for the development of the Transport Strategy:

- (a) the Public Transport Interchange on the Esplanade
- (b) town centre pedestrian improvements, including possible extensions to the pedestrianised area in High Street and Union Street
- (c) traffic access to and along the length of the Esplanade

There will be a high degree of interaction amongst these schemes. For example, options for (a) and (b) could include some form of 'people mover' to link the Interchange and town centre. Options for (b) and (c) will have a range of effects on traffic routings and flows throughout the town centre. All schemes also have a potential impact on parking capacity and distribution which needs to be explicit within the options.

Therefore, it is suggested that concept options should be developed that include all of the three schemes together and illustrate the impacts for the whole of the Ryde area.

10 The Way Forward

This report represents Phase 1 of the Ryde Transport Strategy study. It is proposed that the way ahead for the Ryde Transport Strategy should be:

10.1 Implement Schemes that are Ready to Go

The first priority should be to put in place the following schemes that are ready for implementation:

- Queen's Road / Mayfield Road bus gate
- Traffic Quiet Cells for the area north and south of St Johns Road
- Extensions to Residents' Parking Schemes

10.2 Development of Schemes Identified for Early Implementation

Depending on the level of work carried out to date on each particular scheme, this will require:

- development of scheme options e.g. for Five Ways junction
- consultation on existing or new options e.g. for Safe Routes to School
- detailed design

The objective of this work would be to have schemes ready for implementation within a year, with a programme of design work for the remaining schemes.

10.3 Development of Options for Major Schemes

A range of options should be developed, with different combinations of schemes for the Interchange, Esplanade and pedestrian improvements. The range of initial options should be as broad as possible, including such schemes as pedestrianising Union Street, 'people movers' to link the town centre and Interchange (and possibly replace the rail service) and changes to parking arrangements.

A possible methodology for the development of options is:

- Brainstorm meeting with Council and RDT officers to consider all possible schemes
- Produce a range of different concept drawings
- Assess and discuss concepts to give a number of feasible/viable 'preferred options'
- Further work on preferred options
- Consult the public on the preferred options

10.4 Ryde Traffic Model

Many of the schemes to be developed will have a significant impact on traffic movements in and around Ryde. It is recommended that a traffic model is built to 'test' improvement options and to enable traffic impacts to be quantified. It is proposed that the model should be built to replicate traffic

conditions for the AM and PM peak periods on a typical summer weekday. Traffic surveys will be required during the summer to obtain accurate and up-to-date data on traffic volumes and trip distributions. It is also recommended that traffic counts are conducted in March 2003 to give a comparative set of data and that an automatic traffic counter is installed to monitor traffic levels throughout the year.