



## **High Wycombe Town Committee**

# **High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) – Public Consultation**

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## Recommendations:

- a) That the Committee note the overview of the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
- b) That the Committee advises whether it overall supports progressing these draft plans to public consultation, having considered the implications of the draft plans not being progressed.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 Work on the development of the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and the High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) commenced in 2019 and 2020 respectively. The two plans have been developed in parallel to ensure close alignment and synergy, with the High Wycombe LCWIP intended to form a supporting plan to the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy.

Draft versions of the two plans have now been produced, informed by extensive engagement. This includes workshops with Buckinghamshire Council Members, Officers and a range of local stakeholders. The draft plans have been shared with Local Members for their consideration and amended in light of feedback received.

It is now proposed to progress the draft plans to public consultation. Local Members representing wards in the High Wycombe town area have recently been invited, via email, to indicate their views on the draft plans and the proposed public consultation. A number of responses have been received and follow up discussions held as required, however, responses have not been received from the majority of Local Members. As such, this report invites the Town Committee to give a view on the draft plans and the proposed public consultation. This will aid a decision to be taken on whether the draft plans are to progress to public consultation.

## 2. Main content of report

- 2.1 This section of the report summarises the remit, focus and purpose of the draft High Wycombe Transport 2050 Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP, which have been developed through local engagement. Appendix A contains an overview of the key interventions that are proposed in the two draft plans.

Following this, the report summarises the current position regarding the proposed public consultation, outlines the rationale for the public consultation, and highlights the potential implications should draft plans not progress to consultation.

2.2 High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy: The draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy outlines a 2050 Vision, which sets the future ambition for the town's transport system. The Vision consists of a Vision Statement, three 'Connecting' themes, and a set of key outcomes for each of those themes, which have established through engagement. From this, the Transport Strategy proposes a package of 26 transport interventions for the High Wycombe area (see Appendix A), which have been developed and refined through engagement. This includes discussions with High Wycombe Town Committee and High Wycombe Community Board.

The key outcome of the Transport Strategy is to have a set of well-justified, feasible transport proposals for High Wycombe which can be taken forward for future funding applications and delivery. The Transport Strategy will also feed into the forthcoming Buckinghamshire Local Transport Plan 5 and Local Plan.

2.3 High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP): LCWIPs are a strategic, approach, endorsed by national government, to identifying walking and cycling improvements in a defined area. The High Wycombe LCWIP builds on the draft Transport Strategy Vision and aims to make cycling and walking in the High Wycombe area accessible and attractive for all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

The LCWIP outlines a future walking and cycling network and a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements, which have been developed through engagement. Appendix A summarises the key concepts used to develop the network. The proposed network covers a study area of a 20-minute walking catchment and a 25-minute cycling catchment surrounding High Wycombe town centre, as well as connections to surrounding settlements. These proposed improvements are informed by and linked to the interventions proposed in the draft Transport Strategy. The LCWIP is to be used to support funding applications for, and inform the delivery of, improved walking and cycling infrastructure in the High Wycombe area.

2.4 Proposed public consultation:

It is proposed to progress the draft High Wycombe Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP to public consultation together for a six-week period.

To progress the draft plans to public consultation, a Key Decision is required. To enable the decision maker to make an informed decision, the Key Decision Report must reference the engagement undertaken and the views of Local Members relating to the proposed decision.

Copies of the draft plans have been circulated to Local Members representing wards in the High Wycombe town area. This follows recent workshops and briefing sessions

to discuss the draft plans. Feedback received through these various engagement activities has been considered and amendments have been made to the draft plans.

Local Members representing wards in the High Wycombe town area have also recently been contacted via email and invited to indicate their overall view (*supportive / neutral / not supportive*) on the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and the High Wycombe LCWIP and the proposal to progress the draft documents to public consultation. At present, responses have not been received from the majority of Local Members. As such, the overall view of Local Members on the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and the High Wycombe LCWIP is currently unclear, meaning a Key Decision cannot be progressed.

To enable a clear understanding of the overall view of Local Members, the Town Committee is invited to give a view on the draft plans and the proposed consultation. This will aid a decision to be taken on whether the draft plans are to progress to public consultation. To support the Town Committee in making its view, Table 1 summarises the rationale for the proposed public consultation and highlights the potential implications if the draft plans are not progressed to public consultation.

	<b>Rationale for public consultation</b>	<b>Implication if not progressed</b>
<b>Policy</b>	<p>Public consultation is the next step required for the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP to be finalised and, in turn, be put forward for adoption as Council policies. The policies would enable an informed long-term approach to future transport investment in the High Wycombe area.</p> <p>The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy supports the Local Transport Plan, which is a statutory requirement as set out in the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Local Transport Act 2008. By producing a new Transport Strategy in line with Government guidance the Council will be fulfilling its statutory duty to keep the strategy under review.</p>	<p>If not progressed to public consultation and adoption, the draft plans and the proposals within them would not feature in adopted Council policy, which is used to inform strategic and bidding priorities. There would be a lack of clear long-term policy direction for future transport investment in the High Wycombe area.</p>



	Whilst the Council's development of an LCWIP is not a mandatory or statutory requirement, it is highly recommended by the Department for Transport as best practice.	
<b>Funding</b>	The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP represent key mechanisms through which the Council will be able to leverage future funding for the delivery of the proposed transport infrastructure projects, providing justification to support negotiations with developers and government.	Not progressing the draft plans to public consultation will result in lost funding opportunities to deliver the proposed interventions.  Government funding for walking and cycling infrastructure is conditional on having an LCWIP in place. Without this, the Council will be disadvantaged, and potentially unable to seek future government funding for improved walking and cycling infrastructure in High Wycombe.
<b>Delivery</b>	The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy outline ambitious long-term delivery programmes which seek to improve local infrastructure, connectivity, environment and amenity. Having these focused programmes in place, and progressing their delivery, will benefit local residents and visitors to the town.	Without transport delivery plans in place for High Wycombe, there will likely be delays to progressing and delivering transport interventions in the town.

*Table 1*

### **3. Next steps and review**

- 3.1 The overall view of High Wycombe Town Committee will be shared with the High Wycombe Community Board, who will also be invited to give a view on the draft plans and the proposed public consultation.
- 3.2 Local Members are also invited to comment if they have a preference on the methods and forums that are used for future Member engagement and discussion on similar projects.

*If supported:*

- 3.3 Subject to Local Members' support, a Key Decision Report will be progressed seeking agreement to conduct a six-week public consultation on the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and the draft High Wycombe LCWIP. The consultation is intended to focus on inviting feedback on the overall direction of the plans.

Subject to the Decision being approved, the public consultation would be held online, via the Your Voice Bucks platform. To encourage participation, summary documentation will be produced, a communications plan will be delivered, and printed copies of consultation materials will be made available from a central High Wycombe location.

Once concluded, end of consultation reports will be produced and shared with Local Members, the Town Committee and the High Wycombe Community Board. The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP will then be revised if and as required.

Following this, the plans will be put forward for adoption as Buckinghamshire Council policies in the 2022/23 financial year. This adoption process will be subject to a subsequent Key Decision Report and approvals process.

It should be noted that specific proposals and interventions outlined within the two plans will be subject to further development work, engagement and public consultation as they are taken forward.

*If not supported:*

- 3.4 If the draft plans and the proposed public consultation are not supported by Local Members, the consultation will not be undertaken, and the draft plans will not be progressed further at this time. This would have a number of resulting implications, as noted in this report.



## Appendix A

### Overview of the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy

#### The High Wycombe Transport Vision and themes:

The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Vision sets the overall ambition for the town’s transport system. It consists of a Vision Statement, three ‘Connecting’ themes, and a set of key outcomes for each theme.

*Vision:* ‘By 2050, High Wycombe will be among the best connected and most innovative towns in the Thames Valley, where all journeys, from start to finish, are emission-free, seamless, and safe for all residents, businesses and visitors’.

#### *Themes:*

Connecting locally	Connecting regionally	Connecting green spaces
<p>Allowing everyone to access key destinations, services and travel hubs by providing and promoting attractive alternatives to the car, making best use of technology; as well as reducing the need to travel and reducing the distance travelled every day.</p>	<p>Strengthening connectivity – digital, energy and transport – to support the movement of people and goods within the Thames Valley and to London, Heathrow Airport, Oxford and beyond.</p>	<p>Enhancing health and wellbeing by providing safe, accessible routes to and throughout the town and its unique natural surroundings, including The Chilterns and Rivers Wye and Thames.</p>

#### Proposed schemes and interventions

The Transport Strategy proposes a package of 26 transport schemes, grouped into 6 categories, as detailed below. Using an analytical tool, these schemes have been tested against possible future scenarios.

Category	Scheme description
Behaviour change	High Wycombe behaviour change package - promote uptake of sustainable modes of travel (cycling, walking and public transport) as alternatives to single-occupancy car trips
Walking and cycling	Town centre wayfinding scheme
	'Healthy Neighbourhood' schemes - reducing the volume of traffic on residential streets and making it easier and safer to travel within neighbourhoods on foot or by bicycle.
	Segregated cycling lanes and 'quiet way' style network on all arterial corridors and key routes



Category	Scheme description
Public transport	Improved bus services to Cressex Business Park and Globe Business Park from High Wycombe neighbourhoods
	Additional layover space for buses and dynamic bus stand allocation
	Fast, affordable, reliable bus services
	Expansion of the Pay As You Go (PAYG) travel area to High Wycombe
	Development of a High Wycombe and surrounding towns travel zone with integrated ticketing
	North-south bus priority corridor on the A404 Marlow Hill
	East-west bus priority corridor on the A40 London Road and West Wycombe Road
	Old Oak Common Station connectivity interventions
	Twin track rail line between Princes Risborough and Aylesbury
	Conversion of existing bus fleet to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles
Shared and new mobility	'Mobility hub' schemes
	Autonomous shuttle between the bus and rail stations
	Demand responsive flexible bus services and integrated ticketing
	Car club spaces as standard in new developments and the town centre
	Docked e-bike and/or e-scooter hire scheme in High Wycombe
	E-bike hire scheme for longer-term trial rental periods
Highways and congestion management	Optimisation of town centre traffic signals
	Repurposing the A40 Abbey Way flyover
	Demand responsive signals on A404
Land use planning and parking	Town-wide electric vehicle charging infrastructure
	Parking standards to support car-free or car-light development
	Additional demand management / pricing mechanisms



## Overview of the draft High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

Building on the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy Vision, the High Wycombe LCWIP looks at how local walking and cycling infrastructure can be improved and proposes a comprehensive future walking and cycling network that covers High Wycombe and links to surrounding settlements.

The proposed walking and cycling network has been developed by identifying what improvements are required across the following five network planning concepts. These concepts have been informed by, and are aligned with, the various proposals outlined within the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy. Key interdependencies between the two plans are identified.

### Network planning concepts:

- **Walkable core** - considers how High Wycombe town centre could become a more attractive and thriving place where walking and cycling are encouraged. It recommends that improvements should be made to wayfinding and signage, the public realm and walking and cycling infrastructure in the town centre.
- **Main radial routes, key links and hubs** - considers how the strategic road network in High Wycombe could be used to provide direct walking and cycling links to the north, south, east and west. It also looks at ways to improve walking and cycling links with key residential and employment hubs in the town.
- **Healthy neighbourhoods** - looks at ways that local neighbourhood streets can be grouped together to form a local network where walking and cycling are encouraged by discouraging through vehicular traffic in a defined area.
- **Wider network and strategic routes** - looks at options for enhancing walking and cycling connectivity with local settlements surrounding High Wycombe. These links will be subject to further investigation, subsequent to the High Wycombe LCWIP.
- **A cohesive and connected network** - looks at a variety of interventions to complete the proposed walking and cycling network and explores behaviour change interventions that can support and complement the delivery of the network.