

Cheshire West & Chester Council

Chester Transport

Strategy Summary



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For more information Tel **0300 123 7036**

For full details about our Transport Strategy and its supporting documents please visit the Council website www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk and search for Transport.



Foreword



Welcome to Cheshire West and Chester Council's Chester Transport Strategy. The strategy highlights the priorities for the next 15 years for the City of Chester to support jobs and regeneration.

The strategy is the result of public consultations to identify and shape what is required to make a real difference in the City of Chester.

Our new Transport Strategy for Chester was approved by Executive on 19th February 2014. The strategy aims to deliver a number of key regeneration and sustainability aspirations for the city:

- To help realise the One City Plan – the development guide for Chester;
- To accommodate future housing growth as identified in our Local Plan;
- To improve the quality of the city centre including plans to extend the pedestrianised areas to include; Northgate Street, St. Werburgh Street, and introduce public realm improvements by the Amphitheatre;
- To respond to new developments including Northgate, the Central Business Quarter and the Cultural Centre; and
- To tie in the various master plans such as the Cathedral and Northgate, to transport aspirations for the city.

It is important to us that over the lifetime of this plan, we ensure that the City of Chester can cope with likely future trends and opportunities to support economic growth.

By increasing awareness and access to sustainable transport for residents and commuters we will ensure that the City of Chester maintains its place as a premier destination within England, the UK and Europe and continues to play a major role in the sub-regional economy.

This plan provides the basis to turn our vision into reality.

Councillor Lynda Jones
Executive Member for Growth and Innovation

Identifying local issues and concerns

Views from local people, businesses and partners were gathered from over 20 consultation events and numerous questionnaire responses to help prepare this strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS: You said, we listened

Your recommendations helped shape our scheme designs and delivery schedule, this includes:

SCHEME 1: Bus Strategy and Infrastructure

new bus interchange at Gorse Stacks with circular bus service and bus priority measures.

You Said:

- 48% of all respondents rated the scheme as “very important” to “high priority”; and
- There were concerns over distances between Gorse Stacks and Northgate development.

We listened:

- The new bus interchange scheme will be delivered within the short-term as a priority measure for the Council; and
- Inclusion of a circular bus service linking Gorse Stacks and future Northgate development will be implemented upon scheme completion.



SCHEME 2: Congestion Relief and Access to Employment

tackle key congestion hotspots and queuing at pinch-points on the local highway network.

You Said:

- There is a need to reduce congestion and consideration for unlocking new development sites, improving access to employment; and
- Concerns over traffic in the city centre;

We listened:

- The Council will identify, design and deliver junction improvement schemes to address current and future traffic congestion and pinch-point problems; and
- Improve traffic in the city centre through pedestrianisation, Urban Traffic Control and Active Traffic Management along with junction improvements to reduce pinch points.



SCHEME 3: City Centre Pedestrianisation & Public Realm Improvements

create pedestrian friendly areas surrounding Northgate, the Amphitheatre and Frodsham Street.

YOU SAID:

- The Amphitheatre scheme shouldn't constrain heavy flows of traffic at peak times (when pedestrian flows are lower);
- Concerns over access to the Cathedral, particularly for the elderly and people with mobility impairments and during events.

WE LISTENED:

- The Amphitheatre design will be self-enforcing to encourage traffic to slowdown and be mindful of pedestrians; and
- Additional blue badge parking facilities will be made available in other car parks in the centre of the City. Before implementation more consultation will be undertaken with all stakeholders.
- A new Shopmobility site will be included in the new Northgate development, providing access to the Town Hall Square and Cathedral.



Our proposed actions and measures

The new Chester Transport Strategy sets out how we can work towards our vision, to ensure that the City of Chester can cope with likely future trends and opportunities to support economic growth.

Our final recommendations fall under ten themes. These meet challenges that we have identified in the city's historic core, the wider city's urban area, and the longer distance journey-to-work catchment (outer area) extending to Wirral, parts of North Wales, and other towns in West Cheshire including Ellesmere Port and Northwich. The maps shown in Figure 1, 2 and 3 illustrate the scheme areas.

The final ten recommended work packages of schemes are detailed right. We are confident that these packages will individually unlock economic growth, new housing and development within the City of Chester and wider Borough.



Scheme / Package Name

- 1 City centre pedestrianisation and public realm improvements;
- 2 Bus strategy and infrastructure;
- 3 Congestion relief and access to employment;
- 4 Chester parking strategy;
- 5 Mobility impaired access, shopmobility and dial a ride;
- 6 Rail services and infrastructure;
- 7 City centre pedestrian and cycle enhancements;
- 8 Strategic pedestrian and cycle enhancements;
- 9 Smarter choices and behavioural change; and
- 10 Coach and taxi strategy.

Details about these packages are set out in the remainder of this summary document.

The full version of our Chester Transport Strategy Report and supporting documents can be found on the Council's Chester Transport Strategy website.

Visit www.chesterrenaissance.co.uk and click on "a changing city" link to access the Chester Transport Strategy and supporting documents.

Maps of our proposed actions and measures

Figure 1: Map of Historic Core Transport Schemes for Chester City Centre

The map to the right highlights the recommended Historic Core Transport Improvement Schemes including; Public Realm enhancements, junction enhancements, New Gorse Stacks Bus Station, Coach parking enhancements, enhanced cycle routes and improved connectivity enhancements.

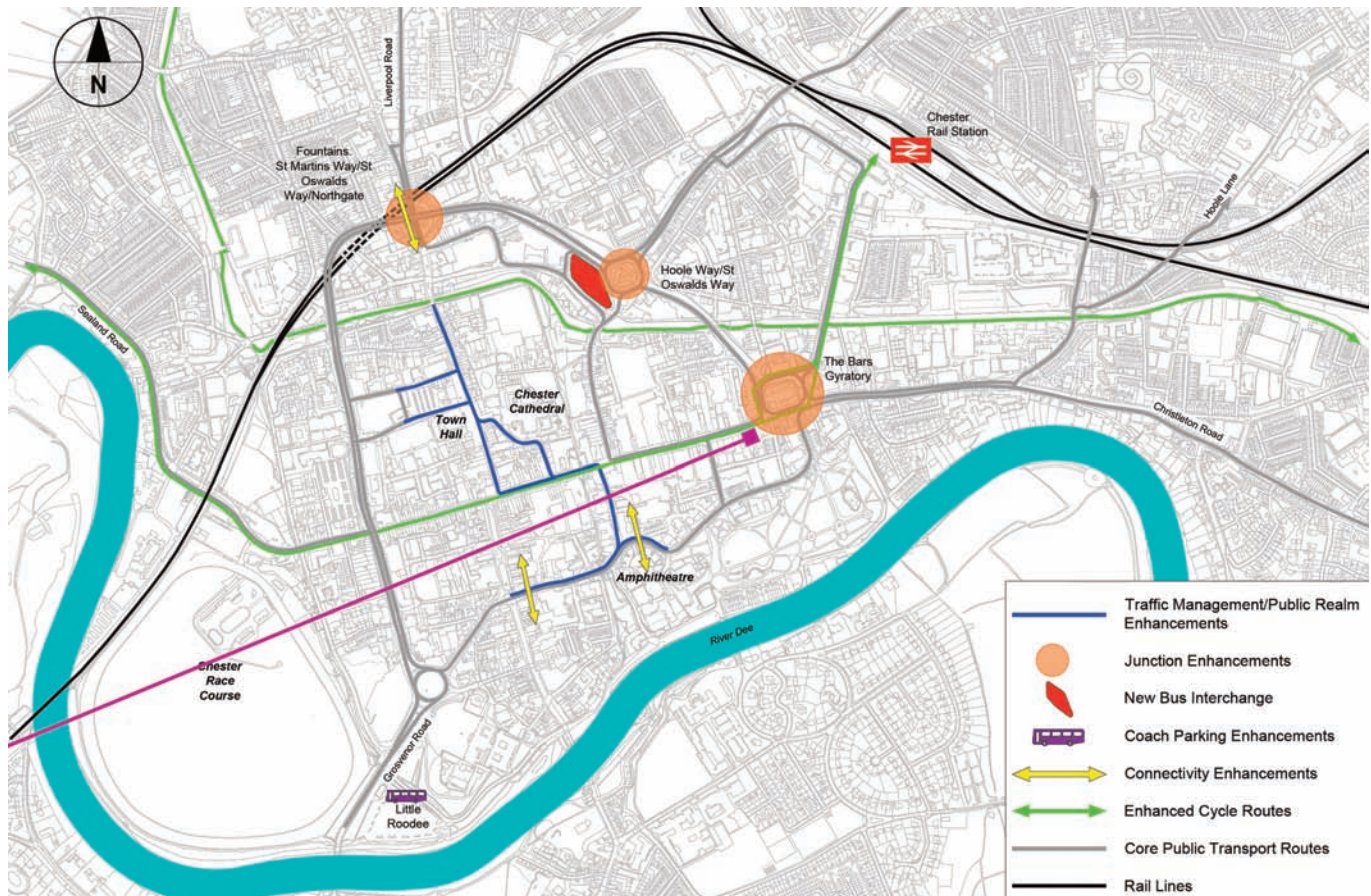


Figure 2: Map of Urban Area Transport Schemes for the Chester area

The map to the right highlights the recommended Urban Area Transport Improvement Schemes including; A proposed 5th Park and Ride site in Hoole, intermediate stops for Park and Ride vehicles, junction improvements, activate traffic management, enhanced cycle route and bus priority measures.

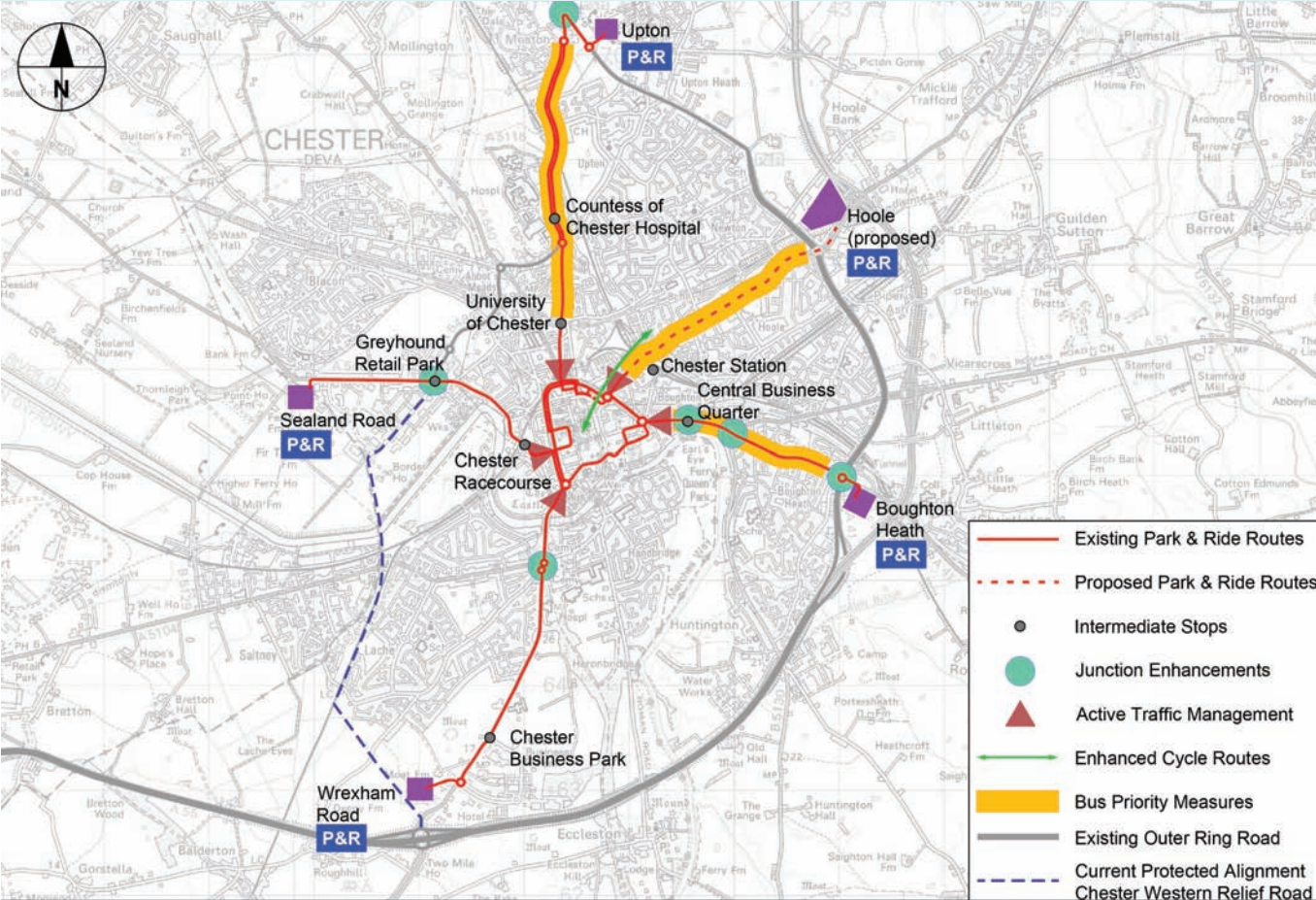
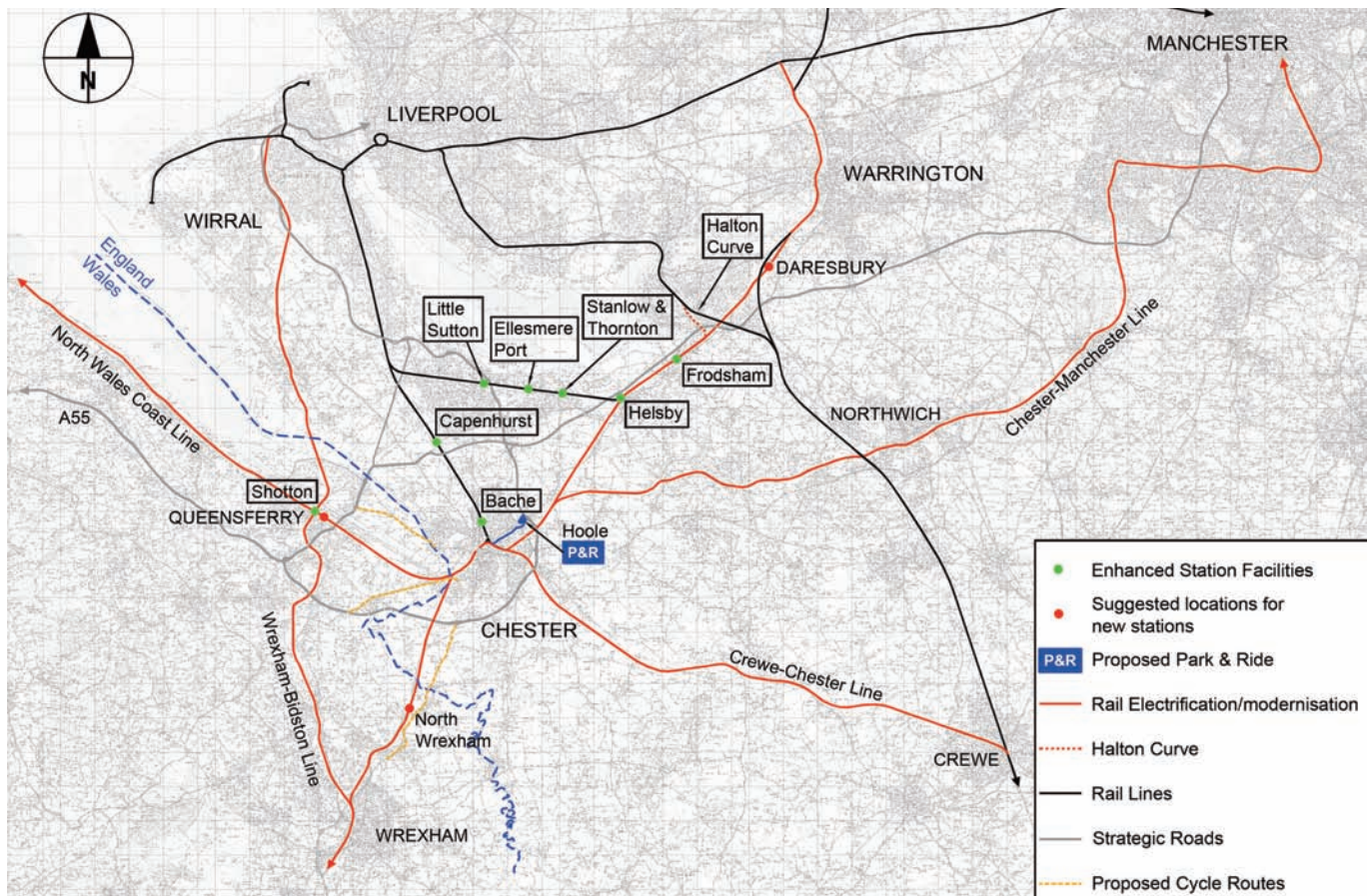


Figure 3: Map of Outer Area Transport Schemes for the Chester area

The map to the right highlights the recommended Outer Area Transport Improvement Schemes including; enhanced railway station facilities, new railway stations, new park and ride site, rail electrification / modernisation, reinstatement of the Halton Curve railway rail, proposed Chester Western Relief Road.



1 City Centre Pedestrianisation and Public Realm

We aim to significantly enhance traffic management and the environment at the 'Heart of Chester', to encourage more pedestrians in the areas of; Northgate Street, St. Werburgh Street and extending to Hunter Street.

Consultation feedback was favourable and ranked the scheme as first for importance for Chester to unlock new developments.



Recommendations include:

- Extend the city's core pedestrianised area to include Northgate St, St Werburgh St, Hunter St and St John St during the core hours of 10.30am to 4.30pm;
- Improve the overall public realm and attractiveness of Northgate St, Town Hall Square, St Werburgh St and part of Hunter St including the re-location of current blue badge on-street parking to other City centre car parks and new parking within the planned Northgate development;
- Limit vehicle access to the pedestrianised area during core hours, while maintaining essential access for residents, the Cathedral, hotels and others, and identify how this is controlled and managed;
- Introduce a shared space area on Little St John Street to improve pedestrian links to the Amphitheatre, Roman Gardens, St John's Church and the Groves;
- Review options to provide a shared space environment along Pepper Street;
- Introduce a shared space environment along Frodsham Street linking to the planned new bus interchange; and
- Consult with residents of King Street and Water Tower Street on road access, to prevent rat-running.

2 Bus Strategy and Infrastructure

This combines proposals for a new bus interchange at Gorse Stacks, “Shopper Hopper” circular service, and bus priority on key arterials, with service improvements via quality partnerships, and enhancements to rural bus provision including Demand Responsive Transport and the creation of feeder services on higher frequencies and until later in the evening.

Consultation feedback supported the scheme as high priority. It's recommended that the bus interchange work is undertaken as early as possible to unlock the Northgate Development and other schemes.

Recommendations include:

- Build a new city centre bus interchange at Gorse Stacks;
- Maintain and improve bus access across the city centre at interchanges on Delamere Street, other existing stops and within the new Northgate development;
- Introduce a “shopper hopper” shuttle bus to improve links between the new bus interchange and other parts of the city;
- Examine opportunities to introduce bus priority measures along key corridors including the A540 Parkgate Road, A5116 Liverpool Road, A56 Hoole Road and A51 Boughton corridor; and
- Work with bus operators to establish Quality Bus Partnerships with improved frequencies and hours of operation.



3 Congestion Relief and Access to Employment

It is our goal to tackle key congestion and queuing at pinch-points on the local highway network, and significantly reduce the impact of traffic arising from future housing growth and development.

Consultation feedback provides support for a reduction of traffic in the city centre, with the package classed as high priority.

Future schemes will provide opportunities for junction remodelling, allowing increased capacity with improved signalisation while reducing traffic flows and queuing times.

In the longer term, a scheme such as the Chester Western Relief Road may be required, so we plan to carry out further investigation to test the need for this proposal.

Recommendations include:

- Identify, design and deliver junction improvement schemes to address current and future congestion and pinch point problems;
- Identify and improve highway capacity through signalisation and other measures;
- Work with key stakeholders, to undertake a feasibility study for the Chester Western Relief Road including alternative routes to its current protected route; and
- Identify and deliver improved cross-border connectivity to reduce congestion.



4 Chester Parking Strategy

We propose to continue to deliver our existing parking strategy for the City. This is consistent with the objectives and aspirations of the One City Plan. This will make better use of the city's car parks to create a more sustainable and healthy location in which to live and work.

Consultation findings support the package to be of high priority with mixed opinion on car park pricing.

This package represents a suitable balance between best practice elsewhere, innovation, use of new technology to maximise benefits.

Recommendations include:

- Delivery of the Council's Parking Strategy;
- Introduce cashless car parking solutions;
- Establish a Member led working group to review improvements for the Park and Ride bus services that will be included in a new contract to run these services, that will be introduced in 2016;
- Develop a full business case and detailed design for a fifth park and ride site serving the A56 Hoole road corridor; and
- Review and introduce residential on-street car parking schemes where requested and supported by the local community.



5 Mobility Impaired Access, Shopmobility & Dial a Ride

Considering the needs of disabled access and parking is to form a key part of the Transport Strategy and several options are being considered to address this. Creating better links between parking supply with Shopmobility services is also of importance.

Consultation feedback was favourable for providing additional disabled spaces on Kale Yards and other cars parks throughout the city centre and Northgate development in order to help our plans for the further pedestrianisation of the city centre.



Recommendations include:

- Relocate and accommodate existing on-street blue badge parking provision from Northgate Street; St Werburgh Street, Eastgate Street and St John Street to other central car parks with a particular focus on the use of the Kale Yards car park and existing Shopmobility centre.
- Ensure extensive blue badge parking is allocated within the new Northgate Development and Delamere Street development car parks;
- Provide a new Shopmobility centre within the Northgate Development;
- Undertake access audits to improve routes from the new bus interchange and car parks for blue badge users;
- Examine options for providing a satellite Shopmobility service in the new Gorse Stacks bus interchange; and
- Ensure that Dial a Ride and specialist transport have access to Shopmobility sites and bus interchanges and hubs.

6 Rail Services and Infrastructure

A key recommendation of the strategy is the creation of an integrated transport network with enhanced rail services and infrastructure, consisting of station improvements for pedestrians and cyclists, line electrification, improvements to rolling stock quality, and service frequency enhancements.

Many of these schemes are longer term and are out of the direct control of the Council, key improvements require lobbying and strategising.

Consultation feedback broadly supported rail electrification and welcomed service improvements on the Mid-Cheshire line.

Recommendations include:

- Work with rail partners to improve facilities, enhance interchange, increase car parking at Chester and other local railway stations;
- Work with the Governments Electrification Task Force to lobby and make the case to support the electrification of the Crewe – Chester – Holyhead, Chester – Warrington, Mid-Cheshire Chester – Manchester lines; and the upgrade of other lines in Ellesmere Port and Halton;
- Work with partners to identify and make a business case for potential new railway stations at Newton by Tattenhall and a site on the Chester – Wrexham line; and
- Work with train operators to encourage rail travel and build on the opportunities presented by the Northern Hub scheme in Manchester;
- Establish a business case with partners for the Halton Curve scheme to help improve rail access from Chester and North East Wales to South East Merseyside and Liverpool Airport.



7 City Centre Pedestrian and Cycle Enhancement

We plan to deliver a comprehensive package of schemes in order to improve the city centre environment in terms of pedestrian and cycle connectivity, accessibility and safety. This will build on the aspirations set out in the Council's Cycling Strategy published in 2013.

Consultation feedback shows support for improved pedestrian and cycling facilities in the city, especially with proposed subway closures to be replaced with surface cross-ways to improve pedestrian security.

The proposed package includes improvements to the Bars gyratory and Hoole Way roundabout, an upgrade to the quality of the east-west route along the canal, enhanced cycle hire and cycle parking provision across the city centre, and the potential provision of traffic management / introduction of 20mph zones where feasible and supported by local communities.



Recommendations include:

- Develop and implement schemes that benefit pedestrians and cyclists within the city centre including secure cycle parking;
- Improve connectivity and safety for pedestrians and cyclists by replacing subways with at-grade crossing points;
- Ensure schemes meet the objectives set out in the Council's Cycling and Waterways Strategies; and
- Introduce 20 mph zones where appropriate and where they are supported by local residents.

8 Strategic Pedestrian and Cycle Enhancements

This package aims to improve the sustainable accessibility around the wider urban area from further afield. The package includes access improvement between Hoole and the city centre via a new foot and cycle bridge, enhanced cycle priority on key inbound routes, improved cycle routes to Wrexham, and additional potential future cycle links.

Consultation feedback was favourable towards these plans, particularly the improved cycle and footway access from Hoole to the city centre.

Recommendations include:

- Undertake a feasibility study for a new footbridge to run in parallel with Hoole Road railway bridge linking Chester Railway Station and Chester Business Quarter from Hoole;
- Ensure that the Highways agency A55 / A483 junction improvement scheme safely accommodates cyclists needs;
- Examine opportunities to improve cross-border cycling links using the A5104 corridor between Chester and Broughton and the A483 / B5445 corridor between Chester and Wrexham;
- Continue to improve the connectivity of local pedestrian and cycle networks;
- Maintain existing cycle routes, multi-user paths and towpaths for all users; and
- Review Hatton–Whitchurch railway alignment for potential multi-user route.



9 Smarter Choices and Behavioural Change

We will continue to deliver a range of measures to promote and encourage the use of more sustainable travel. This includes:

- Workplace Travel Planning / Engagement;
- Residential Travel Plans;
- Personalised Travel Plans;
- Education Travel Plans; and
- Station Travel Plans.

Recommendations include:

- Work with developers on major developments to create a sustainable transport network and support the delivery of workplace, school, residential, station and personalised travel plans;
- Undertake travel behaviour and awareness campaigns to encourage the use of sustainable types of travel;
- Support mobile, flexible working that aims to reduce the need to commute regularly;
- Implement Smartcard technology for cross-boundary passenger transport trips;
- Work with partners to encourage visitors to consider using sustainable transport to reach the city; and
- Introduce measures to reduce traffic congestion arising from Race days, festivals and similar events in the city.

The Smarter Choices Package consisting of cycle training, way-finding / public information improvements, travel training will dovetail with the identified walking and cycling infrastructure improvements, and travel planning to promote sustainable travel modes. A large part of this work is currently being undertaken by other projects.



10 Coach and Taxi Strategy

The movement of tourists and visitors to our city is of particular importance within the setting of our historic city. A coach strategy for Chester would bring together various strands including tourist travel, heritage, sight-seeing and National Express long distance, to provide a strategy for accommodating these vehicles in convenient locations around the city. One of Chester's biggest coach assets is the successful coach park at Little Roodee, and the strategy would include specifying an enhanced role for this and its facilities including cafe, heated waiting area, retail outlet and toilets, and considering how this may be better linked with the city centre.

Alongside this, a strategy for taxis is also proposed with the aim of getting the best use possible in the city. This would lay down clear guidelines for taxis advising on ranking facilities, penetration into the pedestrian zone, layover and idling, and provision of facilities for drivers.

Recommendations include:

- Work with partners to prepare a coach strategy for the city including; parking provision for coaches, city centre pick up / drop off points, layover / overnight parking, marketing and promotion; and
- Work with partners to develop a taxi strategy for both hackney carriages and private hire vehicles in Chester. To include; access to the city, reducing conflicts with centre residential areas, location of taxi ranks, layover, licensing guidelines and use of bus lanes by taxis.



Taking Work Forward

We plan to take work forward over a fifteen year period of activity. A suggested timetable is included in the full Recommendations Report.

In the short-term, our immediate priorities include:

- Northgate Street/St. Werburgh Street/Town Hall Square/Cathedral Area Shared-Space/Pedestrianisation/Public Realm Improvements;
 - Liaise with Northgate and Re:New Design Teams to look at current and future access and movement requirements;
 - Undertake detailed consultation with key stakeholders to consider access and servicing requirements;
 - Prepare a “route map” setting out the various stages actions and timetable for the introduction of further pedestrianisation within the city centre.
- Addressing Congestion on Radial Routes at Pinch Points;
 - Undertake further work to identify problem junctions / corridors, and prepare designs and schemes to reduce congestion at these locations.
- Bus Strategy;
 - Develop options for a new bus interchange at Gorse Stacks including full consultation with bus passengers, operators, local residents and businesses and other interested groups;
 - Examine how to introduce bus improvements on key corridors into the city centre.

- Parking Strategy;
 - Continue the delivery of the Councils Parking Strategy;
 - Ensure that there is readily available blue badge parking provision in existing and new city centre car parks and Park and Ride sites;
- Park and Ride;
 - Examine and introduce improvements to our Park and Ride services including opportunities for intermediate stops and improved hours of operation;
 - Consider the need and location of a potential new Park and Ride site to serve the A56, Hoole Road corridor.



Notes

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This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This image shows a full page of a document template designed for handwriting practice. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced, horizontal dashed lines across the entire width of the page. The background is plain white, providing a clear guide for letter height and placement. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

Accessing Cheshire West and Chester Council information and services

Council information is also available in Audio, Braille, Large Print or other formats. If you would like a copy in a different format, in another language or require a BSL interpreter, please email us at **equalities@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk**

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Pokud byste požadovali informace v jiném jazyce nebo formátu, kontaktujte nás

Jeżeli chciałoby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, prosimy dać nam znać.

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如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

Türkçe bilgi almak istiyorsanız, bize başvurabilirsiniz.

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