Somerset Council

Wellington Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Autumn 2024

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1 Introduction

1.1 What are Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)?

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) are focused, 10-year plans to develop a safe walking, wheeling and cycling networks within a local area. LCWIPs contain plans showing routes and core zones where investment will be targeted, an indicative programme for the improvements and explain the process followed to identify the network and improvements.

'Wheeling' is an emerging term to refer to journeys made by wheelchair and mobility scooter users. The term 'cycling' includes the use of bicycles, electric power-assisted cycles (e-bikes), hand cycles or other adapted cycles for disabled people, cargo bikes, recumbents, tandems, tricycles and bikes with trailers.

Walking, wheeling and cycling are often collectively referred to as "active travel" - this phrase is used throughout this document.

The concept of LCWIPs was introduced in the government's 2017 Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS). Gear Change followed in 2020, and this set out a bold vision for cycling and walking in England, whereby *"cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030."* In summer 2024 the new government indicated that active travel will be an essential part of its National Integrated Transport Strategy.

LCWIPs provide a local approach to identifying active travel improvements that will help deliver the government's vision and targets. The infrastructure improvements identified will then be taken forward for design, consultation and delivery as funding allows.

LCWIPs are important for a number of reasons, including because:

- They set out infrastructure plans for active travel in specific geographical areas;
- They support the achievement of a very wide range of national, regional and local plans, policies and strategies;
- Government expects councils to have a pipeline of deliverable and evidence-led active travel schemes ready to be submitted for funding bids; and
- Funding from government to local authorities for active travel infrastructure investment has increasingly been tied to the preparation of LCWIPs.

1.2 Somerset's Transport Vision

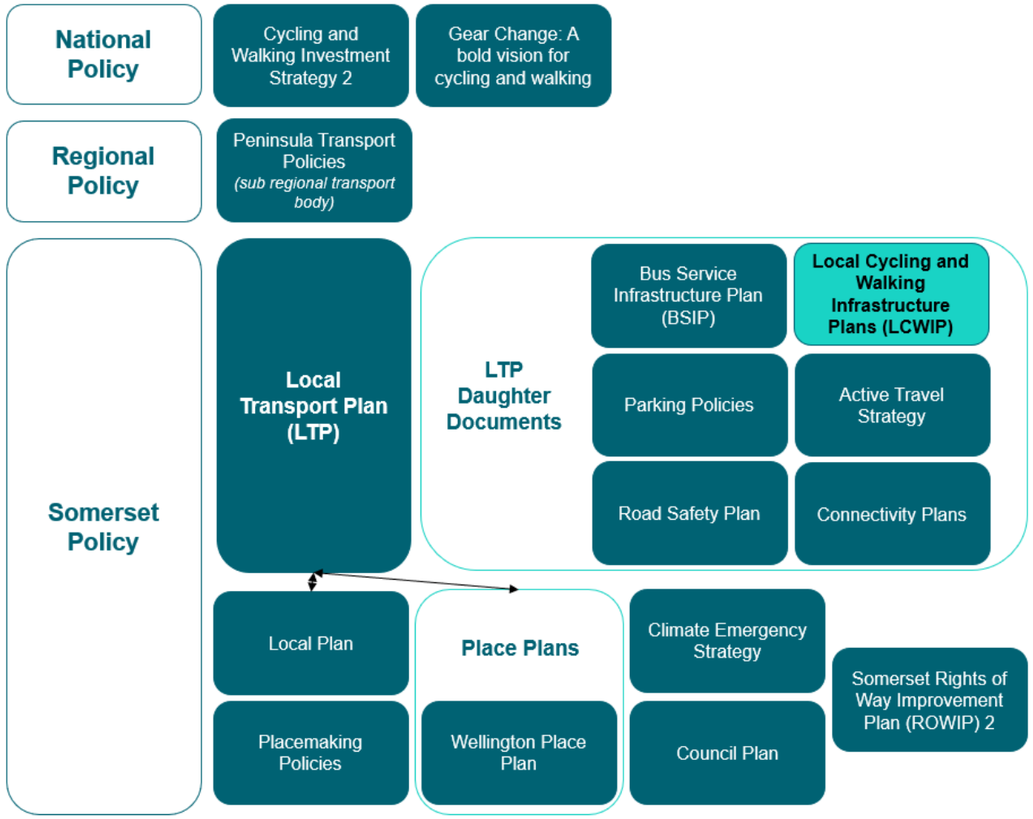
Somerset Council's new vision for transport is set out in the draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) and is built around four themes and associated objectives, shown in Figure 1 below.

Enabling more active travel is central to the county's vision for transport, cutting across multiple themes and objectives, and will be at the heart of the Council's decision-making.

Figure 1 – Somerset's Vision for Transport in the Draft Local Transport Plan

LCWIPs will be a key way of delivering Somerset Council's ambition for better walking, wheeling and cycling networks in the county. The diagram in Figure 2 shows how the county's LCWIPs fit into the wider policy and strategy picture.

Figure 2 – Diagram showing LCWIPs and related policies and strategies



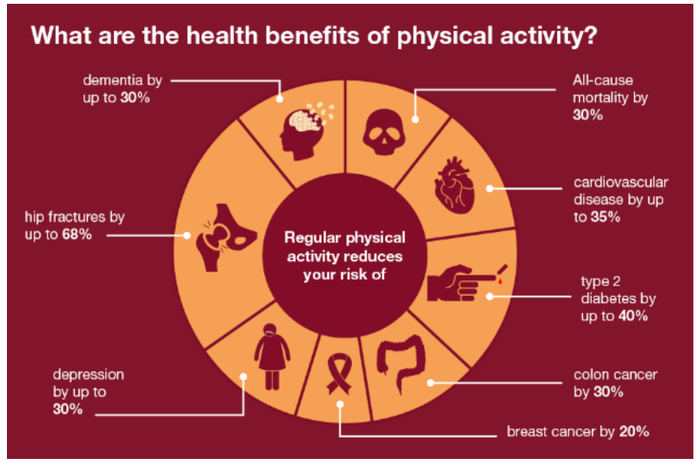
The Wellington LWCIP will be a supporting document to the LTP, providing local detail and identifying the infrastructure improvements to achieve the LTP objectives. It will provide evidence to inform the preparation of the new Somerset Local Plan, which the Council is planning to have in place by 2028. Expanding LCWIP coverage is also an action in Somerset's Climate Emergency Strategy.

1.3 Active travel benefits everyone

Walking, wheeling and cycling more often, for whatever purpose, directly benefits us in a number of ways, particularly:

- **Improving our health and wellbeing** – The health benefits of walking, wheeling and cycling journeys cannot be overestimated. It is one of the easiest and most effective ways to introduce more physical activity into everyday life. It makes us fitter and healthier, and helps us live longer with shorter periods of ill health (see Figure 3). It also has positive effects on mental health;

Figure 3 – Health benefits of physical activity



Source: Physical activity: applying all our health

- **Providing independence and choice** – well-designed, safe active travel infrastructure enables more people to travel independently without needing a car for journeys or relying on others for transport. This particularly benefits children, older adults, disabled people, and households on lower incomes; and
- **Saves us money and often more convenient** – Walking, wheeling and cycling are affordable options for making short distance trips.

1.4 Active travel investment helps us solve 'big picture' problems

At a wider level, investing in, and enabling more, active travel will also contribute to addressing some of the County's and UK's major problems, including those listed below:

- **Addressing road safety issues** – Creating safer streets is at the heart of active travel investment. Government surveys indicate that safety concerns are the main reason people are discouraged from cycling (48% of respondents), and safer roads was the most popular factor that would encourage people to cycle more, chosen by 61% of respondents.
- **Boosting the economy** – Safe walking and cycling networks enable people to access jobs, and travel to local shops and businesses in their community. Case studies show that investment in walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure and streetscape enhancements can generate as much as a 40% extra footfall. Attractive places to walk, wheel and cycle leads to more active travel for leisure, which supports the visitor and tourism economy;
- **Combating climate change** – Making more journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling (and public transport) is one of the most cost-effective ways of reducing carbon

emissions from transport and contributing to achieving our local, national and international climate commitments;

- **Enhancing local environments** – Active travel investment brings opportunities to increase tree planting and greenery, enhance biodiversity and upgrade public spaces in our neighbourhoods and communities. Walking, wheeling and cycling are 'low emission' modes, helping to achieve clean air and quieter streets, and avoid the negative impacts which can be generated by motor vehicles;
- **Supporting the NHS** – Active travel enables people to manage, or prevent, a wide range of chronic health conditions. It therefore reduces the pressure on the NHS, with fewer GP and hospital appointments required; and
- **Tackling traffic congestion and traffic growth** – 'Business as usual' would see traffic congestion continue to worsen, especially with new development. Creating safe conditions for making short distance journeys by walking, wheeling and cycling, or linking with public transport for longer journeys, enables more people to use their cars less, and in turn reduce car parking pressure at destinations.

1.5 The potential for active travel in Wellington

Many walking journeys, and more limited levels of cycling, currently take place in and around Wellington at present. Comprehensive data on local active travel is not available for all journey purposes; however, information is available for travel to school and to work. Summary information is set out below, with additional detail in **Appendix B** (Summary of LCWIP data and evidence):

- 18% of Wellington's residents who commuted to a usual workplace usually walked to work whilst 4% typically commuted by bicycle; and
- 73% of children attending Wellington state schools walked to school and 4% cycled.

However, there is significant potential for many more journeys to be made by active travel modes:

- A government forecasting tool (the Propensity to Cycle Tool) suggests that, in the most ambitious scenarios, and if safe and suitable networks were in place, there is the potential for:
  - up to 36% of journeys to work by Wellington residents to be walked or cycled; and
  - up to 83% of Wellington schoolchildren to walk or cycle to school.
- Reopening a railway station for Wellington is a key opportunity for the town and surrounding area. With suitable infrastructure and services, public transport can be important in supporting active travel, and in turn, active travel can enable people to access public transport. Accessing public transport in this way is sometimes known as 'first mile, last mile journeys'.

According to the 2023 National Travel Survey statistics, around 25% of trips made by English residents are under 1 mile (1.6km) and more than two thirds are less than 5 miles (8km). Across England as a whole, 61% of trips under 5 miles (8km) were made by car. Wellington is relatively compact, being 2.5 miles (4km) east to west from Rockwell Green to Chelston and around 1.9 miles (3km) north to south from Tonedale to the A38. Therefore, many journeys within Wellington are distances that could be walked or cycled by many people, if safe and suitable routes were in place.

Many town destinations are within 1 mile (1.6km) of people's homes and the majority of people are within a 1 mile (1.6km) walk of the town centre. These are distances which many people can easily walk, if the routes are safe, inclusive, direct and attractive.

All parts of Wellington are within 3 miles (4.8km) of each other, a journey length which can be easily cycled by many people if the conditions were suitable. Additionally, some communities surrounding Wellington are also within comfortable cycling distance.

1.6 Good design for walking, wheeling and cycling

To enable people to feel confident to choose to walk, wheel and cycle for their journeys, accessible, good-quality and safe infrastructure needs to be in place. That means:

- Ensuring our streets, footways and paths are designed for people of all ages – from 8 to 80 and beyond – and all abilities to move around;
- Creating routes that people from all walks of life can access and feel safe and comfortable to use;
- Designing for people using wheelchairs, mobility scooters, and non-standard cycles such tricycles and e-cargo bikes; and
- Considering different perceptions of safety.

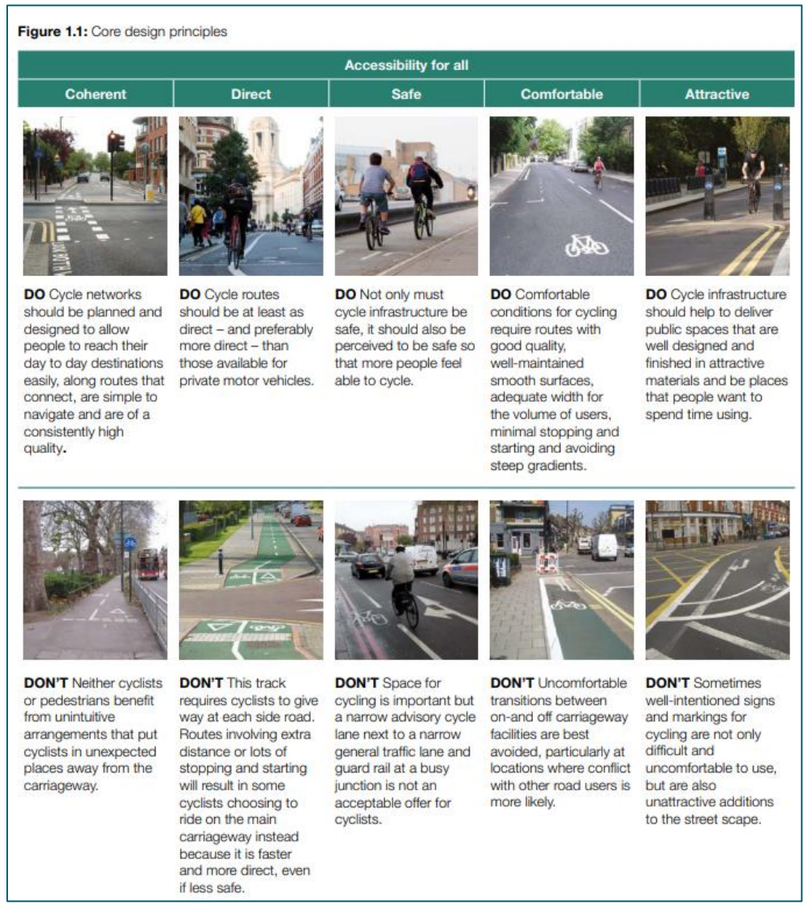
To achieve good design, the government has published guidance documents on planning and designing for active travel including:

- Local Transport Note 1/20 - Cycle Infrastructure Design (2020);
- Inclusive Mobility - A Guide to Best Practice on Access to Pedestrian and Transport Infrastructure (2021); and
- Manual for Streets 1 (2007) and 2 (2010).

In addition the government has set up Active Travel England, a new executive agency is tasked with raising infrastructure design standards, review major planning applications and fund high-quality schemes. Chris Boardman OBE is appointed as the first National Active Travel Commissioner.

A key part of the guidance documents are core design principles, which represent the essential requirements to achieve more people walking, wheeling and cycling. Figure 4 replicates the core design principles from Local Transport Note 1/20.

Figure 4 – Core Design Principles for Cycling from Local Transport Note 1/20



1.7 Key types of infrastructure and solutions

A selection of the infrastructure or solutions likely to be required to create suitable walking, wheeling and cycling routes are described below. In every case, detailed design, engagement and consultation will be required in order to identify the most appropriate scheme.

Crossings

Providing safe crossings enables people to cross roads, particularly those with fast vehicle speeds or high traffic flows. Crossings can link together parts of the active travel network and reduce severance. They are designed to prioritise people walking, wheeling and cycling. Zebra, parallel or signalised crossings (sometimes collectively referred to as 'controlled crossings') can be used depending on the volume of traffic and location.

Figure 5 – Example of a parallel crossing

Footway improvements

A range of improvements can be made to ensure that walking and wheeling routes are safe, accessible and can be used by everyone. This can include footway widening, completing missing sections in the footway network, improving surface quality, tackling potholes and defects, and consistently providing dropped kerbs and tactile paving.

Junctions

Redesigned side road junctions can reduce the distance people walking, wheeling and cycling have to cross, enhance safety by reducing the speeds of turning vehicles, and emphasise pedestrian priority, in line with the revised Highway Code rules. Solutions can also include raising the crossings to be at the same level as the footway, and setting back the vehicle give way lines (sometimes known as 'continuous footways').

Figure 6 – Example of redesigned side road junction

Cycle Tracks

A cycle track involves providing dedicated space for cycling alongside roads. This is particularly important to protect people cycling from high speed and/or high flows of motor traffic. Cycle tracks can be segregated or shared (with people walking and wheeling), depending on the numbers of trips being made.

Figure 7 – Example of cycle track and separate footway

Traffic Free Routes

Traffic free routes can be created by upgrading existing Public Rights of Way or creating routes away from the highway. This could include upgrading lighting, and/or improving the path quality and width to make it usable year-round and by all users.

Speed limits and traffic management

A range of measures can be implemented to help ensure that people drive at appropriate speeds and make streets safer and more pleasant for walking, wheeling and cycling journeys. Changes to traffic regulations (such as lower speed limits, including 20mph limits and zones) and to the physical street environment may be required in combination to achieve this.

Changes to the speed limits need to align with Somerset Council's position on setting speed limits. Physical changes to the street can include kerbed build-outs, road humps, and chicanes. It can also include planters, tree planting and removing central white line road markings as means of more naturally calming traffic speeds.

Measures to prevent through-traffic on certain streets (whilst retaining local access) may be appropriate in places, to create routes which are safer for walking, wheeling and particularly cycling. This can be achieved by using planters, bollards or sometimes cameras.

Figure 8 – Example of measures to prevent through motor traffic on local street

Supporting measures

There are a range of other measures to help reach the full potential of walking, wheeling and cycling, and ensure that active travel routes meet the core design outcomes of being coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive. Measures to be considered include the following:

- Benches and seating – to allow people to rest on their journeys and extend the distance they are comfortable travelling;
- Cycle parking – convenient and secure parking for all types of cycle at destinations, as well as cycle hangars, which are covered, lockable, secure pods providing cycle parking in residential areas for people who do not have space at home to park bikes.
- Lighting – providing lighting increases a sense of personal security and helps support year-round utility journeys. Depending on the location and circumstances, options include low-level lighting on bollards, solar-powered studs, lighting only between certain times, or installations activated by the presence of people walking, wheeling or cycling;
- School Streets – these are temporary restrictions on motorised traffic on roads outside of schools, at drop-off and pick-up times, to enhance pupil safety and support active travel for the school run. Further information is available on the Somerset Activity and Sports Partnership website;
- Trees and planting – as well as their traffic speed reduction role, trees and planting enhance the attractiveness of routes, provide shade and shelter, and help limit flooding. Parklets can be installed on-street in town centres and other suitable locations with a combination of seating, planting and cycle parking. Sometimes the parklets can provide outdoor seating for local food and drink businesses; and
- Wayfinding – clear and consistent signs and road markings help people navigate, particularly to and from traffic-free routes. They can also promote general awareness of a route. Wayfinding information can, for example, include destination and distance information.

1.8 How the LCWIP was prepared

The Wellington LCWIP was developed in line with government guidance in LCWIPs Technical Guidance for Local Authorities and information in other documents, including Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design. The LCWIP has been shaped by data analysis and engagement with and inputs from Wellington Town Council and the Wellington Wheelers group. The Wheelers undertook assessments of routes and provided input on local aspirations and suggested improvements.

A summary of how the LCWIP was prepared, who was involved, and the six-stage process followed is set out in Appendix A.

Appendix B provides a summary of the information gathered and used to develop the LCWIP.

We also welcome ideas and feedback to help us reflect the local needs and desires. If you wish to comment or put forward suggestions, please email transportpolicy@somerset.gov.uk.

2 Objectives, scope and timescales

2.1 LCWIP objectives

The Wellington LCWIP will contribute at a local level to the achievement of the seven objectives set out by Somerset Council for all LCWIPs in the county. These objectives are to:

- Have evidence and plans in place to allow quick but detailed development of funding opportunities;
- Help deliver government targets by providing infrastructure that enables more walking, wheeling and cycling, particularly for shorter journeys;
- Help deliver other local plans, policies, and strategies, including Somerset's Climate Emergency Strategy;
- Improve current walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure to ensure routes are accessible for all, better quality, connected and safe;
- Improve the health and wellbeing of residents by providing the opportunity to make journeys by active travel modes;
- Inform planners and developers about the intended walking, wheeling and cycling networks to ensure wider connections and integration; and
- Provide the foundation for making longer-term improvements to walking, wheeling and cycling links to and from surrounding settlements.

2.2 LCWIP geographic scope and timescales

The Wellington LCWIP focuses on trips made to and from locations within Wellington and Rockwell Green. The plan identifies active travel routes connecting some of the important journey origins and destinations in the town. Whilst recreational or leisure trips (i.e. no destination) are not the focus of the LCWIP more of these journeys may be encouraged by the identified improvements.

2.3 Timescales

This first version of the LCWIP outlines routes for improvement and covers a 10 year period (2024-2034), in line with government's Technical Guidance. However, the Council intends to review and revise the LCWIP in the following ways:

- Identify a network of walking, wheeling and cycling routes covering the whole town, rather than just the routes shown in this version;
- Plan for a comprehensive network of walking, wheeling and cycling routes to access the proposed new rail station;
- Include routes to, and improvements for, connections to nearby settlements; and
- Take account of any new national guidance and new local policies, such as the LTP when adopted.

3 Context and key issues

3.1 Town context

Wellington is a fast-growing market town close to the western county boundary with a population in 2021 of around 16,700 people. The town has a range of employment, schools, shops and services. Whilst many of these destinations are clustered in the town centre, significant employment is also located at Chelston and north of the town centre adjacent to the railway line.

Wellington is located close to strategic transport networks. The M5 motorway is located around 0.6 miles (1km) from the southern edge of the town. The Great Western Mainline runs through the town and plans are advancing to reopen a railway station to serve the town. The National Cycle Network follows a combination of roads and traffic-free paths, and routes are waymarked with blue and red signs. Route 3 (The Westcountry Way) runs a short distance to the north of the town through Nynehead and Langford Budville.

Beyond Wellington, Taunton is a key destination for many journeys, including for leisure and shopping, to college and the major hospital (Musgrove Park Hospital). The journey distance is around 6.8 miles (11km) between the two town centres, but only 3.1 miles (5km) between the Chelston and Comeytrowe roundabouts, and there is a local ambition to provide a quality active travel route between the two towns.

Residents of smaller settlements surrounding Wellington, such as Bradford-on-Tone, Langford Budville, Sampford Arundel and West Buckland, make journeys to the town to access facilities and services located there. Whilst links to these nearby communities are not directly included in this first version of the LCWIP, the intention is for these to be contained in future active travel plans.

Figure 9 shows the LCWIP area in relation to neighbouring settlements and key transport links.

3.2 Town vision

Somerset Council adopted the Wellington Place Plan in March 2023. This sets a vision for Wellington to be easily accessible, with walking, cycling and bus services, creating safe and easy connections between the town centre, community facilities, neighbourhoods, the proposed new railway station and beyond to Taunton.

Community engagement about the Place Plan found that sustainable transport is the highest priority among local people, as a means of achieving a more sustainable town, reaping the benefits for the environment, town centre experience and health.

Figure 9 – Wellington LCWIP Strategic Context

3.3 Key issues and opportunities

A reopened railway station

Reopening a railway station for Wellington is a key ambition for the town and surrounding area. The new station is proposed to be located to the north-west of the Lidl supermarket, off Nynehead Road. It is part of a wider project to create a Devon and Somerset Metro rail network, and will create public transport connections to key destinations including Exeter, Taunton, Bridgwater and onwards to Bristol.

The aim is for local residents to be able to reach the station as easily as possible by walking, wheeling, cycling and bus, as well as having access for cars and taxis. A planned new active travel route to the station from Taunton Road (close to the Lillebonne Way roundabout) will provide a direct connection to and from the town centre.

Space constraints

As a historic market town, the existing road network in many parts of Wellington comprises narrow streets with pinch points, narrow footways, or in some locations no footways at all. There are limited route options for motor traffic, including HGV access, to travel across or through the town. Therefore, the available streetspace needs to accommodate a range of transport modes, and this can make it challenging to provide quality infrastructure for active travel.

Road network and traffic flows

Many of Wellington's main roads radiate out from the town centre crossroads at the Iron Duke pub, where Fore Street, High Street, North Street and South Streets meet. One road corridor runs north-east to south-west through the town centre, along Taunton Road – High Street - Fore Street – Mantle Street – Exeter Road. The other corridor runs broadly north-west to south-east along Milverton Road – Station Road – Waterloo Road – North Street – South Street. The A38 runs to the south of the built-up area, and meets Taunton Road at the Chelston Roundabout, and Exeter Road at a roundabout west of Rockwell Green.

Whilst there are many residential roads with low traffic flows, the main roads through the town have much higher levels of traffic. For example, data indicates that in 2017 Station Road has an average of around 4,900 vehicle movements per day and in 2019 Taunton Road near Chelston had around 14,800 vehicle movements per day. These levels of motor traffic dissuade most people from cycling.

Existing active travel infrastructure

The town currently has two zebra crossings, plus signal crossings at three crossroads in the town centre and Rockwell Green (see Figure B- in Appendix B). However, there are many other sections of busy road without signal or zebra crossing points, such as along the whole of Taunton Road. The town has some sections of cycle tracks separated from motor traffic, such as on parts of Taunton Road, between Chelston Roundabout and Nynehead Road. However, these are limited in extent and pre-date the government's design standards set out in Local Transport Note 1/20.

National Cycle Network Route 3 follows rural lanes to the north of the town. However, at present, the town is poorly connected to this cycle route.

Topography

The lowest and highest points of Wellington are separated by a 50-metre height difference. The use of e-bikes and (subject to a change in the law) e-scooters offer ways of overcoming gradient issues and encouraging more people to make shorter trips without using the car.

3.4 Planning applications and new development

There are a number of developments in the pipeline in and around Wellington, which will increase the population and commercial activity in the town. For example, homes and employment are planned on the land between Taunton Road and the location of the new rail station.

The Council's new Local Plan will, amongst other things, allocate sites for new homes and employment and plan for the associated infrastructure required to serve major development areas. The proposed active travel networks in the LCWIP are intended to connect and serve both existing and future residential and employment areas and key facilities. The LCWIP will be closely integrated into the new Local Plan. The active travel schemes from the LCWIP are proposed to be included in Local Plan's Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

The Wellington Place Plan makes it clear that any development should be located in the correct place in the town and should embody and enhance the following six principles:

- An accessible place;
- A town rooted in its setting;
- Celebrating our industrial and commercial heritage;
- A high bar for sustainability;
- A welcoming town and centre; and
- A resilient town.

There is opportunity to ensure Wellington's future strategic developments are located to enable active travel and sustainable lifestyles, with shops and services within easy walking, wheeling or cycling distance. To this end the Place Plan separates the town into three areas; Tier one (more suitable), Tier two (suitable, subject to further detailed studies), Tier 3 (less suitable).

It will be critical to ensure future developments are connected with safe and high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling routes to enable new residents to make local journeys without needing the car. In addition, care must be taken to avoid developments increasing traffic volumes that in turn discourages active travel.

Since June 2023 all Local Planning Authorities, including Somerset Council, must consult the government agency Active Travel England on certain types of large planning applications. Active Travel England are now consulted on developments which are least 150 housing units, 7,500sqm of floorspace or 5 hectares in size, or larger. This ensures they can influence key planning applications at the earliest possible stage, so that travel choices can be designed into new developments from day one.

4 Active travel routes

4.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies the active travel routes identified for improvement in Wellington. It summarises why they have been chosen, what the current issues are, and the likely type of improvements needed to enable people to walk, wheel and cycle safely and confidently. Many of the required improvements are likely to be similar for each route.

Figure 10 – Wellington LCWIP Active Travel Routes for Development

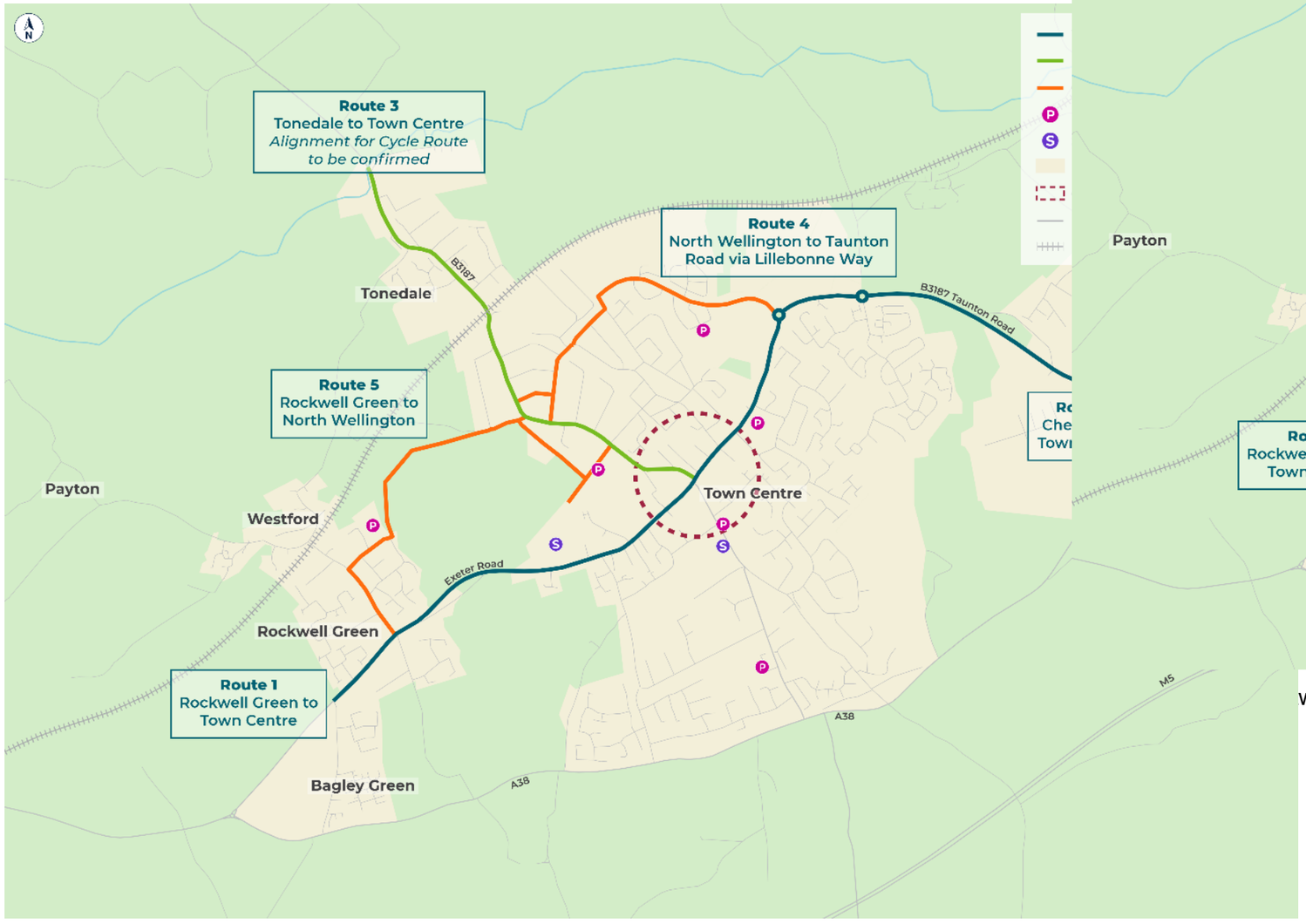
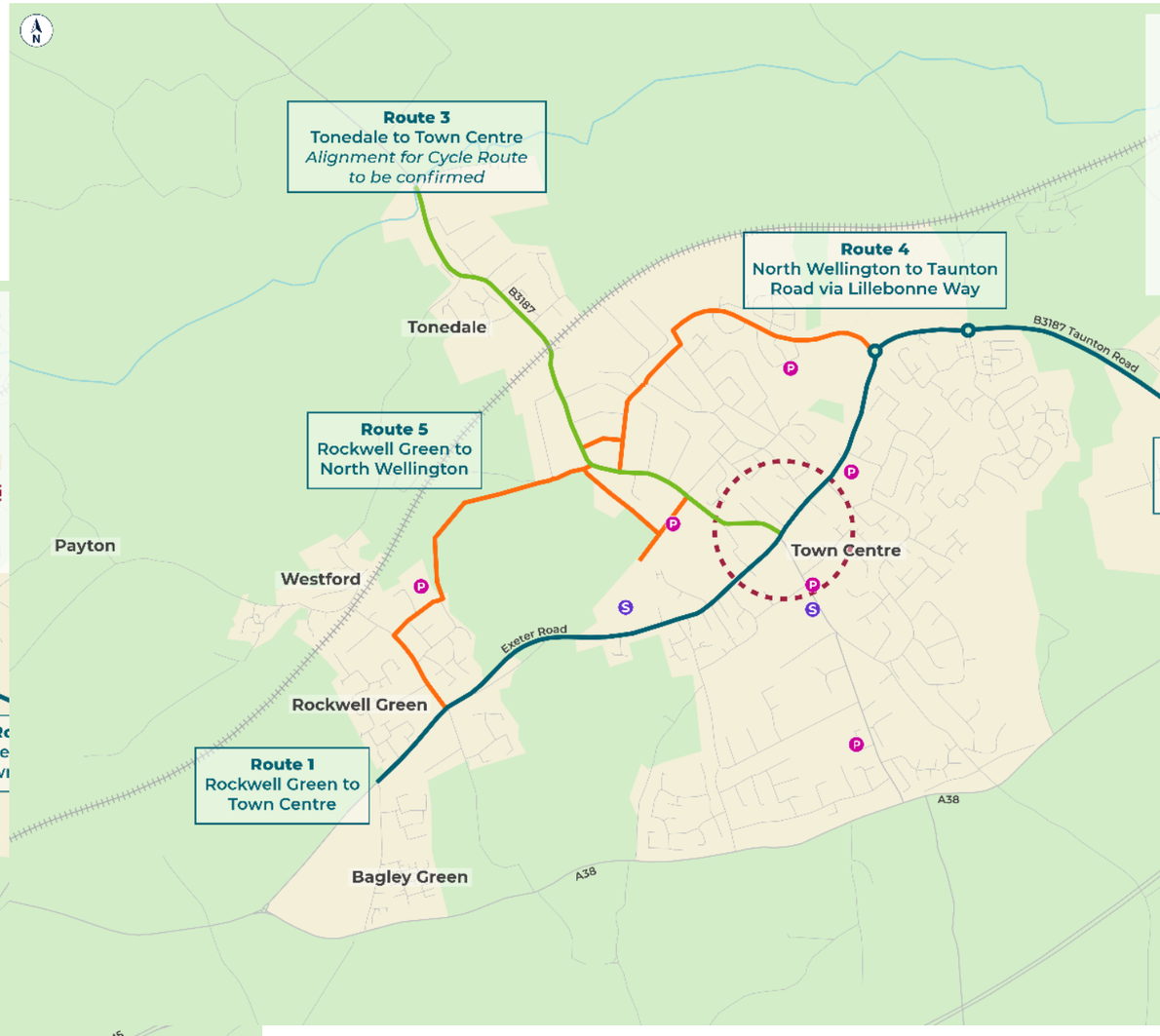


Figure 10



work of active travel routes for improvement in the town.

The active travel routes are listed below:

- A Core Walking Zone covering the town centre, as a focus for infrastructure improvements to benefit walking and wheeling journeys;
- Route 1: Rockwell Green to the town centre;
- Route 2: Chelston to the town centre;
- Route 3: Tonedale to the town centre;
- Route 4: North Wellington to Taunton Road via Lillebonne Way; and
- Route 5: Rockwell Green to North Wellington.

A brief commentary is set out below about each route, why it was selected, the key issues which will need to be addressed, and the key potential improvements. No decision has been made at this stage about the proposed improvements, and each proposal will require detailed design, engagement and consultation in order to determine the scheme to be delivered.

Appendix B sets out the Summary of Evidence for the LCWIP. This includes plans showing the key origins and destinations for journeys within the town, including employment facilities, schools and healthcare sites, existing cycling infrastructure, and key physical barriers to active travel.

4.2 Town Centre Core Walking Zone

- **Where**: The Core Walking Zone covers the walking and wheeling routes in the town centre, including Fore Street, High Street, North Street and South Street, as well as connections to Asda and Waitrose.
- **Why:** The town centre is home to a large number of destinations for walking and wheeling journeys, including shops and businesses, cafes, pubs and restaurants.
- **Key issues:** The town centre has narrow footways in many places, and there are steps and a section of missing footway at the rear of the Iron Duke. Footways cross busy side roads and accesses without infrastructure to emphasise pedestrian priority. Not all arms of the signal junctions have signal crossings and there are no signal or zebra crossings west of the Iron Duke along Fore Street and Mantle Street.
- **Summary of potential improvements:**
  - Measures to ensure low traffic speeds and support safe walking and wheeling journeys, such as 20mph limits, traffic calming, street redesign and features including planting.
  - Redesign side road and accessway crossings to enable safer walking and wheeling movements and emphasise pedestrian priority.
  - Identify additional locations for improved crossings on Fore Street and Mantle Street. Redesign and upgrade signal junctions to provide direct crossings for people walking and wheeling on as many arms of the junction as possible.
  - Identify locations for footway widening.
  - Redesign area on North Street to the rear of the Iron Duke to provide continuous footway provision as a means of avoiding the steps.
  - Consider opportunities to provide locations for outdoor seating to be used by food and drink businesses.

4.3 Route 1 - Rockwell Green to the town centre

- **Where**: This route runs west to east along Exeter Road, Mantle Street and Fore Street.
- **Why**: It links key residential areas in the west of Wellington to the town facilities, including Court Fields School and the medical centre on Mantle Street.
- **Key issues**: The route currently has a 30mph speed limit, high traffic flows and limited sections of painted cycle lanes, which do not provide protection from motor vehicles. There are no zebra or signal crossings between the traffic lights at the Iron Duke in the town centre and the traffic lights in Rockwell Green, a distance of approximately 0.6 miles (1km). Rockwell Green Road has narrow footways, extensive on-street parking, and the resultant carriageway is narrow, which can create a poor environment for active travel. Other than Exeter Road, there are currently no reasonably direct alternatives to connect Rockwell Green to the town centre for active travel.
- **Summary of key potential improvements**:
  - New and improved crossings of Exeter Road and/ Mantle Street to provide safe routes to Court Fields School and the medical centre.
  - Redesign the road layout and construct a cycle track to protect people cycling from motor traffic and create routes to the town centre, schools, medical centre and other destinations.
  - Measures to ensure low traffic speeds, such as 20mph limits and/or traffic calming, to create a safer environment for walking, wheeling and cycling.
  - Consider whether a new route could be created for walking, wheeling and cycling to connect Rockwell Green to Exeter Road, avoiding Rockwell Green Road.

4.4 Route 2 – Chelston to the town centre

- **Where:** This route runs east to west along Taunton Road and High Street.
- **Why:** It connects the eastern residential areas to the town centre and St. John's Primary School. It also connects town residents to the new Lidl store and employment at Chelston. Significant new development is expected to be focused in the Taunton Road area in the coming years, and this will also provide a key route to reach the new rail station.

- **Key issues:** The eastern part of the route is generally wider, has 40mph speed limits and some of the highest recorded traffic flows in the town (14,798 daily vehicle movements at Chelston in 2019). The western section into and through the town centre has 30mph speed limits. Existing infrastructure for cycling is presently disjointed and not to modern standards. The section between Chelston Roundabout and Nynehead Road has a shared cycleway/footway; however, west of Nynehead Road people cycling have to mix with the heavy traffic flows. There are a series of roundabouts, which can be difficult to cross for people walking, wheeling and cycling. There are no signal or zebra crossings along the length of Taunton Road (a distance of 1.2 miles (2km)).

Figure 11 – Taunton Road west of Lillebonne Way

- **Summary of key potential improvements:**
  - Redesign junctions and provide new and improved crossings to support safe walking, wheeling and cycling journeys, such as at the Nynehead Road roundabout (Lidl).
  - Construct continuous cycle tracks, through a combination of widening and upgrading existing infrastructure and creating new sections where currently not provided, to create a safe route to the town centre and Chelston. This would require a redesign of the road layout and side roads in many places.
  - Measures to ensure low traffic speeds in western section of route, such 20mph limits and/or traffic calming.

4.5 Route 3 – Tonedale to the town centre

- **Where**: Route 3 links Tonedale to the town centre, following the direct road route along the B3187 (Milverton Road, Station Road, Waterloo Road and North Street).
- **Why:** It connects residential areas north of the railway line to the rest of the town, where the majority of the facilities are located, and provides access to the industrial areas off Milverton Road. To the west of Waterloo Road, Beech Grove and Courtland Road provide access to two of the town's schools (Beech Grove Primary School and Court Fields School).
- **Key issues:** The B3187 provides access to businesses in the north of town and connections to communities including Milverton. Based on 2017 traffic surveys Station Road had an annual average daily traffic flow of 4,789 vehicles and 85th percentile speeds of 31.5mph. There are a number of pinch points, and at some of the narrowest sections, there are no footways, or footways on one side of the road only. There are no reasonably direct alternative road options to connect areas north of the railway line to the rest of the town. Initial assessment indicates that is not enough space to accommodate a continuous cycle track along these streets. The streets west of Waterloo Road which provide access to local schools have narrow footways and become congested at school drop off and pick up times, with associated pupil safety concerns.
- **Summary of key potential improvements:**
  - Redesigned junctions along the B3187 to support safe walking and wheeling journeys.
  - New and improved crossings of the B3187 to better connect areas to the east and west.
  - Footway and lighting improvements, including detailed study to identify potential options to address the gap in footways north of Tone Hill.
  - Continuous cycle tracks protected from motor traffic along the B3187 cannot be accommodated due to the limited highway widths and suitable alternative routes will need to be investigated, either to the east or west of the B3187. This is likely to be a combination of routes along existing roads and completely new alignments.
  - Measures to ensure low traffic speeds, such as 20mph limits and/or traffic calming, to create a safer environment for walking, wheeling and cycling along the B3187 as a whole.
  - Consider the introduction of measures such as a School Street for Courtland Road and Beech Grove, to enhance children's safety and support active travel to local schools. School Streets are timed restrictions on motorised traffic on roads outside of schools, at drop-off and pick-up times.

4.6 Route 4: North Wellington to Taunton Road via Lillebonne Way

- **Where:** Route 4 links North Wellington to Taunton Road via Seymour Street, the traffic-free path adjacent to Relyon and then along Lillebonne Way. This route links Route 2 and Route 3 without needing to travel through the town centre.
- **Why:** This provides connections to destinations at Chelston, the Lidl supermarket and employment sites in North Wellington for residents in Tonedale, North Wellington and Longforth Farm. It also serves the Isambard Brunel Primary School.
- **Key issues:** A cycle track has been constructed along Lillebonne Way as part of the Longforth Farm development, but at present this does not give priority to people on the

cycle track. The Taunton Road roundabout, at the eastern end of Lillebonne Way, can be difficult to cross for people walking, wheeling and cycling, and there are no signal or zebra crossings. The route crosses Brendon Road and the staff and freight access to Relyon. The traffic free path between Brendon Road and Lillebonne Way does not currently have lighting, and the spacing of bollards at the western end mean it may not be accessible for all.

- **Summary of key potential improvements:**
  - Redesigned side road junctions along Lillebonne Way to support people walking, wheeling and cycling across the side roads.
  - Upgraded traffic-free path between Rylon and Lillebonne Way, including lighting and ensuring all users can pass through the bollards.
  - Consider redesigning the section of Seymour Street by the Relyon access to enhance safety for people walking, wheeling and cycling, potentially including enhanced crossings and/or a cycle track.
  - Ensure the cycle track on Lillebonne Way is integrated with cycle tracks on Taunton Road (route 2), with safe crossings, to provide access to key local destinations such as Lidl.
  - Measures to ensure low traffic speeds, such as 20mph limits and/or traffic calming, to create a safer environment for walking, wheeling and cycling.

4.7 Route 5: Rockwell Green to North Wellington

- **Where:** The route links Rockwell Green and Waterloo Road / Station Road via “the Green Corridor” through The Basins and along Corams Lane.
- **Why:** It links the residential area of Rockwell Green into northern Wellington. It connects to Rockwell Green Primary School, Beech Grove Primary School and Wellington Sports Centre. It already provides an important and well-used traffic-free link for walking.
- **Key issues:** At present the route through the Green Corridor is a narrow unsurfaced path, with gates and narrow wooden bridges. It is not fully accessible, or designed to accommodate people wheeling or cycling. There is no lighting. Coram’s Lane has a 30mph speed limit and provides the access to Wellington Sports Centre, with 1,768 vehicles per day recorded in 2017.
- **Summary of key potential improvements:**
  - Upgraded Green Corridor path to make it suitable and accessible for all, with path widening and upgrading surfaces. It is recommended that this route is designed to accommodate cycling, as this would provide a direct traffic-free connection to a range of destinations. Consider whether the route could be designed without gates and instead using bollards or cattle grids, and options for appropriate lighting, such as solar studs, along with wayfinding.
  - Measures on Coram’s Lane to ensure low traffic speeds, such as 20mph limits and/or traffic calming, and potentially parking restrictions, to create a safer environment for walking, wheeling and cycling.

5 LCWIP delivery and next steps

5.1 What happens next

The LCWIP sets out an ambitious programme for active travel investment in Wellington, in the short, medium, and longer term timescales. Table 2 to Table 3 indicate the key proposals and when they are planned to take place. It also indicates:

- Whether scheme development and design is already underway; and
- The degree to which each proposal is assessed as supporting active travel access to schools, to the proposed rail station and to proposed development (on a 3-point scale).

Table 1 – LCWIP Proposals Delivery Summary Table – Short Term

Scheme or proposal	Scheme development and design underway?	Supports access to / from schools	Supports access to / from rail station	Supports future development
Chelston Roundabout new active travel crossings	Yes	+	++	+++
Active travel links from rail station to Taunton Road	Yes	+	+++	+++
Any other planning application infrastructure?	Several applications still in pre-application phase.			+++

Table 2 – LCWIP Proposals Delivery Summary Table – Medium Term

Scheme or proposal	Scheme development and design underway?	Supports access to / from schools	Supports access to / from rail station	Supports future development
Route 1: Rockwell Green to the town centre	No	+++	+	+
Route 2: Chelston to the town centre	No	+++	++	+++
Route 3: Tonedale to the town centre	No	+++	+	++
Route 4: North Wellington to Taunton Road via Lillebonne Way	No	++	+++	++
Route 5: Rockwell Green to North Wellington	No	++	+	+
Town Centre Core Walking Zone improvements	No	++	++	+

Table 3 – LCWIP Proposals Delivery Summary Table – Longer Term

Scheme or proposal	Scheme development and design underway?	Supports access to / from schools	Supports access to / from rail station	Supports future development
Schemes identified in future active travel plans (town-wide coverage and connections to surrounding villages)	No	Potentially	Potentially	Potentially

5.2 Funding opportunities and partnership working

Somerset Council and Wellington Town Council will work in partnership with other organisations to secure funding to deliver the LCWIP. Investment will be derived from a range of sources. They include potential contributions from:

- The Department for Transport;
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government potential future bidding rounds;
- Somerset's Council Local Transport Plan budget;
- Developers via planning permissions; and
- Other partner organisations, such as the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership or Great Western Railway.

Infrastructure proposals from the LCWIP will be considered for inclusion in capital investment bids, which may draw on a range of national or local funding streams, including those listed above. The inclusion of proposals in this LCWIP indicates that they are based on strong evidence.

The Wellington LCWIP will form part of a county-wide pipeline of active travel infrastructure schemes devised by Somerset Council in partnership with the Town and Parish Councils.

5.3 Integration with planning permissions and new developments

In Gear Change, the government states that it expects developments to include good-quality active travel infrastructure on-site and make financial contributions to enhance off-site routes. The Council will work closely with planning applicants and other stakeholders to achieve the LCWIP strategic proposals and other necessary local active travel infrastructure. Developers in the county will be expected to follow a new set of placemaking principles entitled Creating Places for People. Designing for active travel is at the heart of these placemaking principles.

Planning applicants will be expected to apply the LCWIP principles to their developments to demonstrate that suitable connections are available or can be delivered subject to improvements. Funding contributions will be secured from planning applicants for relevant infrastructure, including schemes listed in the LCWIP Delivery Plan, and for cycle parking.

Somerset Council

Appendices

Appendix A

How the LCWIP was prepared

Appendix A - How the LCWIP was prepared

Introduction

The LCWIP was developed collaboratively with a Project Working Group consisting of representatives from Somerset Council, Wellington Town Council and consultants WSP. Tasks and activities were divided between the partner organisations based on skills, knowledge, and resources.

Consultants WSP provided training, prepared guidance notes and route audit materials, and supported with the route audit process and LCWIP drafting.

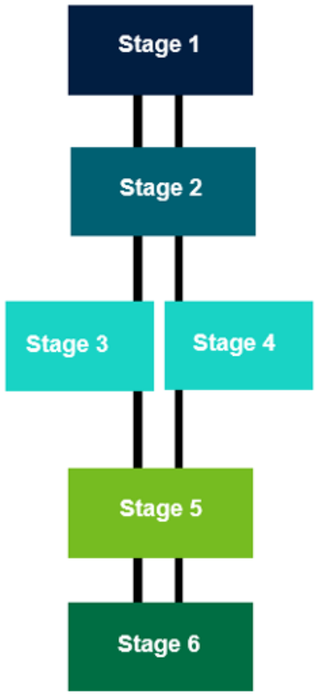
Town Council involvement has provided local knowledge of issues and potential solutions, as well as community contacts to be involved in the LCWIP process. Wellington Town Council also took the key proposals to their Council Meeting and these were generally supported by the Council.

The Wellington Wheelers, a local cycling group, asissted with the development of the LCWIP. They completed the site visits for the cycling audits (using the Route Selection Tool (RST)) and provided their local knowledge of the routes, their key issues and their vision for improvements.

Methodology

The LCWIP was developed in line with Department for Transport guidance set out in LCWIPs Technical Guidance for Local Authorities and additional advice in Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design. The preparation followed the recommended six-stage process, as illustrated in Figure A-1 and described in the paragraphs below.

Figure A-1 – LCWIP stages



Stage 1 - Determining Scope

This stage determined the geographical coverage, set up the Project Working Group and assigned tasks.

Stage 2 - Gathering Information

Background information and data was collected and analysed.

Stage 3/4 - Network Planning

Stage 3 identified and assessed priority corridors and routes for cycling. In parallel Stage 4 identified and assessed priority routes and zones for walking. The priority routes were assessed to consider the current situation and what improvements are required to ensure they are of a suitable standard.

Stage 5 - Prioritising Improvements

This stage prioritised the improvements to create a phased delivery plan of schemes.

Stage 6- Integration and Application

The LCWIP network plans and delivery plan will be factored into council strategy and policy and taken into account as part of council decision-making such as planning applications.

Stage 1: Determining Scope

In Stage 1, a Project Working Group was set up, with responsibilities and tasks divided between Somerset Council, Wellington Town Council and WSP. The geographic scope and programme for LCWIP development were agreed. Training sessions were held with to explain the LCWIP process and how information for the LCWIP would be gathered (in Stage 2).

Stage 2: Gathering information

Evidence and data were gathered to enable the development of the LCWIP. This was primarily used to:

- Understand the existing situation – routes available for active travel, opportunities and constraints, travel patterns, important origins and destinations for local journeys;
- Develop the active travel network plans;
- Inform the route audits which assess the current suitability of routes; and
- Inform the prioritised delivery plan.

A summary of evidence for the LCWIP is set out in Appendix B.

Stage 3: Network planning for cycling

Using data on journey origins, destinations, and potential future cycling demand (in the Propensity to Cycle Tool), important cycle corridors were mapped. Directness is one of the core design criteria set out in the LCWIP Technical Guidance influencing the suitability of cycle routes. Therefore, in line with the guidance, the proposed cycle corridors were initially shown as straight lines for network planning purposes.

With reference to the data on key destinations and potential future cycling demand, the Project Working Group agreed the priority corridors to assess in the LCWIP. The priority corridors were mapped to the most direct existing roads and routes. Using a combination of desk study and site visits, route audits were then carried out to:

- Assess the current standard of routes for cycling; and
- Consider whether the routes can be made suitable with improvements, or if an alternative alignment was required instead.

The town council completed the desk studies on the priority corridors and the Wellington Wheelers completed the site visits. Based on the information gathered, routes were scored against five core design criteria using the Route Selection Tool.

The Wellington Wheelers provided commentary on the existing quality of routes and possible improvements which could be made, plus suggestions for alternative routes where space for infrastructure was limited.

Stage 4: Network planning for walking

The Technical Guidance requires LCWIPs to identify Core Walking Zones and Key Walking Routes. Core Walking Zones consist of a number of walking trip generators that are located close together. Key Walking Routes are important pedestrian routes which serve the Core Walking Zone within a distance of around 2km (1.2 miles). Using data on journey origins and destinations, and following the Technical Guidance, a Core Walking Zone was chosen covering the town centre, reflecting the concentration of key destinations located there.

Similar to the network planning for cycling, the Project Working Group agreed a priority list of Key Walking Routes to assess. Route audits were then undertaken on these, using a combination of desk study and site visits, to:

- Assess the current standard of the routes for walking and wheeling; and
- Identify the improvements to bring routes up to an acceptable standard of provision.

Routes were scored using the Walking Route Audit Tool. This contains twenty criteria grouped under the five core design outcomes which the Department for Transport uses to assess pedestrian infrastructure.

Stage 5: Prioritising improvements

A high-level prioritisation exercise was undertaken to consider which active travel proposals were anticipated to come forward in the short, medium and longer-term.

Stage 6: Integration and application

The published network plans and delivery plan will be factored into Somerset Council strategy and policy. The Council will deliver the proposals as funding opportunities arise, and the LCWIP will be taken into account as part of other decision-making, such as planning applications.

Somerset Council intends to review and revise the LCWIP and will publish a more comprehensive second version in due course.

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Appendix B

Summary of data and evidence used in the LCWIP

Appendix B – Summary of data and evidence used in the LCWIP

Introduction

The LCWIP process is led by evidence and data. This appendix sets out the most important information which was used to develop and shape the Wellington LCWIP.

Local travel patterns

Comprehensive data on local travel patterns is not available for all journey purposes; however, information is available for travel to school and to work.

In terms of school travel, the Department for Education's statutory schools census collected information on pupils' usual, main mode of travel to school until 2011. Based on the 2011 schools census, 73% of children attending Wellington state schools walked to school and 4% cycled. Individual schools recorded higher levels of walking or cycling, with 80% of children at Court Fields School walking to school, and 6% cycling.

In terms of commuting to work, the census collects data on usual mode of travel to work, plus home location and employment destination. The most recent census took place in spring 2021 when Covid restrictions on travel were still in place; the 2011 census is therefore the most recent for which comprehensive data on travel is available. Based on the 2011 census results, 38% of Wellington commuters had their workplace destination elsewhere in the town or the immediate surrounding area (the areas covered by Census Mid-Level Super Output Areas Taunton Deane 012 and 013, as shown on the Office for National Statistics Open Geography Portal).

Using the same 2011 census dataset, 18% of Wellington's residents who commuted to a usual workplace usually walked to work whilst 4% typically commuted by bicycle. The average mode shares for the county were 14% walking and 4% cycling.

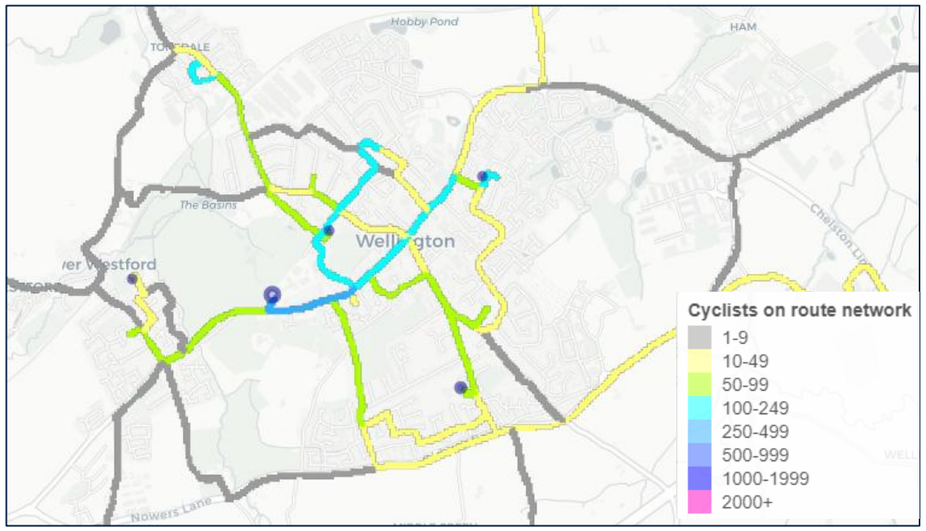
Forecast active travel demand

The government-funded Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT) forecasts potential future demand for cycling to school and work under different scenarios, accounting for trip distance and hilliness. The scenarios are based on 2011 data for travel to work (national census) and travel to school (schools census). The tool uses different scenarios to model what active travel demand could look like, ranging from a 'Government Target' scenario (to double cycling activity between 2013 and 2025) to the more ambitious 'Go Dutch' and 'e-bike' scenarios. The 'Go Dutch' scenario assumes cycling levels on a par with those in the Netherlands whereas the 'e-bike' scenario, only available for commuting, is a further extension of the 'Go Dutch' scenario, and is based on widespread uptake of e-bikes, allowing for longer distance cycling, as well as that on hillier routes.

The most ambitious scenarios forecast that, with suitable infrastructure and supporting measures, the proportion of Wellington schoolchildren walking and cycling to school could increase from 77% of all trips to 83% and the proportion of commuting trips by active travel could increase from 22% to 36%.

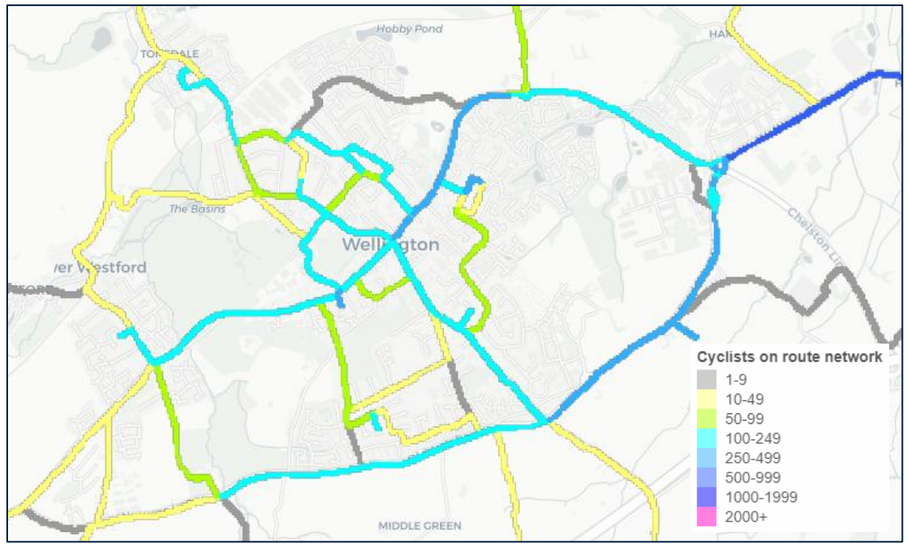
The PCT forecast flow maps (Figure B-1 and Figure B-2) show where the increased cycling demand is expected to occur across the town, for travel to school and travel to work respectively. It should be noted that an equivalent scenario planning tool is not currently available to geographically plot forecast future walking trips.

Figure B-1 – PCT Forecast Flow Maps – Travel to School 'Go Dutch' scenario



Source: PCT Tool Version b9421854 released under a GNU Affero GPL and funded by the DfT, Map @OpenStreetMap

Figure B-2 – PCT Forecast Flow Maps – Commuting 'e-bike' Scenario



Source: PCT Tool Version b9421854 released under a GNU Affero GPL and funded by the DfT, Map @OpenStreetMap

Origins and destinations for local journeys

Introduction

The Technical Guidance states that planning active travel networks should start by mapping main origin and destination points across the LCWIP area. **Error! Reference source not found.** shows the locations of journey origins and destinations used in the LCWIP development.

Origins

Trips often start from the main residential areas. Along with the existing residential areas, the following significant residential developments recently completed, underway, with planning permission or allocated in the Local Plan were mapped:

- Bagley Green – Around 200 homes are under construction south-west of Rockwell Green;
- Cades Farm - Around 400 homes have been constructed south of Taunton Road;
- Jurston Fields – Around 650 homes and community facilities are under construction on land between the A38 and Cades Farm;
- Longforth Farm - Around 500 homes and a primary school have been constructed on the eastern outskirts of the town, between Taunton Road and the railway line, with plans for a further 200 on land closer to Nynehead Road; and
- Tonedale Mill – The regeneration of this historic mill site off Milverton Road is planned to accommodate around 220 dwellings.

Destinations

The LCWIP aims to enable walking, wheeling and cycling journeys to a variety of destinations and for a wide range of journey purposes. In accordance with the Technical Guidance, the following destinations were used to inform the LCWIP network planning:

- The town centre, with destinations including shops and supermarkets, businesses and services, pubs, cafés, restaurants, the arts centre and Wellington Community Centre;
- The Lidl supermarket off Taunton Road;
- Employment areas – Key employment at Chelston and in north Wellington (including KDC / ONE, Pritex and Relyon), plus additional land for employment has been allocated in the Local Plan adjacent to the planned railway station at Longforth, and at Chelston.
- Primary and secondary schools – the town's six primary schools, and the two secondary schools, Court Fields School and private school, Wellington School;
- Transport interchanges – The new railway station (to be located north of Taunton Road and west of Nynehead Road);
- Hospitals and health facilities – Wellington Community Hospital, located off South Street, and the Medical Centre on Mantle Street; and
- Selected leisure and sports sites – Wellington Recreation Ground, Wellington Park and Wellington Sports Centre, all located to the north of the town centre.

Existing cycling and walking networks

Most parts of Wellington have a comprehensive network of walking routes, comprising footways next to roads plus traffic free links. Whilst walking infrastructure may exist, people can be deterred from using them due to a range of barriers and constraints, including parked vehicles blocking footways, uneven and potholed surfaces, and missing sections of footway (see also commentary in the section below).

Figure B- shows the road network and other infrastructure available in the town for cycling. At present the available network broadly comprises the following:

- Cycle lanes on the carriageway, delineated by coloured paint, but with no protection from motor traffic.
- Cycle tracks next to roads, separated from motor traffic by kerbs, in some locations with space shared with people walking and wheeling;
- Motor traffic-free paths, sometimes shared with people walking and wheeling;
- Quiet residential streets which are generally suitable for most people to cycle on; and

- Streets with heavy traffic and/or fast traffic without protected cycle tracks and which Local Transport Note 1/20 identifies as being unsuitable for most people to cycle on.

There are cycle lanes on Exeter Road east of Rockwell and sections of Taunton Road east and west of Lillebonne Way.

Cycle tracks are provided along Lillebonne Way, on Taunton Road from the Lidl roundabout to Chelston Roundabout, and close to three roundabouts on the A38 (Exeter Road, Jurston Fields and Westpark 26).

There are motor traffic-free links for cycling (and walking and wheeling) in the following locations:

- In Wellington from Lillebonne Way to Brendon Road and Church Fields, and Aspin Road to Gay Close;
- In Rockwell Green from Dobree Park to Greenway Road and Barrington Way to Blackdown Road; and
- At Chelston from Westpark 26 to Taunton Road, and Castle Road to the lane leading to Ham.

Sites with planning permission will also provide the active travel links:

- From Jurston Farm to Aspin Road, Laburnum Road, Beech Hill and Westpark 26.

Barriers to movement

Geographical features in and surrounding the town can prevent or dissuade people from making active travel journeys. The main identified physical barriers are shown in Figure B- and are summarised below:

- Roads with high traffic flows and/or high traffic speeds which have a limited number of safe crossing points, or where the crossing points do not connect to safe cycling routes, particularly:
  - The main east-west route through Wellington (Taunton Road, High Street, Fore Street, Mantle Street and Exeter Road);
  - The main north-south route through Wellington (Milverton Road, Station Road, Waterloo Road, North Street, South Street and Pyles Thorne Road; and
  - The A38 through Chelston and to the south of Wellington.
- The mainline railway, with limited crossing points

In addition, and whilst not marked on the map, the following features also constitute barriers to active travel journeys:

- Residential estates with poor cycle and pedestrian permeability, or access, to / from the surrounding areas, such as the Cades Farm development;
- Junctions with characteristics which are hazardous to cycling, such as where people cycling must mix with high traffic flows, negotiate large multi-lane roundabouts, or pass wide side roads; and
- Bollards, barriers or gates preventing easy passage by all types of cycle design, mobility scooters or wheelchairs.

Figure B-3 – Journey Origins and Destinations

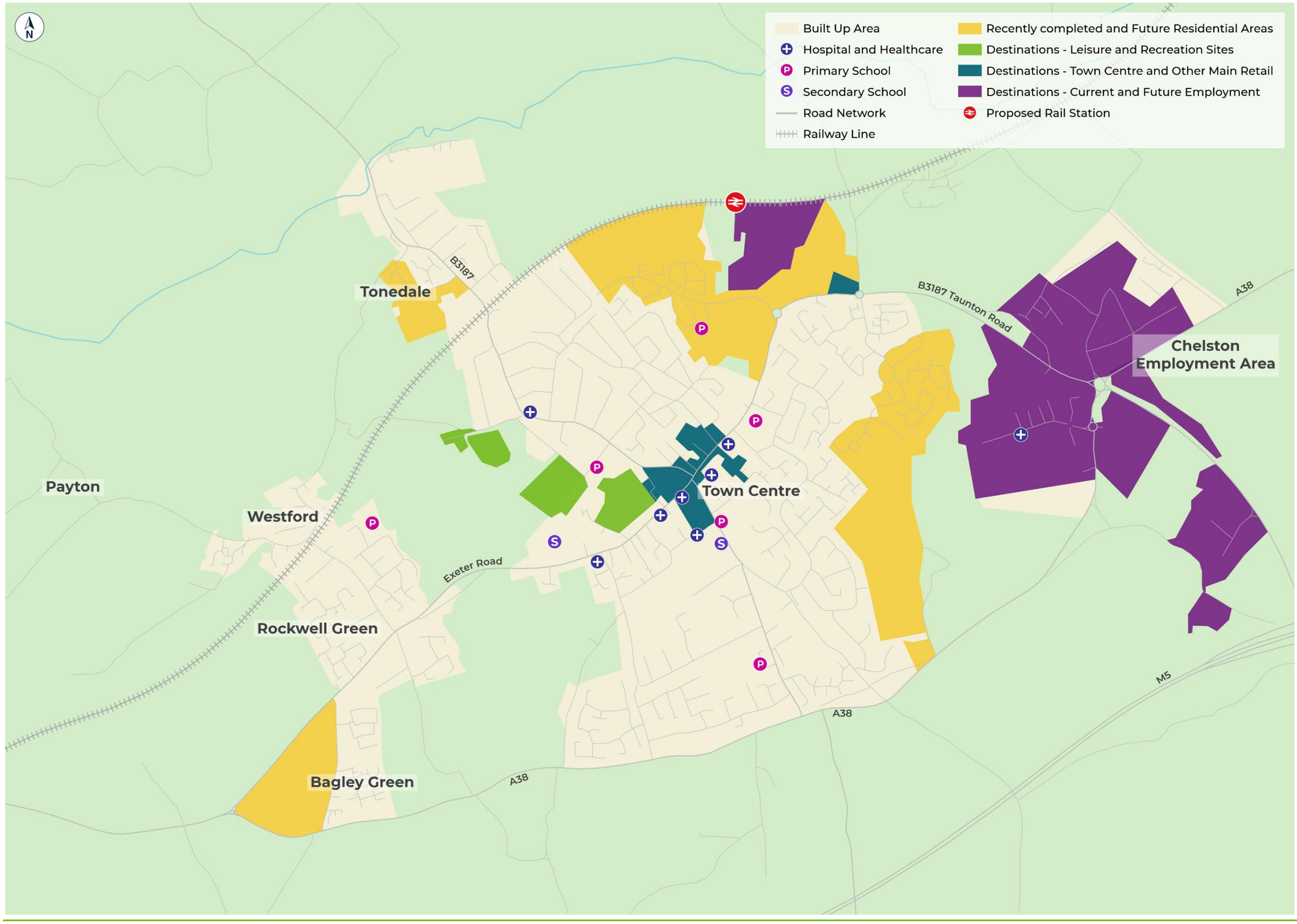
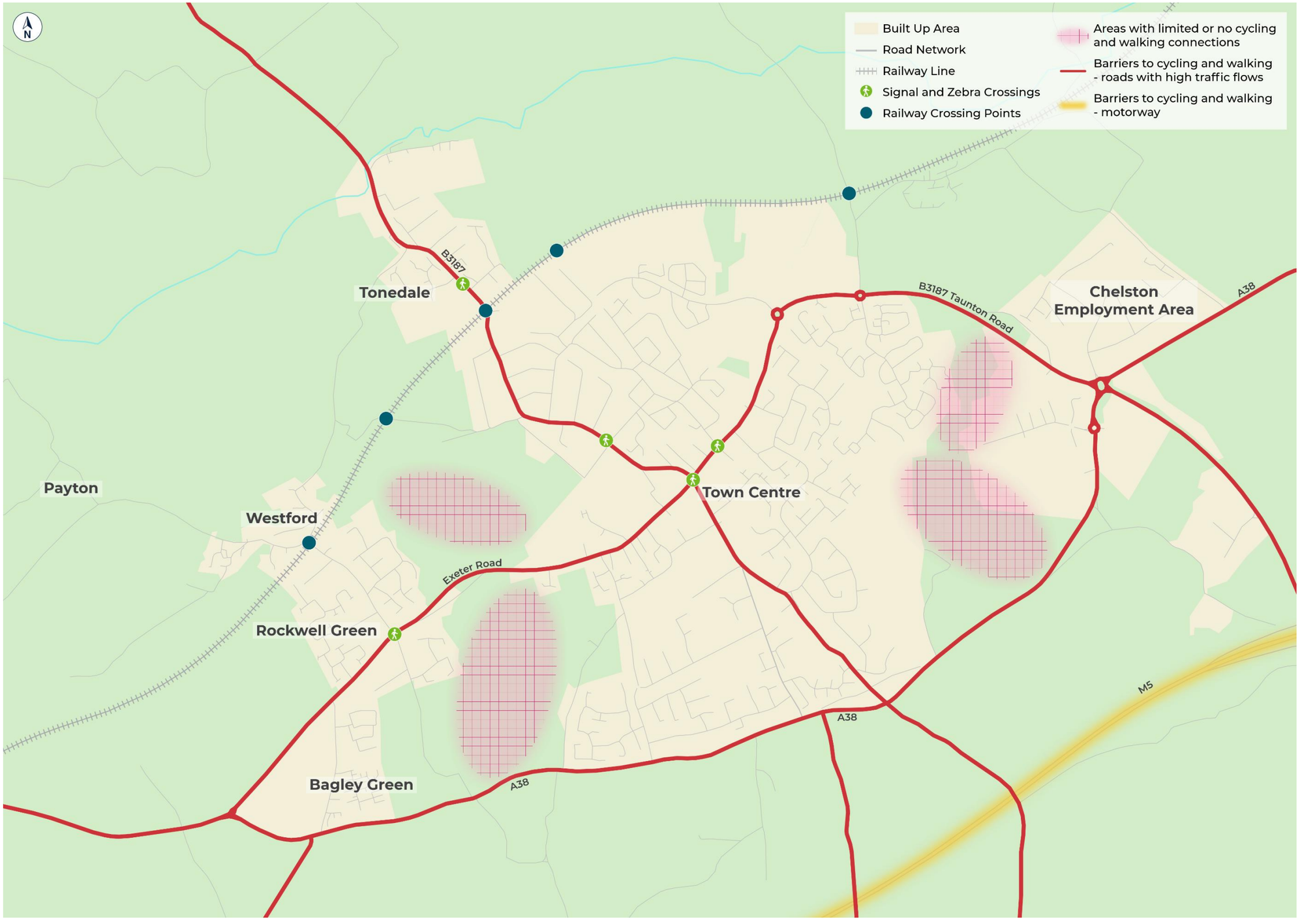


Figure B-4 – Existing Cycling and Walking Networks

Figure B-5 – Barriers to Movement Map



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