

# **Title of report: Herefordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan**

**Meeting: Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: Wednesday 8 November 2023**

**Report by: Geoff Pickford, Interim Head of Transportation and Parking**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards)

## **Purpose**

The report sets out the progress to date on the development of the Herefordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and seeks comments or recommendations on the plan before its completion in December 2023.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- a) **The scrutiny committee is asked to note progress to date on the development of the Herefordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and offer any comments or recommendations before the plan's completion in December 2023.**

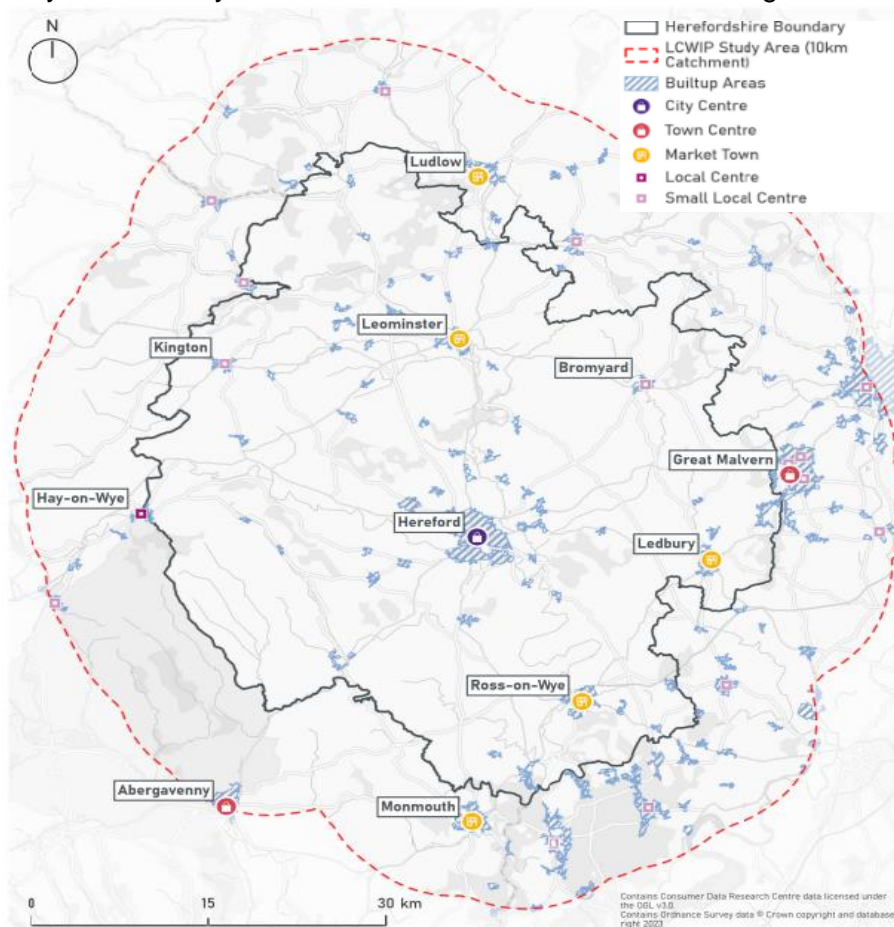
## **Alternative options**

1. Not to develop a countywide Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. This is not recommended, as Active Travel England (ATE) and the Department for Transport (DfT) have indicated that local authorities without an approved LCWIP will not be eligible to apply for future funding for active travel schemes.

## **Key considerations**

2. In 2017, the DfT published guidance on the development of LCWIPs. LCWIPs, as set out in the Government's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy, are a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements required at the local level. An LCWIP will provide the council with a prioritised list of active travel schemes that can be delivered over a three, five and 10 year period, as and when future funding opportunities arise.

3. Although LCWIPs are non-mandatory, both DfT and ATE have made it clear that local authorities without an LCWIP will either not be eligible to apply for future active travel funding, or will score badly in funding bid evaluations, and hence are unlikely to be successful for funding.
4. The development of the Hereford City Masterplan<sup>1</sup>, which was considered at the Cabinet meeting on 2 March 2023, includes proposals for improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure as part of the vision for the city. The methodology used to create the prioritised plan is in line with DfT and ATE guidance, effectively meaning that the masterplan contains the LCWIP which extends to the city boundary and identifies key links into the rest of the county.
5. No such LCWIP exists for the rest of the county. However, in February 2023, the council was granted £67,124 from ATE's Capability Fund, of which the majority was allocated to develop a countywide LCWIP. A smaller proportion was allocated for the purchase of an active travel sensor to monitor cycle flows on the newly constructed St Owen St contraflow scheme. Phil Jones Associates (PJA) was commissioned to develop the countywide LCWIP.
6. The creation of this county-wide LCWIP is closely aligned with the concepts presented in the city LCWIP. It aims to not only build upon its proposals, but seeks to expand and extend its impact by evaluating additional strategic routes for walking and cycling throughout the county. This approach acknowledges the significance of promoting walking and cycling beyond the boundaries of the city centre, reflecting a holistic and logical approach for Herefordshire. The project will continue to take full consideration of the proposals outlined within the city-wide LCWIP, creating a well-rounded plan for cycling and walking across the county.
7. According to DfT guidance, cycling can replace trips made by other transportation modes, especially the car, within a 10km radius. Therefore, even though the LCWIP covers the whole county, it is crucial to include a study area expanding 10km from the county boundary, reflecting the cross-border linkages with neighbouring counties such as Worcestershire and Powys. The study area and 10km catchment is shown in Figure 1 below.



<sup>1</sup> Draft Hereford City Masterplan <https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50108560/Appendix%201%20-%20Hereford%20City%20Masterplan%20a%20Vision%20for%20Our%20City%20in%202050%20Consultation%20Draft%20Spring%202023.pdf>

8. The commission to date, has followed the six stage process as set out in the DfT's 'LCWIP Technical Guidance for Local Authorities<sup>2</sup>' and comprises:
  - a. Stage 1 - Determining Scope
  - b. Stage 2 - Gathering Information
  - c. Stage 3 - Network Planning for Cycling
  - d. Stage 4 - Network Planning for Walking
  - e. Stage 5 - Prioritising Improvements
  - f. Stage 6 - Integration and Application
9. It is anticipated that, once complete, the LCWIP will sit under the Local Transport Plan as a supporting document, similar to that of the Highways Maintenance Plan and other plans and strategies.
10. The expected completion date of the LCWIP is December 2023. The LCWIP programme and progress at the time of writing the report are outlined below:

**Key**

	Completed
	In progress
	To be completed

	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023	August 2023	September 2023	October 2023	November 2023	December 2023
<b>Stage 1</b>								
<b>Stage 2</b>								
<b>Stage 3</b>								
<b>Stage 4</b>								
<b>Stage 5</b>								
<b>Stage 6</b>								

11. Following DfT guidance, Stages 1-3 have been completed and Stages 4 and 5 are currently underway. PJA have already begun the process of developing a prioritisation matrix for the walking and cycling routes, which will be refined and used to establish the priority order of routes. Additionally, stage 6 of the LCWIP process is "integration and application" which PJA has continuously been aligning with key local policies and plans throughout the project.
12. Progress to date on the development of the LCWIP has encompassed a number of key activities, outlined below.

<sup>2</sup> Department for Transport (DfT) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan: Technical Guidance for Local Authorities (April 2017) [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/908535/cycling-walking-infrastructure-technical-guidance-document.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908535/cycling-walking-infrastructure-technical-guidance-document.pdf)

13. Developing a case for change for Herefordshire comprises two elements:

- a. Ensuring that the LCWIP is aligned with ongoing projects and policies related to walking and cycling is crucial. Therefore, a comprehensive review of National and Local policies has been conducted, including:

National Policies

- i. Gear Change - A Bold Vision for cycling and walking
- ii. LTN 1/20
- iii. Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan - Technical Guidance for Local Authorities
- iv. National Planning Policy Framework
- v. Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS1 & 2)
- vi. De-carbonising transport: A better, greener Britain
- vii. National Model Design Code

Local Policies

- viii. Herefordshire Local Transport Plan
  - ix. Herefordshire Council County Plan (2020 – 2024)
  - x. Herefordshire Big Economic Plan
  - xi. Herefordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy
  - xii. Herefordshire Local Plan 2021 - 2041
  - xiii. Sustainable modes of travel to school
  - xiv. Herefordshire's Physical Activity Strategy
  - xv. Rights of Way Improvement Plan
  - xvi. Strategic Transport Plan (Midlands Connect)
- b. Assessing the baseline conditions for active travel, consisting of:
- i. Existing infrastructure and networks
  - ii. Walking and Cycling Isochrones (measured using existing infrastructure, the distances of 2km and 10km illustrate the reachable areas by walking and cycling).
  - iii. Indices of Multiple Deprivation
  - iv. Travel to work data
  - v. Air Quality
  - vi. Collision Data
  - vii. Population Density

14. The above analysis has contributed to forming an initial understanding of the current conditions for active travel throughout Herefordshire. This phase has proven essential in steering the direction of the countywide LCWIP.

15. Understanding current and potential future travel trends is crucial in the development of the LCWIP network to ensure it caters to local needs. To achieve this and facilitate the identification of travel patterns, a three-stage methodology has been adopted. This approach involves analysing the following types of trips:

a. Commuting

The Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) is a nationwide model that is used to identify where increases in the rates of cycling can be expected through the provision of better infrastructure. It uses Census 'Travel to Work' data and School travel data to assess trip distances, identifying where there may be scope for short journeys to be undertaken by cycling. This tool is recommended within the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan technical guidance to be used through the LCWIP process.

The PCT tool has a range of different scenarios that can be utilised to assess the potential for future cycling growth. To provide an ambitious, long-term outlook for cycling demand, the 'E-bike' scenario was used. This calculates the number of cyclists that could be witnessed if English commuters become as likely as Dutch commuters to cycle trips of particular lengths and hilliness, and assuming people have access to e-bikes for some longer and hillier trips. The results show that cycling across the county could see a significant rise if such change occurred across the county. Using the 'E-Bike' scenario provides an ambitious and longer-term outlook for cycling flows which is advantageous in network planning as it ensures that the LCWIP cycle network will provide for assumed future advances in Herefordshire's cycle network.

b. Leisure

Information about cycling and walking trips was collected using Strava data. This data was taken from the Strava Metro website. This platform collects data from individuals utilising the Strava app to document their cycling and walking trips throughout the county. This website offers valuable understanding of frequently used routes, travel behaviours, and utilisation trends in activities such as walking, running, and cycling. This resource is endorsed in the technical guidelines of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan as a recommended data source and contributes to informing choices regarding recreational journeys, providing a complementary perspective to the focus of the PCT data on commuting trips.

c. Everyday Trips

To reflect a full range of cycling and walking trips for the county, it is important to not solely rely on the PCT outputs (which is exclusive to commuting) and Strava (which may not reflect all local leisure journeys). This is recognised, and to overcome this, a third layer of analysis has been established which looks at 'everyday trips'. This analysis seeks to understand key walking and cycling trips from key origins (such as housing developments) to key trip attractors (such as villages, local centres, hospitals, supermarkets etc). Key connections of less than 2km (as per LCWIP guidance) were identified between key origins and destinations to identify everyday walking desire lines across the county, whilst desire lines between 5km and 20km were selected to identify potential cycling demand across the county.

16. The outputs from the Strava / PCT / Everyday Trips analysis were combined to provide a single overview of the combined demand identified by the three datasets. Given that each dataset focuses on a unique demand (i.e. PCT focuses on commuting, Strava focuses on leisure whilst everyday analysis focuses on utility trips), this combined analysis provides a more balanced approach to assessing potential demand for walking and cycling across the county, considering

commuting, recreation and utility trips. This helps to present a strategic demand network for walking and cycling across the county, informed by a robust, evidence-based assessment in line with DfT guidance.

17. As mentioned above, the project is at stages 4 and 5 and PJA are currently in the process of auditing key cycling and walking routes. This auditing process will determine the feasibility of desire routes identified through the combined demand analysis and their practical viability.
18. For cycling, PJA are using the Cycling Level of Service (CLOS) tool to assess cycling routes. This tool is separate from the route section tool cited in the LCWIP guidance, however, this tool has been deemed more appropriate as it is recommended within the DfT national cycling guidance LTN 1/20 to assess schemes. This tool will provide a more robust evidence base to recommend ambitious design interventions.
19. For walking routes, the Walking Route Audit Tool (WRAT) is being used to assess the current conditions and suitability of walking routes.
20. Key next steps following the auditing process include:
  - a. Prioritisation of routes for investment, to be determined by creating a prioritisation matrix;
  - b. Continued alignment with local plans, policies, strategies and in-flight projects; and
  - c. Wider stakeholder engagement

### **Community impact**

21. The LCWIP will improve and extend active travel options throughout the county, helping people to make healthy lifestyle choices and improving the overall mental and physical health and wellbeing of residents of all ages.

### **Environmental impact**

22. The LCWIP will help to deliver environmental objectives by:
  - a. Improving and extending active travel options throughout the county;
  - b. Increasing the number of short distance trips being made by walking and cycling; and
  - c. Improving air quality.

### **Equality duty**

23. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

  - a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
  - b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
  - c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
24. An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the LCWIP. This will be undertaken during Stage 6 of the project.

25. When consulting with the public and/or stakeholders, the Council will ensure that it meets its Public Sector Equality Duty by following its comprehensive internal guidance.

## Resource implications

26. The budget of £67,124 was allocated to the Council by Active Travel England (ATE) in February 2023.
27. Up to £60,000 of the budget will be spent on commissioning Phil Jones Associates (PJA) to develop the Countywide LCWIP. PJA has completed the City LCWIP for Herefordshire Council as part of the City Masterplan.
28. Up to £7,000 will be spent on purchasing a multi-modal sensor to monitor pedestrian movements over an initial 5 year period on the St Owen Street contraflow as part of ATE monitoring and evaluation requirements.
29. All procurement was carried out in line with Council's contract procedure rules.

Revenue cost of project	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Future Years	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Consultancy fees	0	60	0	0	60
Purchase of active travel sensor	0	7	0	0	7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>

Funding streams (indicate whether base budget / external / grant / capital borrowing)	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Future Years	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Active Travel England Capability Fund Grant	0	67	0	0	67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>67</b>

## Legal implications

30. Development of Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans is not a statutory requirement but the proposed framework for such plans is being promoted by DfT and other bodies via the publication of the April 2017 guidance note entitled *Department for Transport (DfT) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan: Technical Guidance for Local Authorities*. As indicated above, paragraph 2.4 of the technical guidance confirms that whilst the preparation of LCWIP is non-mandatory, it does improve the case for future investment.
31. This guidance identifies LCWIPs as a new strategic approach to identifying walking and cycling improvements at a local level and describes the key outputs as
- a network plan for walking and cycling which identifies preferred routes and core zones for further development
  - a prioritised programme of infrastructure improvements for future investment
  - a report which sets out the underlying analysis carried out and provides a narrative which supports the identified improvements and network
32. The guidance recommends that LCWIPs will need to be reviewed and updated every 4-5 years to reflect progress made with implementation, significant local circumstance changes or new sources of funding.

33. With respect to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, clarity on the extent of the definitions within the LCWIP will be important. For example, references to “walking” should explicitly include the use of wheelchairs, mobility scooters and other mobility aids and, similarly, that references to “cycling” should include the use of e-scooters, e-bikes and any other vehicle legally defined as a cycle under UK law to avoid potential breach of S.149.
34. Incorporation of the LCWIP as a supporting planning document is consistent with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework in relation to sustainable development and should provide greater clarity in relation to future travel plans/proposals, planning decisions and the appropriate amount and type of financial contributions required under Section 106 planning agreements.

## Risk management

35. The following risks and mitigation proposals have been identified:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Any delay to completion of the LCWIP may result in the council not being eligible to apply for the next tranche of ATE Active Travel Fund and the Capability Fund meaning current or future active travel schemes are at risk of not being able to be progressed or completed.	PJA consultants have been commissioned to develop and deliver the LCWIP. The PMO team are managing the project to ensure it is completed within time and budget.
There is a risk that various stakeholders will request prioritisation of their schemes above others across the county	The LCWIP is a data-driven plan which ensures schemes are prioritised based on their ability to deliver the councils active travel and wider transport and environmental objectives, and offer value for money.

## Consultees

36. The development of the LCWIP will involve wider stakeholder engagement. Consultation will be coordinated to ensure alignment with the development of the Local Transport Plan as appropriate.

## Appendices

None

## Background papers

None identified

## Report reviewers used for appraising this report:

Governance	Ben Baugh	Date 01/09/2023
Finance	Wendy Pickering	Date 31/08/2023
Legal	Marc Sorrentino	Date 29/08/2023
Communications	Rory O’Rafferty	Date 30/08/2023
Equality Duty	Harriet Yellin	Date 29/08/2023
Procurement	Carrie Deeley	Date 01/09/2023
Risk	Kevin Lloyd	Date 23/08/2023
Approved by	Ross Cook	Date 11/09/2023



## **Glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report:**

ATE	Active Travel England
DfT	Department for Transport
HCMP	Hereford City Masterplan
LCWIP	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
PCT	Propensity to Cycle Tool
PJA	Phil Jones Associates
PMO	Programme Management Office
RST	Route Selection Tool
WRAT	Walking Route Selection Tool