



## Report for Leader (Transport portfolio)

<b>Date:</b>	24 February 2022
<b>Reference number:</b>	<b>TR08.22</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) - Public Consultation</b>
<b>Cabinet Member(s):</b>	Councillor Steve Broadbent
<b>Contact officer:</b>	Jess Everett-Puttur and Jonathan Fuller
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	Abbey; Booker, Cressex & Castlefield; Chiltern Villages; Downley; Flackwell Heath, Little Marlow & Marlow South East; Hazlemere; Penn Wood & Old Amersham; Ridgeway East; Ridgeway West; Ryemead & Micklefield; Terriers & Amersham Hill; The Wooburns, Bourne End & Hedsor; Totteridge & Bowerdean; Tylers Green & Loudwater; West Wycombe;
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Note the work undertaken to develop the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).</b> <b>Agree that the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP can progress to public consultation for a period of six weeks.</b>
<b>Reason for decision:</b>	To enable the High Wycombe Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP to progress to public consultation and, through this, towards becoming adopted Buckinghamshire Council policies.

## 1. Executive summary

- 1.1 A draft Transport Strategy has been developed for High Wycombe, outlining a 2050 Vision and proposed package of transport interventions. The draft plans have been developed expecting the demand to travel to increase. As there are limited opportunities to increase highway capacity, the plans focus on improving travel choices to achieve a balance of economic and environmental outcomes.
- 1.2 A draft High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has also been developed, representing a supporting plan to the draft Transport Strategy. The LCWIP outlines a proposed walking and cycling network and interventions.
- 1.3 The two draft plans have been developed in parallel to ensure close alignment and synergy. The draft plans have been informed by extensive engagement with Buckinghamshire Council Members, Officers and a range of local stakeholders.
- 1.4 It is now proposed to progress the draft plans to public consultation. This next step is supported by the High Wycombe Town Committee.

## 2. Content of report

### High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy

- 2.1 In 2019, Steer (consultancy) were appointed by the former Buckinghamshire County Council and Wycombe District Council to develop a Transport Strategy for High Wycombe. This was in recognition of a need for an innovative approach to transport planning in a town where traditional approaches have proved difficult.
- 2.2 As summarised in Figure 1, the draft Transport Strategy looks forward to 2050, setting out a future Vision for the town's transport system. The Vision consists of a Vision Statement, three 'Connecting' Themes, and a set of key outcomes for each Theme. The Transport Strategy aims to take a scenario-based approach to transport matters, proposing a package of 26 transport Schemes across 6 categories. These Schemes are aligned with a future place-based Vision for High Wycombe and are categorised as either Short (0-5 years) Medium (5-15 years) or Long (15-30 years) term interventions.
- 2.3 Since 2019, extensive local engagement has been undertaken to inform the development of the draft Transport Strategy, to discuss and agree the proposed Vision, Themes and Schemes, and to test future transport scenarios. A series of workshops have been held with Members, Officers, Stakeholders, High Wycombe Community Board and High Wycombe Town Committee.
- 2.4 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.

### Figure 1: Overview of High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy

*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>

*Schemes:*

Category	Scheme description
Behaviour change	High Wycombe behaviour change package - promote uptake of sustainable modes of travel (cycling, walking and public transport).
Walking and cycling	Town centre wayfinding scheme
	'Healthy Neighbourhood' schemes - reducing the volume/impact 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
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

## High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

- 2.5 In 2020, Arup (consultancy) were appointed to develop the High Wycombe LCWIP. LCWIPs are a strategic approach 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.
- 2.6 The draft High Wycombe LCWIP outlines a future walking and cycling network and a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements. 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. 5 network planning concepts have been used to identify appropriate interventions at various spatial scales, as summarised in Figure 2. The proposed improvements and their prioritisation are aligned with the proposals detailed in the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy.

Concept	Sub concepts
<p><b>Walkable core</b></p> <p>considers how High Wycombe town centre could become a more attractive and thriving place where walking and cycling are encouraged</p>	<p>1a. Wayfinding and signage</p> <p>1b. Placemaking and public realm improvements</p> <p>1c. Infrastructure interventions</p>
<p><b>Main radial routes and key links</b></p> <p>considers how the strategic local roads in High Wycombe could be used to provide direct walking and cycling links and how walking and cycling links to key residential and employment hubs could be improved</p>	<p>2a. North-south strategic link</p> <p>2b. East-west strategic link (existing)</p> <p>2c. East-west strategic link (via A40)</p> <p>2d. Daws Hill to Handy Cross Hub link</p> <p>2e. Cressex Business Park</p> <p>2f. John Hall Way link</p> <p>2g. Links to strategic development sites</p> <p>2h. Public Rights of Way Improvements</p>
<p><b>Healthy neighbourhoods</b></p> <p>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 zone</p>	<p>3a. Totteridge</p> <p>3b. Desborough</p>

Concept	Sub concepts
<p><b>Wider network and strategic routes:</b> looks at opportunities to enhance walking and cycling connectivity with local settlements surrounding High Wycombe. These links will be subject to further investigation</p>	<p>4a. Hughenden Greenway and Cross-Valley link 4b. High Wycombe to Bourne End Greenway</p>
<p><b>A cohesive and connected network</b> considers a variety of interventions to complete the proposed walking and cycling network and explores behaviour change interventions that can support the proposed network</p>	<p>5a. Public Rights of Way Improvements 5b. A40/A404 roundabout and A40 flyover 5c. Other links and point interventions</p>

**Figure 2: Overview of High Wycombe LCWIP**

- 2.7 The draft LCWIP includes references to case studies of areas with hilly topography where increased walking and cycling levels have been achieved and outlines a range of behaviour change initiatives to support the proposed walking and cycling network.
- 2.8 Since 2020, extensive local engagement has been undertaken to inform the development of the draft LCWIP, to understand key local challenges and opportunities, and to inform the network development process. An online travel perception survey was conducted to capture local travel behaviours. Following this, a series of workshops have been held with Members, Officers and Stakeholders.
- 2.9 The LCWIP will be used to support funding applications for, and inform the delivery of, improved walking and cycling infrastructure in the High Wycombe area. Central government has indicated LCWIPs will be a requirement for local authorities' future active travel funding awards. More broadly, the High Wycombe LCWIP will feed into the forthcoming Buckinghamshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

### Proposed consultation

- 2.10 It is proposed to progress the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP to public consultation together for a six-week period. The consultation is intended to focus on inviting feedback on the overall direction of the plans.
- 2.11 The proposal to commence consultation follows further engagement with Local Members, and is supported by High Wycombe Town Committee, as detailed in Section 6 of this report (*Local councillors & community boards consultation & views*).

### **3. Other options considered**

- 3.1 A public consultation is required for the High Wycombe Transport Strategy and the High Wycombe LCWIP to be finalised and, in turn, be put forward for adoption as Council policies.
- 3.2 If a public consultation is not progressed, the draft plans and the proposals within them would not feature in adopted Council policy, which is used to inform strategic and bidding priorities. As a result, there would be a lack of clear long-term policy direction for future transport investment in the High Wycombe area. Without transport delivery plans in place for High Wycombe, there will likely be delays to securing external funding and delivering transport interventions in the town.

### **4. Legal and financial implications**

#### **Financial implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications directly associated with this report and its recommendations. The proposed consultation activities and subsequent amendment will use existing staff resources or existing Transport Strategy studies budget.
- 4.2 The development of the draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy has been funded through the studies budget of the Council's Transport Strategy team. The development of the High Wycombe LCWIP has been funded through developer funding awarded for this purpose.
- 4.3 The draft High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP outline proposed programmes of future investment in transport interventions and infrastructure in High Wycombe. Any of the proposed interventions that are taken forward will be subject to further feasibility studies that will require funding, either from existing internal or from external sources.
- 4.4 The proposed programmes are, in the main, unfunded, with the exception of schemes where funding has already been secured to support development or delivery work. Future opportunities to secure capital funding from appropriate sources (such as grants, local development contributions, government funding) to progress and deliver the proposed interventions will be explored.

#### **Legal implications**

- 4.5 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.

- 4.6 Whilst the development of an LCWIP is not a mandatory or statutory requirement, it is recommended by the Department for Transport as best practice and is key in enabling the Council to access government funding for active travel.

## **5. Corporate implications**

- 5.1 The development of the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and LCWIP has been informed by, and supports positive progress towards, Buckinghamshire Council's corporate objectives regarding climate change and sustainability.
- 1.4 The proposal to progress the draft High Wycombe Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP to public consultation does not have any direct corporate implications. A future report and recommendation to adopt the High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and the High Wycombe LCWIP as Council policies, following public consultation, would have corporate implications.
- 1.5 Both the High Wycombe Transport Strategy and the LCWIP were developed were developed to be consistent with the current High Wycombe Regeneration Strategy. The draft proposals are feeding into a refresh of the High Wycombe Regeneration Strategy.

## **6. Local councillors & community boards consultation & views**

- 6.1 Following the engagement activities detailed above, further pre-consultation activities have been held. Local Members have been contacted individually and invited to indicate their overall view on the draft plans and the proposal to progress the draft plans to public consultation. As part of this, a report was presented to High Wycombe Town Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022, inviting the Committee to give an overall view on the draft plans and the proposed public consultation. The Committee resolved that it supports the plans progressing to consultation and requested that:
- a) a post-consultation briefing is arranged for Local Members to consider the consultation responses and any recommended revisions
  - b) revised versions of the plans are shared with High Wycombe Town Committee for its consideration prior to being finalised.
- 6.2 The key feedback received through these various engagement activities is summarised below, alongside the key amendments that have been made to each of

the plans. Where amendments have not been necessary (i.e. feedback seeks clarification or relates to matters outside of the scope of the plans) this has been clarified with the Local Member(s).

### ***High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy***

Key feedback received:

*Vision and themes:*

- Need to be informed by and aligned with the changing environmental policy context relating to transport
- Need to be integrated with wider policies that influences demand for travel
- Ambition to make public transport dependable, clean and efficient
- Desire to put more emphasis on the areas surrounding High Wycombe

*Interventions:*

- Include up-to-date data on population/housing and insights on impacts of Brexit, Covid-19, and climate change
- Need for better buses – links to rail; incorporate more provision for cross-High Wycombe journeys; smaller, more regular/flexible buses
- Be realistic – remove Northern Bypass, Northern Park & Ride; make sure development has enough parking
- Recognise the changing roles of town centres and the relationship with development
- Provide clarity on how proposals may be funded (i.e. possible sources)

In response, the following key amendments have been made:

- Proposed intervention PT3 - Hazlemere P&R has been replaced with fast, affordable, reliable bus services
- The proposed section on mobility hubs has been strengthened (SHM1), and maps updated to highlight further locations of where they could be located
- The section on a Workplace Parking Levy has been softened into 'additional demand management / pricing mechanisms', with WPLs forming a part of that discussion, though not being the main intervention
- The funding section has been reviewed and updated accordingly
- All maps have been updated accordingly with the above changes

## **High Wycombe LCWIP**

Key feedback received:

- Interest and support for the proposed measures to alleviate traffic and parking issues in East Wycombe
- Support for highlighting potential supporting measures focused on school travel, such as park and stride initiatives
- Comments about local topography, which could be a barrier to walking and cycling. Other comments identified that e-bikes and segregated infrastructure, alongside behaviour change initiatives, could help to overcome topographical challenges.

In response, the following key amendments have been made:

- Additional school travel behaviour change measures have been included
- Case studies and suggestions of how local topographical challenges can overcome have been included, alongside specific recommendations of measures that could support proposals in locations with hilly topography
- Amendments to scheme specific descriptions and mapping have been made to reflect feedback received and to improve overall readability

## **7. Communication, engagement & further consultation**

7.1 The proposed public consultation will be undertaken online via the Your Voice Bucks platform, with the following measures put in place to encourage engagement:

- Extended consultation period (as opposed to more typical four weeks).
- Summary documentation will be uploaded to support readability and accessibility, alongside the full reports and relevant supporting information.
- A communications plan to provide publicity and encourage participation.
- The consultation questionnaire will be available online by default and printed copies of consultation materials will be available from a central High Wycombe location.

## **8. Next steps and review**

- 8.1 Approval is sought to conduct a six-week public consultation on the proposed High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP, commencing in late March 2022.
- 8.2 Once public consultation has concluded, end of consultation reports will be produced, and a Member briefing session will be arranged to consider the findings and any recommended revisions.
- 8.3 The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and High Wycombe LCWIP will then be revised if and as required. The revised versions of the plans will be shared with the High Wycombe Town Committee prior to finalisation.
- 8.4 The High Wycombe 2050 Transport Strategy and the High Wycombe LCWIP will be finalised and progressed 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.
- 8.5 It should be noted that specific proposals and interventions outlined within the plans will be subject to further development work, engagement with Local Members and stakeholders, and public consultation as they are taken forward.

## **9. Background papers**

- 9.1 This report refers to the following background papers
  - Appendix 1 – Draft High Wycombe Transport Strategy
  - Appendix 2 – Draft High Wycombe Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

## **10. Your questions and views (for key decisions)**

- 10.1 If you have any questions about the matters contained in this report, please get in touch with the author of this report. This can be done by telephone 01296 382427 or email to [joan.hancox@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:joan.hancox@buckinghamshire.gov.uk). If you have any views that you would like the cabinet member to consider, please inform the democratic services team.