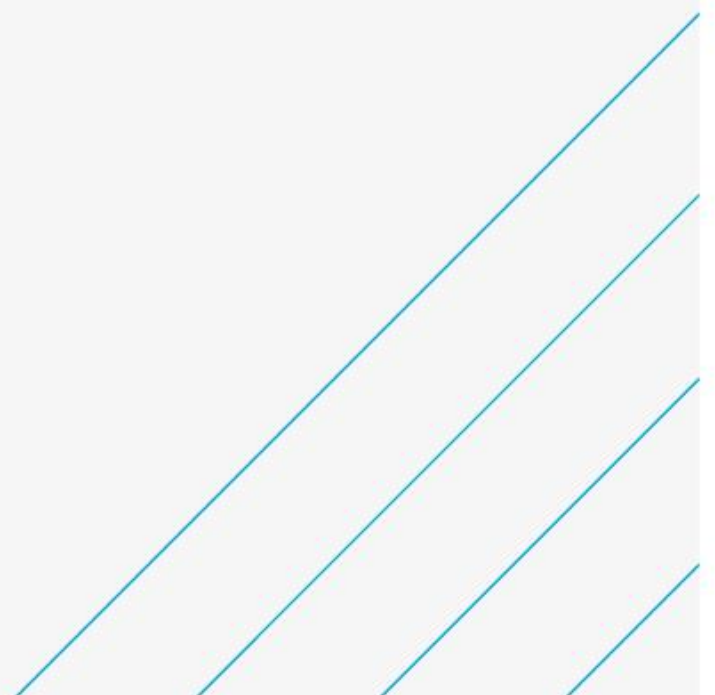


Solihull Cycling and Walking Engagement Report

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

17th February 2020



Contents

Chapter	Page
1. Introduction	3
1.1. Cycling and Walking Projects at the Council	3
1.2. Cycling and Walking Overview	3
1.3. Role of Public Engagement	4
2. Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy	5
2.1. Purpose of the Strategy	5
2.2. Cycling and Walking Strategy Structure	5
2.3. Vision and Objectives	6
2.4. Cycling and Walking Themes	6
2.5. Cycling and Walking Policy	7
2.6. Public Feedback	11
3. Solihull Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	12
3.1. Purpose of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	12
3.2. LCWIP Process	12
3.3. Key Findings to Date	13
3.4. Concept Designs	15
3.5. Next Steps	17
3.6. Public Feedback	17
Tables	
Table 3-1 - LCWIP Process	12

1. Introduction

1.1. Cycling and Walking Projects at the Council

Since late 2018, we have been developing a Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy. The strategy presents the overall strategic approach for cycling and walking in Solihull. The strategy focuses on increasing the number of active travel journeys across the borough, this will be achieved through initiatives such as delivering high quality cycling and walking infrastructure, providing further promotional and behavioural change programmes and supporting new and existing developments to be more sustainable.

The strategy will be supported by a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The LCWIP process has been developed by the Department for Transport (DfT) to encourage and provide guidance for local authorities to develop long term plans for high quality cycling and walking provision. The Solihull LCWIP will identify a number of priority corridors where we will seek to implement improved provision for cycling and/or walking.

This Engagement Report provides an update on the development of the Cycling and Walking Strategy and accompanying LCWIP.

1.2. Cycling and Walking Overview

Moving forward as a borough, we understand the critical role of cycling and walking in supporting the transport network and helping to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. Solihull Connected, the transport strategy for Solihull, sets out the overall vision for transport in the borough. Solihull Connected marks out our vision for how we will deliver transport infrastructure and initiatives in the future, how we will accommodate growth in travel demand on our network and how we will seek to maintain Solihull's character.

A key objective of Solihull Connected is to 'Support and enable the integrated delivery of sustainable and efficient forms of transport'; this includes cycling and walking. To get to a position where cycling and walking are widely used forms of daily transport (particularly cycling) we must plan for it in the same way we would plan for any other mode of transport.

Solihull Connected acknowledges the need to ensure cyclists are provided with infrastructure that allows for a quick, reliable and safe journey. To enable such journeys, a comprehensive network of cycle routes across the borough is required. In regard to walking, we need to ensure the pedestrian environment is convenient and pleasant, helping to alleviate pressure on the transport network.

Solihull Connected has identified the potential for cycling, including;

- A household travel survey in 2011 suggested that half of households in the borough already have access to a bicycle; the highest in the West Midlands.
- The same survey suggested that 57% of all daily trips made by Solihull residents are shorter than 5km in length, a total of 320,000 trips every day which are a short walk or cycle distance.
- If we could switch just 10% of residents' commuter journeys to cycling, based upon conservative estimates of how many could switch at various distances, then we could raise cycling participation from around 6,300 to over 55,000 trips per day across the borough.

1.3. Role of Public Engagement

The purpose of public engagement is to:

- Gather feedback on the Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy (currently under development) ensuring our cycling and walking policies align with the aspirations of our residents
- Better understand major barriers for cycling and walking
- Help identify priority cycle routes for investment
- Gather feedback on the draft Solihull Cycling Strategic Network
- Gather feedback on the type of cycling provision preferred in Solihull

2. Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy

2.1. Purpose of the Strategy

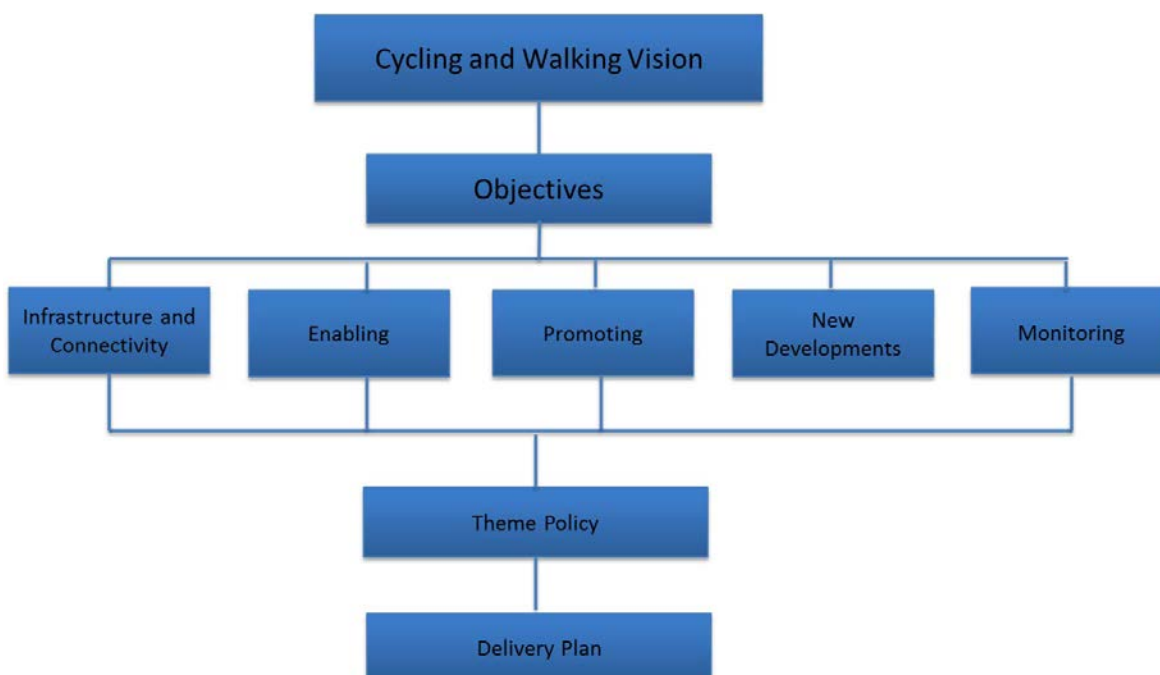
To support our transport strategy, Solihull Connected, it is imperative that we produce a Cycling and Walking Strategy that will seek to achieve objectives relating to active travel within Solihull. The Cycling and Walking Strategy will demonstrate our clear commitment to increase the number of sustainable journeys on our network.

The purpose of the Cycling and Walking Strategy is to:

- Set clear policies for cycling and walking, ensuring the council is consistent on all matters relating to active travel;
- Ensure cycle and walking infrastructure achieves the standards set by the West Midlands Design Guidance and/or standards set within the strategy;
- Provide guidance for developers, ensuring new developments are more sustainable and encourage cycle and walking journeys;
- Improve the capability and confidence of local users to cycle, or cycle more often. This will maximise the benefits of new infrastructure by improving capability;
- Develop creative promotion programmes to encourage active travel; and
- Develop a funding strategy to gain future funding for active travel.

2.2. Cycling and Walking Strategy Structure

The figure below outlines the structure of the Cycling and Walking Strategy. The overall vision of the strategy will be supported by a number of key objectives. The objectives will be achieved across a range of cycling and walking themes. The themes will include a range of policies which will be delivered through the Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan.



2.3. Vision and Objectives

The vision for cycling and walking as set out in the Cycling and Walking Strategy is to:

Develop Solihull into a cycling and walking borough, increasing physical activity and improving wellbeing – further enhancing the borough’s status as an attractive, sustainable and economically vibrant place to live, work and visit.”

In order for our cycling and walking vision to be realised in the borough, we have identified a range of objectives. The objectives presented below will be achieved through the policies set out in 5 key themes (further detail found in the following section)

The cycling and walking objectives are:

- Increase the number of people cycling and walking in Solihull
- Improve the provision of cycling and walking infrastructure, making active travel more convenient for short distance journeys
- Improve cycling capability throughout the borough by providing cycle training initiatives
- Make cycling and walking ‘the norm’ through targeted promotion, particularly working with local schools; and
- New developments to include high quality cycle and walking infrastructure and facilities.

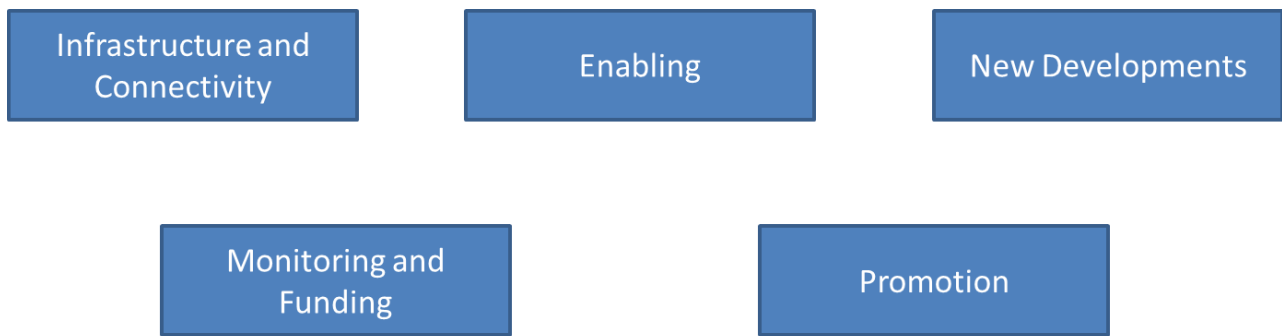
2.4. Cycling and Walking Themes

The Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy sets out five key themes to help shape the future direction of cycling and Walking in the borough. The themes are underpinned by key policies to guide programmes and initiatives which will be delivered across Solihull over the coming years through the Cycling and Walking Delivery Plan.

These themes have been identified:

- In recognition of the wide variety of topics and projects relating to cycling and walking in the borough
- To support the overall Cycling and Walking Strategy vision
- To acknowledge the need to improve cycling and walking infrastructure
- Based on their potential to address challenges faced by air quality and physical inactivity:
- Maximise on new development opportunities: and
- To better promote cycling and walking across Solihull

The five themes are presented below



There are many links between the themes outlined above. A coordinated approach will maximise on investment, particularly through the promotion of new infrastructure, including engaging with the local community. Examples of our coordinated approach across the themes include:

- Developing behavioural change programmes as part of new cycling and walking infrastructure schemes;
- Ensure that all new cycling infrastructure has a monitoring programme to develop an evidence base for assessing benefits of new infrastructure and;
- All new behavioural change programmes (as part of enabling theme) have a coordinated package of promotional activities.

2.5. Cycling and Walking Policy

To achieve the objectives and overall vision of the Cycling and Walking Strategy, it is imperative to develop a range of policy which will support the five themes outlined above. The draft policies presented below have been developed in coordination with local stakeholders. As we are still in development stage of the strategy, we have identified a number of policies across the five themes which we are now able to present and engage with the local community upon.

The below table outlines the policy, the alignment to the relevant theme and a brief description of what we will do as part of the policy. Further information on the complete set of cycling and walking policies will be presented within the draft Cycling and Walking Strategy.

Policy	Theme	Policy Description
We will deliver a high quality cycle network which ensures cycling is a safe and convenient mode	Infrastructure and Connectivity	<p>To achieve our cycling and walking vision, the development of a high quality cycling network is imperative. The Solihull Cycling Network will consist of three key elements</p> <p>Solihull Strategic Corridors - Largely made up of high quality cycle routes leading into Solihull Town Centre and key district centres</p> <p>Solihull Local Routes - Local access routes serving residential, education, leisure employment and rural areas and generally not on major highways</p> <p>Solihull Green Corridors - These are routes that are away from the highway network including the use of canals and parks in the borough</p>

<p>Cycle Infrastructure will meet West Midlands Design Guidance Standard (or local amendments if required)</p>	<p>Infrastructure and Connectivity</p>	<p>It will be important that cycle infrastructure delivered in Solihull meets the standards set out within the West Midlands Cycle Design Guidance where possible. We will seek to design schemes around the core 5 principles outlined below</p> <p>Safety - All cycle routes within the network will be designed with safety as the most important design principle</p> <p>Directness - We will seek to design routes which connect origin (where people travel from) and destination (where people travel to) using the least distance and least delay as possible</p> <p>Coherence - We will design routes to a consistent standard. The network will comprise of different types of routes, but the aim will be to provide continuous provision, with no 'gaps' at difficult locations.</p> <p>Attractiveness - Cycle routes will be designed to make them attractive options for potential users. We will do this by designing for all abilities, allowing for adequate width and reducing conflict with motorised vehicles</p> <p>Comfort – Routes will be designed to be physically comfortable with a high quality surface key to the overall design of the route.</p>
<p>Improve the walkability of Solihull. Improving connectivity and the public realm</p>	<p>Infrastructure and Connectivity</p>	<p>Moving forward as a borough, it is important that we increase our emphasis on designing around people not cars. Designing Solihull Town Centre and districts around people will lead to a healthier population and less congestion in Solihull,</p> <p>As part of new infrastructure projects we will consider the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making walking a priority – ensuring all users feel comfortable • Plan for walking at all stages –ensure that the needs of pedestrians is considered throughout the design and delivery process • Create a walking network - develop a network of pedestrian routes linking new developments to existing network • Design streets as places to enjoy – design the local network around people and not the car. Streets will be designed in a way to encourage people to travel on foot and places to stay and socialise.

<p>We will develop new awareness initiatives and capability programmes around new cycle and walking infrastructure</p>	<p>Enabling</p>	<p>As part of new cycle infrastructure, it will be imperative that we develop a range of awareness and capability programmes to maximise on the opportunities arising from high quality cycle infrastructure.</p> <p>We will develop a range of creative ideas and workshops with members of the public that promotes travelling by active modes. We will also provide widespread advertising on social media and local media alongside interactive public launch events to ensure visibility of new infrastructure.</p>
<p>We will work with local schools to provide Bikeability (level 1-3) to primary and secondary school children.</p>	<p>Enabling</p>	<p>Bikeability has been a great success in Solihull. In 2019/2020 we expect to deliver the programme to over 4,500 children. Moving forward, we want to build on the success of the Bikeability programme.</p> <p>As part of our partnership with local schools through the Bikeability programme, we will undertake the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will ensure cycle training is available to all schools within the borough from learn to ride through to advanced on road training. • Provide training such as maintenance skills which will provide children with the skills to maintain their own bike • Work with parents to build cycle confidence and address common perceived issues around cycling and walking that will result in their children cycling more
<p>Development proposals should incorporate appropriate safe and convenient access to walking and cycling routes, linking to the Solihull Cycling Network where possible.</p>	<p>Developments</p>	<p>Attractive and well-connected networks encourage more people to walk and cycle to local destinations. Increasing the uptake of active travel within new developments has a beneficial impact on health while reducing motor traffic, energy use and pollution.</p> <p>We expect developers to review their proposals against the principles of active travel provision within Manual for Streets. The following should also be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developments in Solihull should also align to the core principles of sustainable transport as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework; • Give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities; • Create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones; and • Consider the needs of people with disabilities by all modes of transport.

<p>High quality cycle parking and associated facilities such as changing, store and showers, should be considered as part of new developments</p>	<p>Developments</p>	<p>Cycle parking is a key component in encouraging people to cycle. Storing a bike in a convenient but secure location near the front door is a great way to make people use their bike automatically, particularly for short distance journeys.</p> <p>As part of new developments, developers are expected to consider the following when delivering cycle storage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenience – Storing a bike should be convenient therefore; cycle parking should be located near main entrances and easily accessible. • Security – High quality and secure stands are vital. It is important that the frame of the bike can be locked to a cycle stand which is clearly visible. Isolated stands can deter people from cycling. • Quantity – Developers should determine the sufficient levels of cycle parking for the number of residents or, for amenities such as shops/workplace, the likely number of visitors and employees • Space - There must be sufficient space for people to approach and leave the cycle parking easily. It must be easy for someone to locate their bike.
<p>Cycling and walking will be promoted through the new active travel page on the Solihull MBC website</p>	<p>Promotion</p>	<p>Promoting cycling and walking will start within our own media platforms. As part of the overall redevelopment of the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council website in 2020, we will develop a new Cycling and Walking Page which will a sub section of the Solihull Connected page. The cycling and walking page will including latest policy development, cycling and walking maps and information on local cycling and walking groups</p>
<p>We will promote local and national cycling and walking campaigns to provide greater coverage of active travel</p>	<p>Promotion</p>	<p>At a local, regional and national level, various cycling and walking campaigns take place across the UK to highlight the benefits of cycling and walking. Such campaigns have a great impact in promoting active travel and enables the message to reach a large audience.</p> <p>Our communications team will work closely with our sustainable transport team to identify and promote regional and national campaigns; we will use our various media platforms including the Solihull MBC website, Facebook and twitter accounts to promote campaigns and activities taking place across throughout the year. At a local level we will work with local schools and businesses to promote activities such as Bikeability and Cycle to Work programme.</p>

<p>Regular engagement with local residents to monitor transport trends</p>	<p>Monitoring and Funding</p>	<p>As our strategy evolves, it is important that we continue to engage with the local community to identify any changes to the way in which people travel. Regularly engaging with the local community will help to identify constraints and opportunities relating to travelling on foot or by bike. Through working with the local community, we can start to tailor our priorities based on local needs.</p> <p>As part of this strategy, we have engaged with the local community through public engagement events and online material including a cycling and walking survey. Over the coming years, we will continue to monitor transport behaviour through engaging with the local community through a variety of channels including online surveys and engagement events.</p>
<p>Develop a funding process to ensure delivery of cycle and walking infrastructure and associated programmes</p>	<p>Monitoring and Funding</p>	<p>To deliver our priority cycle routes and pedestrian improvements identified through the Solihull LCWIP, it is imperative that we continue to develop our schemes. Developing our schemes through the business case process will help us to be in pole position to attract funding at a local, national and regional level.</p> <p>To secure funding for cycle and walking infrastructure and associated programmes we will seek to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a consistent level of revenue and capital funding to support the delivery of this strategy (based on securing funding from regional and national funding programmes) • Review the utilisation and prioritisation of other funding sources such as developer contributions and central Government grants/allocations • Develop funding bids on a regular basis based on local to national funding opportunities.

2.6. Public Feedback

As part of public engagement exercise, please provide your feedback on the Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy through the Cycling and Walking Survey on the council website. A link to the survey can be found here <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Parking-travel-roads/SolihullConnected/Cycling-walking-strategy>

3. Solihull Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

3.1. Purpose of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (also known as LCWIPs) are a new, strategic approach that analyses local travel patterns to help identify where we should invest in cycling and walking infrastructure. The LCWIP process enables the identification of cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. The process enables a long-term approach to developing local cycling and walking networks, ideally over a 10-year period.

The purpose of the Solihull LCWIP is to:

- Analyse where people are currently cycling and walking and predict future demand based on growth forecasts in the borough;
- Identify a long term Cycling Network Plan – linking residential areas to major destinations including Solihull Town Centre and Railway Station and major employment sites;
- Identify eight key routes for cycling – these eight routes will be prioritised for funding; and
- Determine improvements to the pedestrian environment including access to Solihull Town Centre

3.2. LCWIP Process

The table below outlines the six stage process to the Solihull LCWIP (following national guidance) and what we are doing at each stage. As part of public engagement, we would appreciate your input across the six stages, particularly helping us to develop a network plan for cycling and helping to identify improvements within the 6 identified core walking zones

Table 3-1 - LCWIP Process

LCWIP Stage	Work to be Undertaken
1. Determining Scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The whole of Solihull Borough will be included within the study. • Determine the appropriate partners and local authority contacts to discuss cross boundary schemes.
2. Gathering Information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a policy review to ensure Solihull LCWIP aligns to national and regional policy. • Determine where people are currently cycling and walking. • Identify potential demand for cycling i.e. where we think people are likely to walk and cycle most in the future. • Hold a workshop with stakeholders to identify key opportunities and barriers for cycling and walking.

3. Network Planning for Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing provision for cycling. • Develop a network plan for cycling – linking major residential areas to major trip attractors e.g. employment, retail, leisure sites. • Identify a number of priority routes for possible future investment • Audit priority routes to determine improvements required
4. Network Planning for Walking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify six core walking zones where there is the most potential for increased and improved walking trips • Work with stakeholders to identify potential improvements including improving safety and reducing severance. • Audit of the six core walking zones – identifying opportunities to improve conditions for pedestrians
5. Route Prioritisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritisation of the audited cycle routes and six core walking zones will be completed following public consultation
6. Integrating and Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the completion of the Solihull LCWIP, the LCWIP report will be adopted as part of the Solihull Cycling and Walking Strategy. • The Cycling and Walking Strategy Delivery Plan will identify the funding required to deliver the routes and core walking zones improvements identified within the LCWIP

3.3. Key Findings to Date

As part of the LCWIP process, we have identified key corridors in Solihull with current demand for cyclists as well as identifying where people are likely to cycle in the future. The Propensity to Cycle tool developed by the Department for Transport has been used to identify where people are likely to cycle in the future using census data.

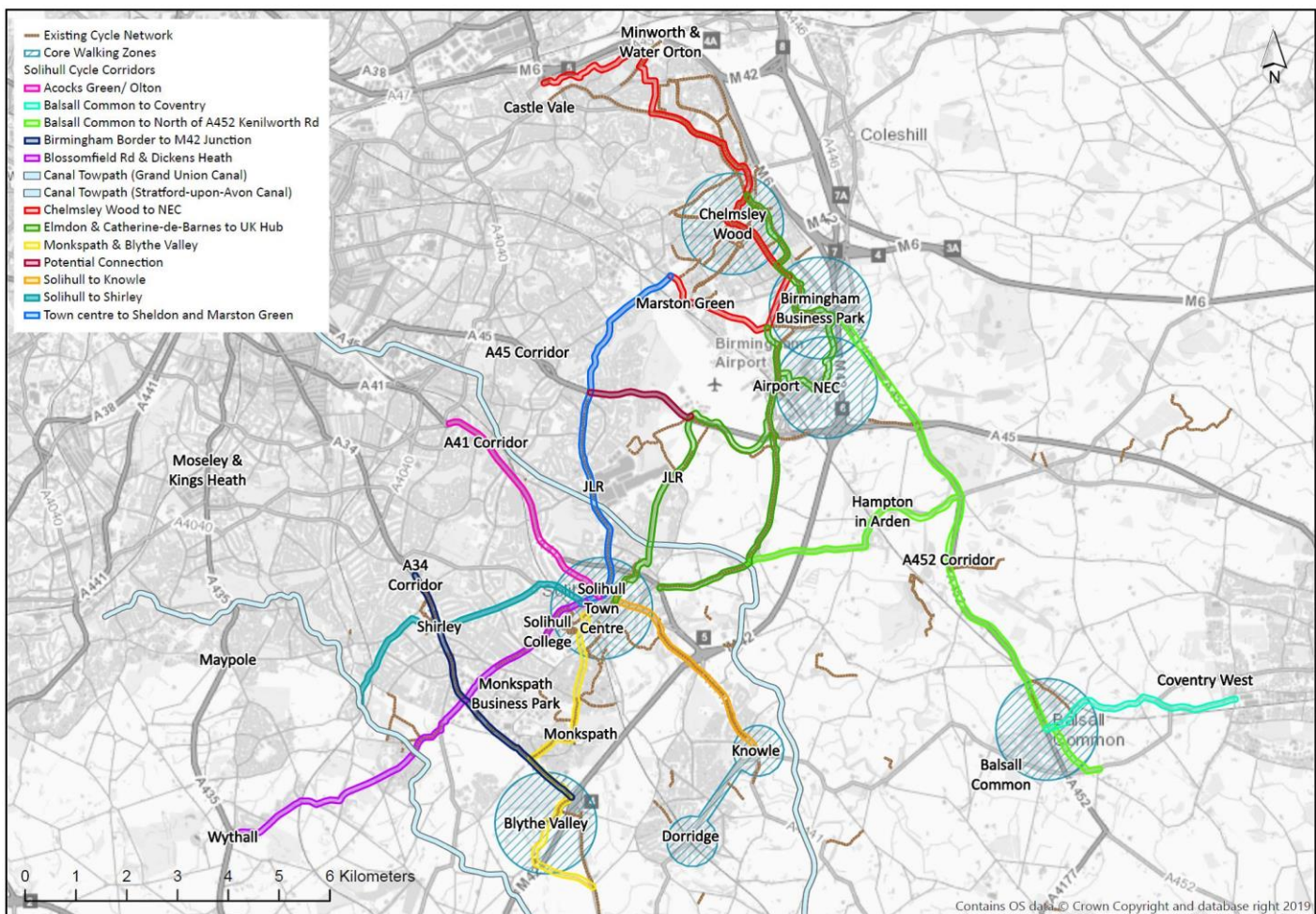
Using feedback from key stakeholders and the Propensity to Cycle Tool, the following corridors are proposed to form the Solihull Strategic Network: (i.e. Solihull Strategic Corridors).

- Acocks Green/Olton to Solihull
- Balsall Common to Coventry
- Balsall Common to UK Central (Regional LCWIP – A452 corridor)
- Birmingham Airport/NEC/Elmdon to Solihull (Damson Parkway and Bickenhill Lane)
- Blythe Valley/Monkspath to Solihull
- Castle Bromwich/Chelmsley Wood to Birmingham Airport/NEC (plus Marston Green connection)
- Dorridge/Knowle to Solihull
- Grand Union Canal Towpath (connections to Acocks Green, Catherine de Barnes and Knowle)
- Meriden/Hampton in Arden to Solihull

- Sheldon/Hatchford Brook to Birmingham Airport/NEC (A45 corridor)
- Sheldon (Solihull border) to Solihull (Lode Lane corridor)
- Shirley to Blythe Valley (A34 corridor)
- Solihull Lodge/Shirley to Solihull
- Stratford Canal towpath (Solihull Lodge, Dickens Heath, Shirley, Illshaw Heath)
- Wythall/Dickens Heath to Solihull
- Solihull Lodge/Shirley to Solihull

These corridors tend to link several locally important trip attractors along their length, and it is likely that many trips will be between places along the corridor (for example, passenger trips on a local bus or rail route) rather than end to end. The corridors above are spread across the Borough however; there is a focus on improving cycle connectivity into Solihull Town Centre.

The draft Solihull Strategic Cycle Network is presented below:



Following the identification of the strategic cycle network, eight of the routes were selected for audit in summer 2019. The initial eight were selected based on their current and future demand. The audit process explores the practicalities of developing infrastructure for cycling in each corridor and, in doing so, helps to inform the scale of capital works that will be required to make the necessary improvements. The aim of the audit is to identify how we can improve current provision for cyclists ensuring our borough is safe and convenient for all modes of travel.

The following key routes were selected for auditing

- Dickens Heath, Shirley to Solihull Town Centre
- Birmingham Airport/NEC/Elmdon to Solihull - Lode Lane/Damson Lane and Damson Parkway
- Birmingham Airport/NEC to Solihull via Bickenhill Lane and Catherine de Barnes
- Blythe Valley/Monkspath to Solihull (including local spur to Cheswick Green)
- Castle Bromwich/Chelmsley Wood to Birmingham Airport/NEC (plus Marston Green connection)
- A34 Shirley to Blythe Valley Park
- Sheldon (Hatchford Brook SMBC border) to Birmingham Airport/NEC (A45)
- Knowle to Solihull Town Centre

For walking, as part of the LCWIP process, six core walking zones were identified following an analysis of key trip attractors and identifying locations with high footfall currently.

The six core walking zones (CWZs) are:

- Solihull Town Centre
- Monkspath/Blythe Valley
- Shirley Town Centre/Solihull Retail Park
- Jaguar Land Rover site on Lode Lane
- Chelmsley Wood/Marston Green/Birmingham Business Park/NEC
- Balsall Common

A “Level of Service” audit has been undertaken to identify existing conditions and to develop interventions required within each CWZ. The results of the CWZs are currently being analysed and we anticipate to determine the interventions required shortly.

3.4. Concept Designs

As part of the LCWIP process, it is important to visualise how the network could look with high quality cycle infrastructure provided. Concept designs as shown below provide a much clearer idea of how we would like some of our major roads to be redesigned in the future.

The concept designs below present an example of high quality segregated infrastructure along Warwick Road connecting Knowle to Solihull Town Centre and a pedestrian and cycle priority crossing on Lode Lane. The concept designs are purely for illustrative purposes only. Further work on the strategic cycle corridors is required prior to determining detailed designs.

Figure 3-1 - Knowle to Solihull Town Centre



Figure 3-2 - Pedestrian and Cycle Crossing on Lode Lane



3.5. Next Steps

We are currently analysing the findings of the audits to determine the work required to improve conditions along the eight corridors audited. Once we have finalised the work required, we will determine the cost along each corridor. We will seek to provide the highest quality of cycle provision possible acknowledging that deliverability and impact on other modes of travel must be considered.

Following the audit process, we will undertake a prioritisation process to identify the top three cycle corridors in the borough. Once we have identified the three corridors we will move forward to develop these schemes further including developing a business case and detailed design for the corridors (dependent on securing funding)

We will continue to work on the remaining strategic cycle corridors identified within the Solihull Cycle Network. We anticipate undertaking further audits in summer 2020. We will continue to monitor future developments to ensure the cycle network is up to date and meets the current and future demands expected across the borough.

The results of the CWZs are currently being analysed and we anticipate determining the interventions required shortly. The interventions identified will be reviewed as part of new and existing infrastructure projects to improve the pedestrian environment.

It is also important that we focus on cycling and walking improvements in residential sites and routes that connect to key local services. We will also identify improvements that can be made in rural areas which will support short distance journeys made by cycling and walking. During the engagement process, we would welcome feedback on how we can improve rural connectivity and how we can improve links to the strategic corridors proposed.

We are aware that few rural links are shown on the network plan (as that is based on demand analysis using DfT propensity to cycle tool) but we certainly don't underestimate the value of those rural routes, particularly for leisure purposes and links to local services. Rural links will be added to the network plan following engagement with local residents.

3.6. Public Feedback

As part of public engagement exercise, please provide your feedback on the Solihull LCWIP through the Cycling and Walking Survey on the council website. A link to the survey can be found here <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Parking-travel-roads/SolihullConnected/Cycling-walking-strategy>