

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PLAN

This Plan will examine the current situation regarding the movement of people by different means of transport, both within the town and beyond. To this end, the Plan will consider the use of footpaths and cycle routes, bus routes and frequency, and car parking within the town centre.

1.0 TRANSPORT POLICY

1.1 Milton Keynes Council's Local Transport Plan 3, together with its review in 2012, sets down 7 transport objectives:-

1.1.1 Provide real and attractive transport choices to encourage more sustainable travel behaviour in Milton Keynes

1.1.2 Support economic growth of the borough through fast, efficient and reliable movement of people and goods

1.1.3 Reduce transport based CO2 emissions to help tackle climate change

1.1.4 Provide access for all to key services and amenities in Milton Keynes, including employment, education, health, retail and leisure.

1.1.5 Improve safety, security and health.

1.1.6 Contribute to quality of life for all Milton Keynes residents, strengthening linkages between communities

1.1.7 Establish a development framework that embraces technological change, in which Milton Keynes can continue to grow, pioneer and develop.

1.2 The objectives of the Milton Keynes Core Strategy Policy CS11 are to meet the demand for increased movement of people and goods, improve accessibility, improve safety and quality of life, and to reduce the Borough's carbon footprint. To achieve this, the measures will include among others:-

1.2.1 A step change in improvements to public transport

1.2.2 More sustainable transport choices for car owners, and information and measures to encourage them to use non-car mode for more journeys

1.2.3 Encouraging greater movement by cycling and walking, through improvements to the redway network and other paths

1.2.4 Planning development so that it is well served by public transport and is easily accessible by walking and cycling

1.3 The transport objectives in the Milton Keynes Local Plan are to encourage walking, cycling and quality public transport while reducing journeys by car, and promoting a healthier lifestyle. Policy T1, The Transport User Hierarchy, states that Development proposals should meet the needs of transport users in the following order of preference:-

- (1) Pedestrians and those with impaired mobility
- (2) Cyclists
- (3) Users of public transport
- (4) Others

1.4 These Local Plan and Core Strategy policies follow the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) guidance that encourages sustainable development and sustainable modes of transport. Paragraph 35 requires development to give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities.

1.5 To follow these objectives, this Plan will examine the current state of Newport Pagnell's footpath, cycling and highway networks, and its bus services, and propose ways by which journeys within the

town and beyond can be made more sustainable.

2.0 WALKING

- 2.1 There is an increasing awareness of the links between active lifestyles and the health and quality of life of the population. In 2010 the Department of Transport and Department of Health published the Active Travel Strategy, which promotes walking and cycling as low cost, healthier options for shorter journeys. Guidance on acceptable maximum walk and cycle distances vary according to the journey purpose and the individual. However, reducing the distance needing to be travelled will increase the likelihood of those journeys being made on foot or by cycle. Average walking journey distance is around 1.2km or ¾ mile, which equates to 15 minutes walking time. The average cycle journey is around 4km or 2.4 miles, and is again broadly a 15 minute journey. If people are prepared to walk or cycle for up to 15 minutes to access local facilities, then it seems reasonable to propose policies which seek to ensure such facilities are available within a 15 minute walk/cycle journey.
- 2.2 If applied to Newport Pagnell, the town centre is within 15 minutes walking distance for all residents along Tickford Street as far as North Crawley Road, most of Green Park estate, Lakes Lane, Westbury Avenue as far as Longfellow Drive, and Wolverton Road as far as Manor Road. All Newport Pagnell residents are within a 15 minute cycle ride of the town centre. The footpaths are generally well maintained and lit, and an annual inspection of footpaths and cycle paths in the town, called an Environmental Visual Audit, is carried out by the Newport Pagnell Partnership in conjunction with Thames Valley Police.
- 2.3 Within the town centre, most of the main facilities and attractions are situated on or near the High Street, which has undergone major improvements through a Newport Pagnell Partnership initiative to install traffic calming measures, resurface and widen footpaths, install dropped kerbs, and install new lighting, seating, refuse bins and cycle parking stands.
- 2.4 While most residents soon get to know the location of the town's facilities and attractions, there are few signs to direct pedestrians and visitors who do not know the town well. A series of waymarking signs pointing to the main destinations, both within the town centre and leading from the main car parks, would help direct and orientate those unfamiliar with Newport Pagnell. Many of the town's recreational areas lie behind buildings and are not immediately apparent to visitors. The benefits of additional signage must be balanced against the need to avoid unnecessary visual clutter. It is therefore proposed that a waymarking survey be carried out by the Newport Pagnell Partnership, in conjunction with Town Council, and implemented in conjunction with the Highway Authority.
- 2.5 The public consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan also highlighted a wish to see the town's history better publicised. This could take the form of a town trail or series of trails, identifying historic buildings, informational noticeboards, published leaflets or signs upon individual buildings. There are four town heritage walks on the Newport Pagnell Town Council web site, and leaflets to accompany the walks are being prepared.

POLICY T1: WAYMARKING

The Town Council, in conjunction with the Newport Pagnell Partnership, and in consultation with Milton Keynes Council, will undertake a waymarking survey and a study to promote the history of Newport Pagnell. The Town Council in conjunction with the other parties will implement the agreed proposals for a waymarking strategy and the promotion of the town's history.

3.0 CYCLING

- 3.1 Cycling occurs both as a means of transport and as a recreational activity. As a means of transport,

the objective is to get to a destination with speed and safety. For recreational purposes, safety and enjoyment are the key factors. A great deterrent to cycling is the fear for the rider's safety when sharing busy road space with fast moving vehicles. Although illegal, cyclists will often use footpaths in preference to busy main roads.

- 3.2 Milton Keynes has a network of redway routes which allow cyclists and pedestrians to share 3 metre wide pathways which avoid or minimise contact with roads. The redways were planned as an integral part of the development of Milton Keynes, but are not present in older settlements which were largely developed without separate provision for cycling. A survey of the cycle routes in Newport Pagnell has been undertaken to establish the town's cycleway provision.
- 3.3 Newport Pagnell has 3 connections to the MK redway network: via Railway Walk, Tongwell Lane, and a link between Stanmore Gardens and Blakelands. Green Park estate has a network of internal redways which link to two of these MK redways, but not all of these internal routes connect with main destinations such as schools and the town centre. Following a survey of existing redway and cycle path routes, the following deficiencies have been identified:-
- (1) Lack of adequate directional signage
 - (2) Absence of linkages with the principle destinations
 - (3) Lack of any separate cycle provision for the rest of Newport Pagnell

Signage

- 3.4 From Milton Keynes there is a lack of signs pointing to Newport Pagnell on the three connecting redway routes. This should be rectified by the addition of new signs.
- 3.5 Within Green Park estate, the existing redways do not have signs at every junction, and the signs which do exist do not guide cyclists fully to their intended destinations. The signs to the Town Centre stop in the middle of the estate by the Kingfisher local centre, and do not represent the best routes into the town centre. A full review of the directional signs on Green Park is required.

Linkages

- 3.6 Green Park is the only estate with redways, but these do not connect with the schools or the town centre. New sections of cycle ways are needed to link existing redways to Green Park and Ousedale schools. Where existing highways do not permit a full redway standard link, shared cycle/pedestrian routes can be engineered.
- 3.7 A new redway should be constructed down Marsh End Road to provide a direct cycle route to the edge of the town centre.
- 3.8 A new link between the end of Tongwell Lane and Willen Road, is also needed to enable cyclists to reach Riverside Meadows as an alternative leisure route to the edge of the town centre, and also to Middleton swimming pool.

New Cycle Route Provision

- 3.9 For the rest of the town, where currently no separate cycle route provision exists, cycle routes can be fitted into the existing highway network in certain locations. This may be achieved by cyclists and pedestrians sharing the same paths, or by widening these paths where practical, or by marking cycle lanes along roads.
- 3.10 On the Poets estate, Portfields School and the local centre are the main focal points for cycle route provision, together with a safe route into the town centre. Westbury Lane and Wordsworth Avenue

have 1.8 metre wide footpaths with grass verges, for most of their lengths. Sections of grass verges could be incorporated into a widened shared surface for cycle and pedestrian use. For a safe cycle route into the town centre, Lakes Lane is generally a quiet road which could be linked via a widened cycle/footpath across the Westbury Lane open space.

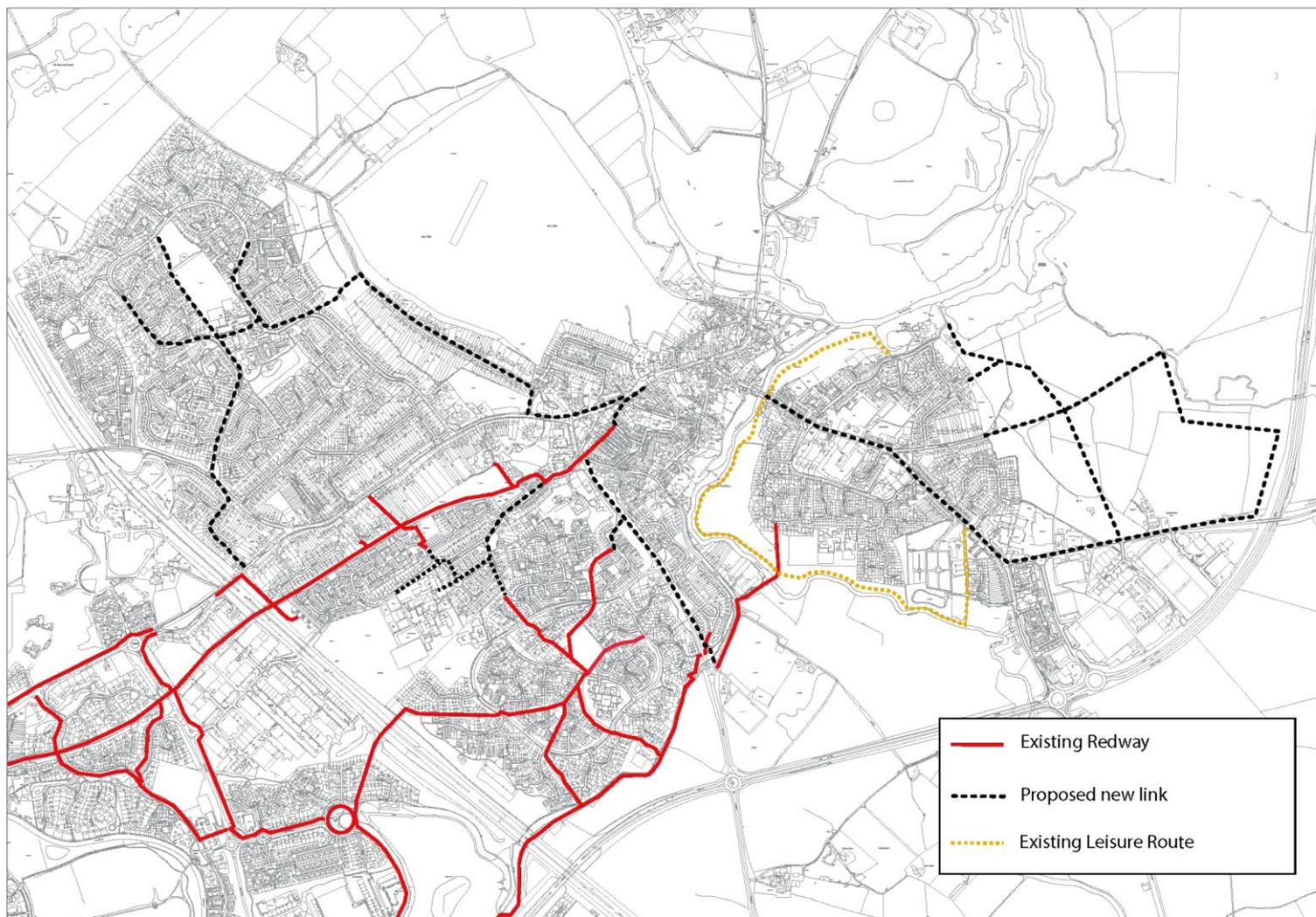
- 3.11 Along London Road and Tickford Street there is an opportunity to create a safe cycle route either along the road or by reclassifying one of the existing footpaths as a shared surface for cyclists and pedestrians, widening the route where space allows, but still retaining off-street parking provision. A full feasibility survey will be required.
- 3.12 The development of Tickford Fields Farm and industrial sites for housing will be required to provide a redway network within the site, and redway connections along North Crawley Road to Tickford Street and London Road, and also to Chicheley Street.

Conclusion

- 3.13 These proposals for new and improved cycle routes will need to be discussed and considered in detail by the Highway Authority to ensure that the end solutions meet highway safety standards. The investment required to achieve these objectives will be considerable, and the improvements will need to be phased in over the plan period up to 2031. New housing development will be required to contribute to the establishment, improvement and extension of the cycle route network. The Neighbourhood Plan will establish the principles and priorities for cycle route and signage improvements.

POLICY T2: CYCLING

The Town Council, in conjunction with the Highway Authority, will seek improvements to the signage, linkages and provision of safe cycle routes throughout the town. All major new housing developments will be required to provide or contribute to redway routes within and beyond their sites, in order to achieve a comprehensive cycle route network. .



4.0 SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS

- 4.1 Newport Pagnell has four junior schools and one secondary school, all of which attract high numbers of car trips, which create short term traffic and parking problems for the surrounding area.
- 4.2 Each school has produced a School Travel Plan with the aims of reducing the number of trips to school by car, reducing traffic and parking congestion, and encouraging pupils to walk or cycle to school as part of a healthier lifestyle. Most of these plans are now several years old and have not been actively monitored or pursued.
- 4.3 As part of this Sustainable Transport Plan, the Town Council, in conjunction with Milton Keynes Council, will liaise with and encourage all Newport Pagnell schools to review and update their School Travel Plan, and will monitor their implementation and results on an regular basis, to see how effective they are in bring about changes to the travel to school patterns.
- 4.4 Each school would be expected to appoint a School Travel Plan Co-Ordinator to carry out an annual travel survey to create a baseline of how pupils travel, and a method to provide a year on year comparison. Each school would need to plan and put into action effective travel initiatives as part of a school action plan.

POLICY T3: SCHOOL TRAVEL PLANS

The Town Council, in conjunction with Milton Keynes Council, will encourage all schools in the town to update their School Travel Plans, to implement them, and regularly monitor their effects.

5.0 BUS SERVICES

- 5.1 Within Milton Keynes, and all neighbouring authorities, bus operators are free to register services which can be run without public revenue (ie commercially) and the Council has to consider the needs not met by this network and arrange the additional services it deems necessary. Newport Pagnell is currently served by 10 bus services operated by 6 different bus companies. All but two of these services are maintained through public subsidies to varying degrees, being uneconomic without subsidy. The frequency of each service varies depending on the route, the day of the week, and time of day. Generally, services are most frequent on weekdays between 0800-1800, with lower levels of service at weekends, early mornings and evenings, but with some services only operating at specific times for journey to school or work purposes.
- 5.2 The two unsubsidised routes are Service No 1 & 2 operated by Arriva from Market Hill. Route 1 operates a half hourly service during weekday peak hours via Green Park, Willen Local Centre, CMK shopping centre and railway station, MK Hospital, Bletchley and Newton Leys. Route 2 operates three buses an hour during weekday peak hours via the Poets Estate, Redhouse Park, Willen Local Centre, CMK shopping centre and railway station, Woodhill and Westcroft. Together, these services provide an acceptable level of regular public transport for the west and south west parts of the town.
- 5.3 The services operating down Tickford Street, serving the south east part of the town, are a combination of service 24/25, 40 & C10, each operated as an hourly service during weekday peak hours, by different operators. While together these services run 3 buses per hour along Tickford Street, their timings are not evenly spaced, and their routes differ, which results in an irregular and poor level of service.
- 5.4 With the proposed development of 1200 dwellings at Tickford Fields Farm, a regular bus service will be needed to serve this development, which will also improve the service to this part of the town. A financial contribution to bus service provision will be required from the developers.
- 5.5 In addition to these services, routes 21, 30/31, 37 and 601 also pass through Newport Pagnell, some hourly or less frequently on their way out to surrounding villages (21,37), and the others as occasional one-off journeys. None of these services provide any service on Sundays.
- 5.6 Many bus services were operated on a 'Hail and Ride' basis within residential areas, which allowed passengers to select a convenient location to stand and hail a passing bus, rather than walk to the nearest designated bus stop. This provides greater convenience to the passenger, but uncertainty and more frequent stopping for the bus operation, to the detriment of timekeeping.
- 5.7 In order to facilitate access to wheelchair users, and parents with buggies, Milton Keynes Council is incrementally improving bus stops with raised pavement heights to give level access onto the bus, and installing shelters at some stops. While most bus stops within Newport Pagnell have not yet been improved, there is a long term trend to move away from Hail and Ride to designated bus stops.

POLICY T4: BUS SERVICES

The major housing developments of Tickford Fields Farm and North Crawley Road Industrial Estate will be required to provide a bus route through the combined development, with attendant infrastructure of stops, signage and shelters, and to contribute financially to the provision of a regular bus service.

6.0 TOWN CENTRE PARKING

6.1 Newport Pagnell has the following long and short stay standard car parking capacity:-

<u>Long Stay Car Park Capacity</u>		<u>Short Stay Car Park (2 hours) Capacity</u>	
	<u>Capacity</u>		<u>Capacity</u>
James Yard	72	Queens Avenue	47
Silver Street	98	Silver Street	12
Lovat Hall	56	Library	30
Station Road	80		
TOTAL	<u>306</u>	TOTAL	<u>89</u>

In addition, there are 104 on-street standard parking spaces and 8 spaces for the disabled, distributed along the length of High Street, St John Street and Queens Avenue. The length of stay varies between 30 and 60 minutes for these spaces.

- 6.2 Arising out of the public consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan came a strong message that car parking in the town should remain free of charge, as one of the main advantages in attracting trade and visitors to the town centre.
- 6.3 Another issue raised was difficulties of parking and the need for additional car parking in the town centre. In order to investigate this, three week-long surveys of car park occupancy were undertaken in March, May and June 2014. The surveys covered the four long stay car parks and the three short stay car parks.
- 6.4 The results show that the three central long stay parks, excluding Lovat Bank, are frequently over 90% full at all times of the day, on all weekdays. While it is rare to find no available long term parking spaces in the town, it may often be difficult to find long term parking space within the centre. Lovat Bank car park, being that much further out, often has spaces available except when there are activities going on in the hall. James Yard car park consistently has the highest levels of occupation. Demand for long stay car parking appears higher in the mornings.
- 6.5 For short stay parking, occupancy levels are general lower with greater availability of vacant spaces throughout the day. This is probably due to the regular turnover of parking, freeing up spaces on a regular basis.
- 6.6 From these survey results, it is concluded that there will be a need to increase long stay parking capacity, if the town centre is to retain and encourage more employment in the town centre.
- 6.7 A survey of the town was carried out to find possible sites for additional town centre long term car parking. Three possible sites were identified, but all are in private ownership. Even if the landowners are willing to sell their land, the cost of acquisition and construction of the car park will be high. The three sites have been referred to the Business Development Committee of the Town Council for further consideration and action.
- 6.8 Signage to and from the car parks for road users was surveyed and found to be generally well signed from most approaches. However, the following exceptions are not adequately signed:-
- (a) Station Road car park entrance, from either direction along the High Street
 - (b) Queens Avenue & James Yard car parks, travelling from east to west along the High Street
 - (c) On leaving Silver Street car park, there are no direction signs to re-join the High Street

These matters will be considered as part of the Wayfinding Strategy. Highway signage is the responsibility of Milton Keynes Council, and the Wayfinding Strategy will be implemented in conjunction with the Highways department.

- 6.9 From the car parks, pedestrian signage to the shops and town centre is poor. This issue will be addressed through the waymarking survey proposed under Policy T1.

POLICY T5: CAR PARKING

The Town Council, in conjunction with Milton Keynes Council, will seek to provide additional long stay car parking capacity close to the town centre. The Town Council will strongly advocate that all town centre car parking shall remain free of charge.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

- 7.1 Newport Pagnell Town Council supports the objectives of giving priority to the more sustainable modes of transport of walking, cycling and public transport, and will promote measures which improve their quality and availability throughout the town. The implementation of these measures will require the cooperation of Milton Keynes Council as the Highway Authority, and of all schools within the town.
- 7.2 Newport Pagnell Town Council will request that Milton Keynes Council carries out a full transport review of the town, leading to a Newport Pagnell Transport Strategy being incorporated into the next review of the Local Transport Plan.
- 7.3 The major new housing development on Tickford Fields Farm and North Crawley Road Industrial sites must incorporate provision for walking, cycling and public transport within the site, and provide connections to the wider proposed network. Financial contribution will be sought from developers to provide a regular bus service to the development, together with cycle route provision.
- 7.4 The implementation of the measures will require substantial financial investment, which will only be delivered on a phased basis over the period of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Town Council will draw up a list of proposals, and a schedule of priorities for their implementation.

POLICY T6: MONITORING

The Town Council will monitor the implementation of the Sustainable Transport Plan on an annual basis, and will review the Plan at five year intervals.