

## Agenda Item 7

### HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>HARLOW AND GILSTON GARDEN TOWN BOARD</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>HGGT Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>14<sup>th</sup> December 2021</b>
<b>Report Authors:</b>	<b>Paul Wilkinson, David Burt</b>
<b>Enclosures:</b>	<b>Appendix 1 – HGGT LCWIP Appendix 2 – HGGT LCWIP walking and cycling maps</b>

---

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report seeks the HGGT Board's formal approval for the HGGT Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The HGGT LCWIP is the HGGT partnership's response to the Government's call to develop a local LCWIP. The LCWIP will assist Highway and Planning Authorities in obtaining funding from Government, Local Enterprise Partnerships, sub national transport bodies and developers. The HGGT LCWIP along with other plans, also informs the delivery of sustainable zero emission movement as set out in the HGGT Vision and Transport Strategy.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. That the HGGT LCWIP is approved by the HGGT Board and submitted to the relevant portfolio holder of Essex CC for noting and endorsement; to Herts CC Exec Members and to the appropriate portfolio holders and Cabinets at Herts CC, East Herts DC, Epping Forest DC; and Harlow DC for noting.**
- 2. To note that the HGGT LCWIP document will be reviewed every three years co-ordinated by the HGGT Partnership.**

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2017 the Government set out the need for a “standard” approach to assess and prioritise walking and cycling schemes to ensure the schemes that were allocated funding were representing value for money and supporting the Government’s aspiration of doubling the number of journeys undertaken by walking or cycling. The Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) process is the response to this need.
- 1.2 An LCWIP is an investment plan, subject to resources being made available, that identifies investment priorities (in accordance with the guidance) for new infrastructure which is designed to support a greater number of people making journeys on foot or on cycle. This is the first time the LCWIP approach has been applied in the Garden Town area. It needs to be seen as a document open to review but principally a mechanism to secure funding within the Government’s framework.
- 1.3 The LCWIP has considered both the existing urban area of Harlow and the proposed new Garden Communities. It has also taken into account the emerging Harlow town centre master plan, which calls for a step change in the quality of the public realm in the town centre.
- 1.4 Whilst Harlow has an enviable existing cycling and walking network, the necessary investment to maintain and upgrade the network has not always been available as the town has expanded, leading to a disjointed and deteriorating network. The HGGT LCWIP provides the evidence to secure investment from funding partners and investors. It has already been used to inform a bid to HMG for more than £1m of investment into cycling and walking in Harlow.

## 2 Garden Town context

- 2.1 The LCWIP links to other strategic transport planning documents, such as the HGGT Vision, HGGT Design Guide, HGGT Transport Strategy, Harlow Cycling Action Plan, Harlow town centre master plan (draft), development proposals and other local initiatives, to ensure its compatibility with other local transport priorities that tackle congestion and enable growth.
- 2.2 The HGGT Transport Strategy sets out the Mode Share Objective, which states that: “50% of all trips starting and/or ending in the existing settlement area of Harlow Town should be by active and sustainable travel modes and 60% of all trips starting and/or ending in the new Garden Communities of Harlow & Gilston Garden Town should be by active and sustainable travel modes.” A key principle to deliver on this is to give greater priority across the network and where appropriate to walking, cycling and public transport.

## 3 LCWIP process

- 3.1 An LCWIP, as set out by the Department for Transport (DfT), follows a very prescriptive and evidence-led approach to creating the plan. This aids the DfT in standardising and comparing schemes across the country and within different contexts. The DfT are increasingly relying on

LCWIPs to allocate active travel funding, with some funds only available to bidders that have completed an LCWIP. The evidence from the LCWIP can be used to ensure schemes meet a high cost to benefit ratio which the DfT require. Essentially, a LCWIP highlights strategic improvements that will get the most people travelling actively and be the best value for money for the Government.

- 3.2 The goal of an LCWIP is to enable the increase in the use of cycling and walking as the mode of travel and identifying the routes and areas where more residents would choose these modes in preference to other means of travel. The LCWIP considers total travel demand regardless of mode, it does not focus alone on existing walking and cycling trips. Cycling and walking networks should be an integral component of a transport system that considers the needs of all users, and connects people with people, places, goods and services.
- 3.3 An LCWIP follows a prescribed process set by DfT which includes: determining the scope of the study, gathering the necessary information and data, planning the cycling and walking elements, prioritising the outputs, and integration into the wider strategic transport programme.

#### 4 Planning for cycling

- 4.1 Using a number of data sources and analytical approaches, the LCWIP process has determined a network of the 9 strongest routes to be developed further in the cycling element of the LCWIP (see Appendix 2). Five of the proposed routes are on the route of the HGGT Sustainable Transport Corridors and this assists in validating their locations.
- 4.2 The table below details the routes and their prioritisation according to Essex CC's (ECC) Advanced Scheme Design (ASD) rankings which looks to evaluate each LCWIP cycle route across the county. The ASD is based on: ECC Organisation Objectives, DfT LCWIP Objectives, Effectiveness and Deliverability.
- 4.3 These rankings assist ECC when bidding for funding but they are not rigid. Route 9, has been submitted to DfT as part of a recent Active Travel Fund bid due to the advanced stages of design for this route and strategic fit against the bidding criteria. If an opportunity is presented that enables a lower ranked route to be brought forward, it will be considered.

LCWIP Route	HGGT area ranking
Route 1: Town Centre orbital	1 <sup>st</sup>
Route 2: Gilston (west) – Parndon Mill – Town Centre	9 <sup>th</sup>
Route 3: Gilston (central) – Burnt Mill – Town Centre	7 <sup>th</sup>
Route 4: Town Centre – First Avenue – Churchgate Street – East of Harlow	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Route 5: Town Centre – Brays Grove – Potter Street	6 <sup>th</sup>
Route 6: Town Centre – Tye Green – Latton Bush – Latton Priory	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Route 7: Town Centre – Passmores – Staple Tye	8 <sup>th</sup>
Route 8: Town Centre – Great Parndon – Water Lane	4 <sup>th</sup>
Route 9: Town Centre – Fourth Avenue - Pinnacles	5 <sup>th</sup>

## 5 Planning for walking

- 5.1 A long list of seven Core Walking Zones (CWZs) were identified and a selection process was performed to narrow this down to four based on four core indicators: walkability potential; destination potential; health inequality; and policy fit. These four CWZs are (see Appendix 2):
- Town Centre
  - Templefields
  - Bush Fair
  - Staple Tye
- 5.2 These four areas provide a balance across Harlow: the town centre being a mixed-use environment; Templefields being a zoned employment cluster but with big box retail attached, and the last two being local centres serving a much more residential catchment. After feedback from HDC Officers, the Templefields CWZ routes were extended to include the Stow.

## 6 Proposed interventions

- 6.1 The findings of the walking and cycling audits were translated into proposed interventions for each of the four walking zones and nine cycle routes. For the walking zones the design interventions were grouped by area and also by design themes (e.g. junctions, de-cluttering, maintenance needs) which provides the option of delivering the interventions either by zone or by addressing a town-wide theme across Harlow. The cycling measures were provided by route. Some elements may be delivered separately to the walking zone or cycle route, within the wider area in which they sit if this provides efficiencies, i.e. where they align to Sustainable Transport Corridors or other LCWIP packages. Further investment in detailed design work is required for the individual schemes.
- 6.2 The estimated total value of the LCWIP potential measures is: c. £38m. This is made up of c. £33m for the cycling element (approx. 22km) and c. £5m for the walking element. This investment will bring the current, substandard, walking and cycling network up to high quality infrastructure that aligns with the latest design standards and approaches. The design and delivery costs for the 5 cycle routes that align with the STCs are expected to be picked up through the STC programme. This information has been used to support the review of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP).

## 7 Engagement

- 7.1 Officers have strived to ensure that the drafting of the LCWIP has been a collaborative process, and they have sought engagement with a range of relevant community stakeholders, such as existing local cycling and walking groups and forums. This has ensured that local knowledge and needs have been incorporated into the evidence base.
- 7.2 Several HGGT partner workshops were held alongside the core officer working group to ensure all partner authorities were informed and engaged in the process of developing the LCWIP.
- 7.3 The partner workshops engagement focused mainly on the walking component of the LCWIP due to the high level of previous engagement and literature on cycling in Harlow, through the Harlow CAP, which was used to inform the cycling element of this report.
- 7.4 The walking stakeholder workshop was convened that included Harlow residents involved in walking groups, such as the Ramblers Association, together with HDC officers. Barriers to walking and the suitability of the identified Key Walking Zones were discussed, and feedback incorporated into the report.
- 7.5 HDC officers were engaged and provided comments on the Key Walking Zones and Priority Walking Routes. Feedback from HDC officers led to the inclusion of the Templefields CWZ and the inclusion of walking routes through the Stow and Old Harlow neighbourhoods. Officer comments on the cycling routes also led to an extension of Route 5 into Church Langley.
- 7.6 Finally, an audit to record the current quality of the proposed walking routes was held with assistance from local residents and HDC and other partner authority officers. This process ensured that the vital local knowledge of these stakeholders could inform outputs.

## 8 Consultation

- 8.1 A summary of the consultation process, which took place over 4 weeks between May and June 2021, is set out below (a full summary of all consultation responses received is available on request).
- 8.2 The consultation was non-statutory and due to the prescriptive nature of the LCWIP process, and lack of flexibility with regard to making changes, it will be primarily used as an evidence base when applying for funding from Government and guide investment from developers. The consultation did provide insightful feedback which can be used to inform future reviews of the document and the development of proposed schemes.
- 8.3 The consultation used a variety of methods to engage stakeholders. Primarily, there was a website with information on the plan and a survey to gather feedback. Social media was used extensively to act as a signpost to the website and generate further comment. A Facebook Live interview was also held to provide a further avenue for comment. Workshops were set

up with various stakeholder groups from the Harlow Youth Council and charities to businesses and local cycling and walking groups.

- 8.4 There were almost 100 responses to the survey. These results revealed a good spread of ages (from 18-75) and geographies, 90% of respondents were from the HGGT area.
- 8.5 Results revealed a broad support - 58% support, 29% oppose - for the walking zones. However, there was less support - 38% support, 57% oppose - for the cycling routes. It should be noted that the survey did not collect data on specific routes and as such the opposition for the network as a whole, could have been due to a specific issue on one route.
- 8.6 From the surveys undertaken for the HGGT Transport Strategy itself there was 81% support for improving the facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. It is believed the lower level of support for the cycle routes in the LCWIP are due to a number of factors:
- 8.6.1 Consultees wished to see more routes included – the LCWIP is a prescribed and focused process. Routes suggested may not have scored highly using the tools set out in the LCWIP. Many more routes are included in the Harlow CAP which was used to inform the LCWIP. The routes recommended in the LCWIP provide the best opportunity for successful funding bids although additional routes can be considered in future iterations.
  - 8.6.2 Opposition to the Parndon Mill route – Officers met with representatives of Parndon Mill Trust to discuss this section of the proposed route. Alternative route alignments have been identified in the HGGT LCWIP to cross the Stort Navigation in this area that do not take the path across the front of the Mill.
  - 8.6.3 A perception that LCWIP was developing new routes at the expense of the current network – the majority of the LCWIP routes are on the existing network and if funding is successful the existing network will be enhanced to the highest standard.
- 8.7 The LCWIP process is designed to allow the Government to allocate funding based on a nationally consistent appraisal method which requires following a staged and prescriptive process. This is the first LCWIP developed by HGGT and the feedback from the consultation will be taken on board in designs as schemes are developed further as well as in future iterations.

## 9 Outcomes and next steps

- 9.1 Endorsement is sought from ECC for the HGGT LCWIP as ECC is the lead Local Highway Authority for the majority of the walking and cycling routes identified within the LCWIP.
- 9.2 Following approval from the HGGT Board and endorsement from ECC, it is intended that the LCWIP will be published and be publicly accessible in spring 2022.

# HGGT

HARLOW & GILSTON  
GARDEN TOWN

- 9.3 The approved and endorsed LCWIP will be used to:
- 9.3.1 Identify short, medium, and long-term investment projects in the cycling and walking infrastructure network.
  - 9.3.2 Support and or inform the development of Local Plans, HGGT strategies and the HGGT IDP.
  - 9.3.3 Support bids for investment to fund the delivery of the schemes identified.
  - 9.3.4 Support the negotiation of Section 106 financial contributions or other forms of infrastructure tariffs e.g. Community Infrastructure Levy.
  - 9.3.5 Support and inform the development of master plans and or Planning applications.
- 9.4 Formal feedback will be provided to DfT on the prescribed approach set out in the LCWIP guidance to state that greater flexibility and localism is required.
- 9.5 The LCWIP will be reviewed every three years co-ordinated by the HGGT partnership. Particular attention will be given to any significant changes in local circumstances, such as the publication of new policies or strategies, major new development sites, and as walking and cycling networks mature and expand.



## HGGT Vision Assurance

### 1. What principles of the HGGT Vision does this seek to achieve?

The HGGT LCWIP seeks to support the achievement of the following HGGT Vision Principles:

- Placemaking and homes
  - Responsive and distinctive design
  - Healthy, safe and connected neighbourhoods and villages
- Sustainable Movement:
  - Revitalising the cycle and walking network
  - Changing the character of roads to streets
  - Integrated transport: a viable and preferred alternative to cars
  - Anticipating change and future proofing infrastructure
- Economy and regeneration
  - A vibrant and resilient Town Centre for all the Garden Town

### 2. What steps have been taken to ensure the HGGT Vision is embedded into the project?

The HGGT LCWIP has undergone numerous reviews by HGGT Partner Officers and the HGGT Placeshaping and Engagement Workstream to ensure the Vision is embedded. The latest standards and designs have been included to ensure alignment with best practice and that the LCWIP pushes for greater ambition on active travel.