

## Cabinet

10 May 2018

### Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy

#### Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1) Noting the deletion of the proposal for a relief road around the eastern side of Stratford-upon-Avon approves the Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy.
- 2) Recommends that the Council endorse the Strategy as an addendum to the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26.

#### 1.0 Background

- 1.1 Warwickshire County Council made a commitment to produce a Stratford-upon-Avon area transport strategy at the third Stratford Traffic Summit (March 2015). The new strategy will supplement the existing and partially outdated Southern and Western Warwickshire Area Strategy, which is contained within the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26 (LTP). With traffic congestion increasing and pressure on the transport network growing, including from the housing and employment allocations within the adopted Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy, there is a need to revisit the existing transport strategy.
- 1.2 The Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy has been produced jointly with Stratford-on-Avon District Council. It sets out the general principles that need to underlie the development of the Town's transport infrastructure over the next 15 to 20 years. The adopted strategy is not a modification of the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26, but will operate as supplementary guidance.
- 1.3 The draft strategy was informed by stakeholder and community engagement which included:
  - Three well attended Stratford Traffic Summits held during 2014 and 2015.
  - A series of meetings held in 2015 with Stratford based organisations and interest groups including the RSC, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Stratford Town Council, Stratford Vision and the Town Transport Group.

The draft strategy also took account of draft versions of the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Plan and the Strategic Transport Assessments carried out by the County Council to assist the development of the Core Strategy.

- 1.4 At its meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2017, Cabinet endorsed the proposals contained within the initial draft Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy and agreed to then consult with the public and stakeholders on the draft strategy.
- 1.5 The consultation took place between 9<sup>th</sup> February and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017. A Consultation Evaluation Report and revised draft strategy were published in December 2017.
- 1.6 The revised strategy was considered by Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Full Council on 24<sup>th</sup> April. The Council resolved that the strategy be endorsed, subject to the deletion of measures that propose an Eastern Relief Road (ERR) and subject to further work being carried out into ways in which dependence on the motor car can be reduced. In response to this resolution, the strategy has been further revised and the measures that proposed an ERR have been removed from the strategy. The revised draft strategy is provided in Appendix A.

## **2.0 The consultation**

- 2.1 The consultation on the draft strategy took place over a six week period between 9<sup>th</sup> February and 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017. It was launched at the 4<sup>th</sup> Stratford-upon-Avon Traffic Summit which was attended by approximately 250 people. Prior to the launch, the draft strategy was discussed at a joint meeting with District and County members. The draft strategy was also presented to Stratford organisations and interest groups during a round of meetings held before and during the consultation period. A further well attended public meeting organised by Tiddington Village Residents' Association took place on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2017 and focused on the possibility of an Eastern Relief Road. The consultation was widely publicised in the local media and stakeholders were invited to respond to the proposed strategy.
- 2.2 The primary means of response was via an online survey held on the Ask Warwickshire website, but responses were welcomed in any written format. The survey asked for an indication of the level of support for the strategy objectives and for each of the six proposed themes, each of which contained a number of supporting measures. The survey also provided an opportunity for respondents to comment on the proposals.
- 2.3 In total 910 responses were received made up of:
  - 651 responses to the online survey
  - 26 via paper versions of the survey
  - 170 responses on a pro-forma response sheet
  - 15 responses on a second pro-forma response sheet
  - 48 other responses received via email and letter.
- 2.4 The consultation feedback was independently analysed by market research consultants and further evaluated by officers. A Consultation Evaluation Report (included in Appendix B of this report) was published in December

2017. The report detailed and responded to the feedback received and set out the revisions that were subsequently made to the strategy. A revised strategy was published alongside the Consultation Evaluation Report.

### 3.0 Key messages from the consultation

3.1 The table below shows the level of support and opposition to the strategy objectives and six themes proposed within the strategy. There was more support than opposition for the strategy objectives and for themes 2, 3, 4 and 5. Themes 1 and 6 received a higher level of objection than support. Analysis of the consultation feedback shows this opposition was primarily a response to the measures proposing the South Western Relief Road and the Eastern Relief Road. The remaining measures within these themes generated relatively few comments.

Item	Support (%)	Object (%)
Strategy objectives	55	45
Theme 1: Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon	23	77
Theme 2: Strategic road, rail and air links	76	24
Theme 3: Public transport provision within Stratford-upon-Avon and across South Warwickshire and neighbouring authorities	85	15
Theme 4: Encourage walking and cycling	88	12
Theme 5: Managing the impact of coaches long distance buses	86	14
Theme 6: Managing the impact of HGVs	34	66

Figures for respondents who responded neutrally, i.e. neither supported nor objected to the proposals, have been excluded from the figures presented above, but are available in the Consultation Evaluation Report (Appendix B)

### 3.2 The South Western Relief Road

3.3 The inclusion of the South Western Relief Road (SWRR) in the strategy generated a significant volume of comments, the vast majority of which opposed the road. The comments objecting to the SWRR made up 12% (52) of comments to theme 1. The reasons for objecting to the SWRR varied, but included:

- The proposed alignment / route.
- The impact on the local community and environment.
- There is no requirement for the road.

3.4 The SWRR will provide a new route between the A3400 Shipston Road and the B349 Evesham Road where it will connect with the West of Shottery Relief Road to provide a link to the A46 at Wildmoor.

3.5 The SWRR was identified in the Strategic Transport Assessments (STAs) that were carried out to provide the evidence base for the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy as being essential to enable the full development of the allocated housing site at Long Marston Airfield. The STAs also identified that

the road would help alleviate wider congestion issues in Stratford-upon-Avon. The SWRR is safeguarded in the adopted Core Strategy but is still subject to detailed design and approval. Its inclusion aligns the Transport Strategy with the Core Strategy. The SWRR has therefore been retained in the revised strategy.

### 3.6 The Eastern Relief Road

3.7 The Eastern Relief Road (ERR) was the most contentious measure canvassed in the draft strategy and it elicited the highest volume of comments. Approximately 35% of comments made in response to theme 1 specifically objected to the ERR. The reasons given for objecting to the ERR included that:

- There is no requirement for an ERR.
- Insufficient detail and supporting evidence had been provided.
- The impact of building the road would be too great, particularly if it resulted in further house building.

These points have also formed the basis of further representations received following the publication of the revised Strategy and Consultation Evaluation Report in December 2017. The representations requested that reference to the ERR be removed from the Strategy. Representations were received from Alveston Villagers' Association, Communities Against Urban Sprawl and Exploitation, Stratford-upon-Avon Town Transport Group and Tiddington Village Residents' Association (these are provided in Appendix C) as well as from a number of local residents which cover similar points to those raised by the organisations.

3.8 The draft strategy identifies that a relief road on the eastern side of the town would provide an alternative route to the M40 and reduce traffic in the town centre. An ERR is not required to support the growth identified in the adopted Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy, but was included in both the consultation draft and the revised draft strategy (December 2017) on the basis that it would improve overall traffic conditions in the town and support the delivery of the following strategy objectives:

- Objective 2; Reduce through trips for motorised traffic in Stratford Town Centre.
- Objective 3; Reduce the negative impact of traffic on air pollution.
- Objective 4; Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy.

3.9 Traffic modelling has shown that an ERR which connects the A422 Banbury Road with the A439 Warwick Road and is delivered in addition to a full western relief road and other transport mitigation identified through the Core Strategy process would further reduce congestion in Stratford-upon-Avon. The modelling also suggests that an ERR could facilitate further pedestrian priority and other environmental improvement schemes in the town centre as well as HGV restrictions on Clopton Bridge. The traffic modelling has been summarised in the Strategy with further explanation provided in the Consultation Evaluation Report.

- 3.10 Only high level assessment and analysis of an ERR had been carried out and while it was considered that this provided sufficient evidence to justify its position in the strategy, it was included on the basis that further detailed assessment of the benefits, impacts, costs, funding options and overall deliverability of such a scheme would be required before a decision could be made on whether an ERR should be promoted and implemented.
- 3.11 A primary objection to the ERR raised within the strategy consultation and the recent representations was that it would enable significant additional housing development to that identified in the Core Strategy to come forward in southeast Stratford-upon-Avon. Furthermore, it was suggested that a large housing allocation may be required to fund the road and that house building on such a scale would generate additional traffic that would take up any road capacity and exacerbate existing traffic problems.
- 3.12 The Stratford-upon-Avon District Core Strategy sets the local planning policy for development allocation until 2031 and does not make provision that could progress an ERR. Unless that were to change following a review of the Core Strategy, the ERR would have to be assessed on its merits as a scheme that is not linked to significant new development. Strategic level traffic modelling suggests that in the event that housing development were to be considered in southeast Stratford in the future, an ERR would both mitigate the strategic impact of the development and also improve the overall traffic conditions within central areas of the town.
- 3.13 **Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne railway line**
- 3.14 Theme 2 of the strategy; 'Strategic road, rail and air links' received a relatively high level of support in the consultation with 76% of respondents expressing support for the proposed measures. However, within the responses to the survey, 66 people stated that the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line should be reinstated or further feasibility work carried out to establish the viability of the line and that this should be reflected in the strategy. In addition, 170 copies of a proforma calling for the reinstatement of the railway line were received. Some opposition to reopening the line was also logged but these comments were few in comparison to those in favour of the line.
- 3.15 The draft strategy did not make specific reference to the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line, but did include a broad commitment to improve the strategic rail offer of the town to destinations such as London and the Thames Valley. It did not detail how this would be brought forward, but instead provided a wide policy area within which the councils could operate.
- 3.16 In response to the volume of comments received on the issue a joint District and County Council position statement on the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line has been incorporated into the revised strategy.

## 4.0 Revisions to the strategy following the consultation

4.1 This section provides a summary of the changes made to the draft transport strategy published in December 2017 following the consultation.

### 4.2 Objectives

- The proposed objective; 'Protect the historic core of Stratford Town and support the visitor economy' has been broadened to reflect the opportunity presented by the transport strategy to not just protect the historic core, but to also enhance this area and the wider town.
- Two objectives have been added to reflect the health benefits that can be derived from an improved and more sustainable transport system, and to promote social inclusion via the transport network.

4.3 Theme 1: Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon.

- Additional explanation of the evidence base for including measures that propose the SWRR and an ERR in the strategy has been provided.
- The commentary on the ERR has been revised to state that funding options will be explored as part of any future work to analyse and assess the value and impact of a road.
- The current status of the A3400 Birmingham Road Improvement Scheme as fully funded with delivery planned for 2019/20 has been reflected in the strategy.
- Measure 8 that proposed focusing '...parking at out of town centre locations....' will be revised to state that it is long-stay parking that will be focused at out of town centre locations. The strategy will also specify that short-stay parking will be retained within the town centre and that consideration will need to be given to how parking operates during evenings in order to support the evening economy.

4.4 Theme 2: Strategic road, rail and air links.

- The need to eliminate on carriageway peak time queuing at Junction 14 of the M40 has been recognised in the revised strategy.
- A position statement on the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line has been added to the strategy.
- The revised strategy makes greater reference to enhancing integration between transport modes.

4.5 Theme 3: Public Transport provision within Stratford-upon-Avon and across South Warwickshire and neighbouring authorities.

- The revised strategy recognises that off-peak inter-urban public transport service improvements are required to support employers in the tourism and leisure sector.
- A measure that proposes a town centre bus station has been added to the revised strategy, along with commentary of the significant challenges that would need to be overcome in order to deliver this.
- A measure has been added to the strategy to support the introduction of technological advancements that make public transport more convenient.

- 4.6 Theme 4: Encouraging walking and cycling.
- The Stratford-upon-Avon Cycle Network Plan has been referenced.
  - The revised strategy highlights the importance of maintaining cycling infrastructure to a high standard.
- 4.7 Theme 5: Managing the impact of coaches and long distance buses.
- A proposal for a coach pick up / drop off facility closer to the town centre has been added to the strategy.
  - Reference has been made to ensuring equality of access in the relevant sections of the strategy.
- 4.8 Theme 6: Managing the impact of HGVs.
- Measure 3 that proposed; 'Impose weight restrictions to limit goods vehicles access to the town centre' has been revised to reflect the existing town centre weight restriction and to propose that future work will focus on reviewing loading restrictions.

## 5.0 Further revisions to the strategy

- 5.1 This section summarises the changes that have been made to the transport strategy following publication of the revised draft strategy in December 2017 and specifically in response to the resolution made at the Stratford District Council Full Council meeting that took place on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018. The District Council resolved that the strategy be endorsed subject to the deletion of measures that propose an Eastern Relief Road (ERR) and subject to further work being carried out into ways in which dependence on the motor car can be reduced.
- 5.2 Theme 1: Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon.
- **Having paid due regard to the resolution passed by Stratford District Council on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2018 the measure that proposed 'A further relief road around the eastern side of the town to provide an alternative route to the M40 and reduce traffic in the town centre' has been deleted.**
  - The measure that proposed 'Impose restrictions on vehicular access to Clopton Bridge (requires delivery of an eastern relief road)' has been deleted. It is considered unlikely that this measure can be delivered without an Eastern Relief Road, but this is discussed further in theme 6 of the strategy and in paragraph 5.3 below.
- 5.3 Theme 6: Managing the impact of HGVs.
- Additional commentary has been provided to explain that it is unlikely the construction of the West of Shottery Relief Road and South Western Relief Road will enable a weight limit to be imposed on Clopton Bridge. This is because the majority of HGVs displaced by a weight restriction would reroute via the shortest alternative route to minimise journey length and fuel costs. This would be either via Seven Meadows Road and Birmingham Road or via the B4086 to Wellesbourne. Both of these routes

have existing capacity issues and neither are suitable for large volumes of HGVs.

- Measure 1 has been amended to remove the reference to the ERR within the proposal to provide relief roads to reduce the level of HGV through traffic accessing central areas.
- Measure 2 has been amended to state that options for imposing restrictions on HGV access over Clopton Bridge will be considered. The previous version of the strategy stated that restrictions would be imposed on HGV access over Clopton Bridge, but that this was reliant on delivery of an ERR.

5.4 No changes have been made to the strategy in response to the request for further work on ways in which dependence on the motor car can be managed. The draft strategy specifically commits to this outcome in Objective 1, 'Reduce high car dependency particularly for travel to work and school' and reducing car dependency is a consistent theme throughout the entire strategy and within many of the strategy measures. Further work will be carried out to develop the detail around these measures as part of work to implement the strategy.

## 6.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

6.1 Subject to Cabinet approval, the Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy will be considered by Council on 15 May 2018. Although Council approval is not required for a modification to the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26, its endorsement is sought as the Strategy will be supplementary guidance to the Plan.

## Appendices

- Revised Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy
- Consultation Evaluation Report
- Representations from stakeholder groups received following publication of the revised draft Transport Strategy.

## Background papers

None

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# Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy

Draft

April 2018



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## Introduction

This document sets out Warwickshire County Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council's shared transport strategy for Stratford-upon-Avon and the town's immediate environs and key strategic links. It identifies general principles that need to underlie future development of the town's transport network so that Stratford-upon-Avon can continue to thrive as a town that meets the needs of local people and as a visitor destination of international significance. The strategy has been produced by the County and District Councils with support from David Tucker of David Tucker Associates.

The strategy seeks to complement the Neighbourhood Plan that is currently in draft form and supports the vision for Stratford-upon-Avon contained in the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011-31. This states that:

*Stratford-upon-Avon will have enhanced its role as a town of international standing that satisfies the expectations of residents, businesses and visitors. More tourists will visit the town and stay longer, in part achieved through an expansion of its cultural offer. The town's role as the main shopping and services centre in the District will have been strengthened. Significant progress will have been made on the regeneration of an extensive area of mostly outworn and underused land adjacent to the canal. New and existing companies will have located on high quality employment land on the periphery of the town, with excellent access to the strategic road network. A new link to the strategic network from the south of the River Avon will have been provided via a western/south western relief road. Traffic in the town centre will be managed more effectively to reduce its impact on the environment.*

This Transport Strategy supports the achievement of this vision by providing a framework for maintaining and improving the transport network over the next 15 years. It builds on previous work that has considered future transport needs and draws this into a single integrated strategy that addresses the complex transport issues being faced.

In preparing this strategy, the County and District Council listened to the public and talked to interest groups and organisations to better understand their concerns and requirements from the transport network. This engagement showed that there is a high level of agreement on what the key issues are, with a primary concern being the increasing level of traffic congestion and the impact future housing and employment growth will have on the character of the town and a transport infrastructure already operating under considerable strain. The strategy includes measures designed to tackle congestion and improve the transport system and town environment to meet the development needs and benefit residents, businesses and visitors.

A draft strategy was the subject of a public consultation that was launched on the 9<sup>th</sup> February at the 4<sup>th</sup> Stratford Traffic Summit. The consultation closed after a 6 week

period on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March and generated 910 responses. This feedback was independently analysed by Osiris MR, a Market Research consultancy. A Consultation Evaluation Report prepared by Warwickshire County Council analyses and responds to the consultation feedback in greater detail.

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## Overall context

### 1. Socio-economic issues

#### 1.1 Economic overview

The local economy in Stratford-on-Avon District is comparatively strong compared to wider Warwickshire and West Midlands economies.

##### ***The visitor economy***

Stratford-upon-Avon is home to the world's most important Shakespeare heritage sites, including his birthplace. Approximately six million people visit the District each year (2.5 million to Stratford-upon-Avon town), spending around £300m per year and supporting over 7,000 jobs. The revenue derived from tourism is crucial to the vitality of the local economy and should be protected and where possible enhanced.

##### ***Employment levels and patterns***

Unemployment across the District is low, with 0.3% of workers claiming jobseekers allowance in May 2016. This is lower than the UK average (1.8%) and West Midlands average (2.2%). There is an imbalance between the number of jobs in the District and its working population. An increasing number of residents commute to higher paid employment outside the District, while lower paid jobs are often filled by people coming into the District from adjoining areas. These commuting patterns impose significant pressures on the road network. Employers in and around Stratford-upon-Avon can struggle to recruit staff into lower paid and part time roles and cite the absence of affordable commuting options, particularly outside of peak travel times, as a barrier to filling vacancies.

#### 1.2 Public Health Context

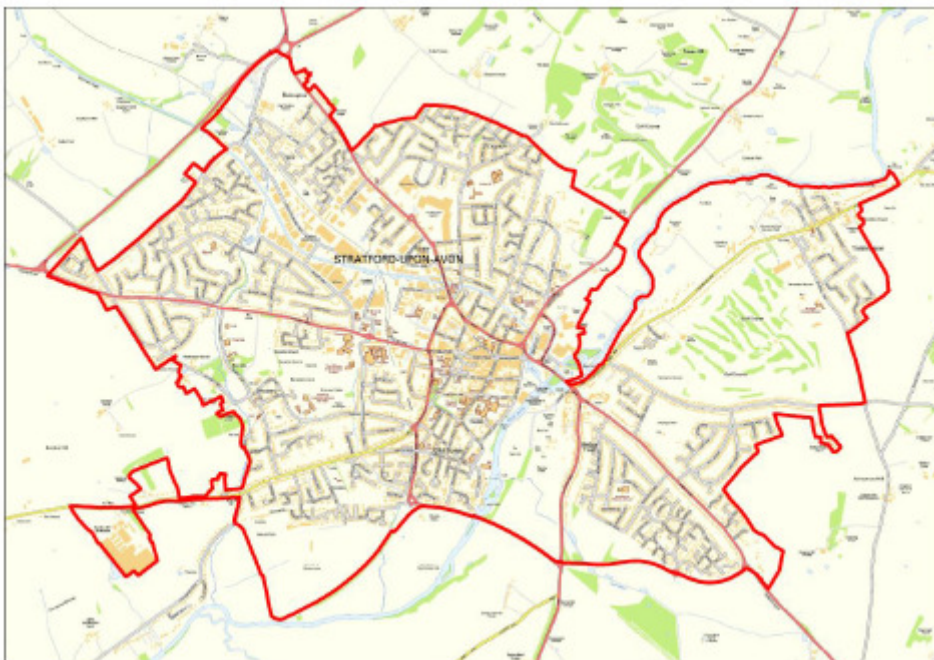
The population of Stratford-on-Avon District benefits from relatively good health, with levels of obesity, health deprivation and average life expectancy better than the national average. However, there is an imbalance in general quality of health across the District, with a difference in life expectancy of over six years between the least and most deprived areas. Transport can impact on people's health through the effect it has on air quality and through the opportunities it offers for people to incorporate active travel into daily routines.

## 2. Environmental constraints

### 2.1 Air quality

Stratford-upon-Avon town is covered by an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), shown in figure 1, which was declared in 2010 as a result of historically measured exceedances of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide objectives. No such exceedances have been measured in recent years, however continued monitoring under the Local Air Quality Action Plan is still in effect.

**Figure 1: Stratford-on-Avon Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) boundary**



Road transport is the main contributor of polluting emissions. Transport infrastructure and behavioural change measures that reduce congestion, improve traffic flows and encourage modal shift to sustainable modes of travel will be key to achieving an acceptable level of air quality in Stratford-upon-Avon whilst providing benefits to public health and the economy. Any development proposals for the town will need to show that air quality will not deteriorate as a result, in line with the Air Quality Strategy in Warwickshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (2011-2026).

### 2.2 Climate change and flood risk

Stratford-on-Avon District is susceptible to flooding and was badly affected by flood events in 1998 and 2007, which caused considerable damage to property and put lives at risk. The Environment Agency has mapped the main areas subject to flood risk and these cover a significant amount of land within

the District, including the River Avon valley through Stratford-upon-Avon town. Future development, including transport infrastructure, must not increase the risk of flooding.

### **2.3 Historic built environment**

Stratford-upon-Avon has a unique built environment with a historic town centre with many listed buildings, including the Grade 1 listed Shakespeare's birthplace and Clopton Bridge (also a Scheduled Ancient Monument).

A key aspiration is to improve the public realm in the town, including a route known as the 'Historic Spine' to promote and support the visitor experience and attractiveness of the town.

The historic nature of Stratford-upon-Avon means that the road layout is constrained. This means that there are competing demands for space on the transport network. Congestion issues quickly develop when there is network disruption, particularly during the summer when tourist numbers are at their highest.

### 3. Transport Problems and Opportunities

Stratford-upon-Avon frequently suffers from traffic congestion, particularly during the morning and evening weekday peaks, as well as congestion associated with tourist traffic, predominantly on summer weekends, bank holidays and during major events.

#### 3.1 Congestion Hotspots

There are some notable areas of congestion within Stratford where average speeds across the morning and evening peak are generally less than 20mph. These routes have been identified as:

- A422 Alcester Road between Stratford station and Bridgeway Gyratory.
- A3400 Birmingham Road between the A46 Bishopton Island and the Bridgeway Gyratory.
- Clopton Road/Arden Street/Grove Road.
- A439 Warwick Road southwest bound towards the Bridgeway Gyratory.
- A3400 Shipston Road, A422 Banbury Road and B4086 Tiddington Road approaches to Clopton Bridge.
- A4390 Seven Meadows Road approach to B439 Evesham Road.
- B439 Evesham Road eastbound approach to Stratford.

The Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy has set a target of providing at least 14,600 new homes and 35 hectares of employment land by 2031. Locations are dispersed across the District, however a significant proportion of the development is focused in and near to Stratford-upon-Avon and it is anticipated that the population of Stratford-on-Avon District will increase by 24,500 (20%) to 145,000 between 2011 and 2031. Without mitigation this growth will worsen congestion in the town.

#### 3.2 Factors contributing to transport problems

A range of factors contribute to the local congestion that occurs on parts of the highway network, particularly during peak periods. These are briefly outlined below:

##### (i) High Car Dependency

**High car ownership** – Car ownership is high compared to county-wide and national levels and this translates into high car dependency for travel to work (71% compared to 59% for the national average). Census data shows that between 2001 and 2011 the number of cars owned by Stratford-on-Avon District residents increased by 10,732. Assuming this growth continues at the



same rate it can be expected a further 29,155 cars will be owned by Stratford-upon-Avon District residents between 2011 and 2031.

**Distance and mode of travel to work** – Almost a quarter of journeys to work within Stratford town are less than 5km (3 miles), with 15% less than 2km (1.2 miles). These distances are appropriate for walking or cycling. However, Census data shows that the pedestrian and cycle mode share for journeys to work is already high (19% compared to the national average of 13%), so the potential for increasing this mode share for journeys to work is fairly limited.

**Park and Ride usage** – with high car ownership and usage, there is the potential to capture this market and convert to Park & Ride (P&R) for town centre trips. There is currently only one P&R facility which is located adjacent to the A46 at Bishopton. This serves visitors approaching Stratford-upon-Avon from the east, north and west. Weekday usage levels are well below the site capacity with the availability and relative low cost of town centre parking acting against the use of the P&R. Furthermore, a lack of bus priority on the route into town means there is no journey time saving for using the P&R. A Park and Ride service that operated from the Rosebird Centre to the south of Stratford-upon-Avon closed in 2015. The service was provided by the developers of the Rosebird Centre for a limited period as a requirement of a S106 planning agreement. Introducing additional P&R facilities with measures that encourage their use could reduce traffic flow into the town centre and alleviate congestion on arterial routes and within central areas.

## (ii) **Town centre through trips and river crossings**

**River crossings** - There are only two River Avon crossings for vehicles in Stratford-upon-Avon: Clopton Bridge, which is Grade 1 listed and a Scheduled Ancient Monument, is a substandard single carriageway bridge in the town centre; Seven Meadows Road is a modern single carriageway bridge situated south of the centre. There are no other options for vehicles to cross the River Avon in the vicinity of the town and both of these bridges bring traffic into central areas.

**Through traffic** – Whilst there is little long distance through traffic in the town there is a significant amount of local traffic that passes through the town and town centre without stopping. The majority of this traffic in the peak periods is travelling from the Shipston Road to Warwick Road, or vice versa with a significant proportion also travelling via the town centre from Birmingham Road to Shipston Road (and vice versa) and Banbury Road to Warwick Road (and vice versa). This traffic is concentrated on the two river crossings in the town, adding to congestion. The provision of relief roads on the southern and



**Rail Network** – Stratford-upon-Avon is served by two rail stations. Stratford Parkway is located approximately 1 mile from the town centre, adjacent to the A46, and the town station is on the edge of the town centre with access from Birmingham Road and Alcester Road. There are two main operators on the line; Chiltern Railways and West Midlands Rail. West Midlands Rail run services every 20 to 30 minutes to Birmingham during peak hours and every hour in the off-peak. Chiltern Railways run services to London Marylebone approximately every 1 ½ to 2 hours with the majority requiring a change at Leamington and taking more than 2 hours. There is an aspiration to improve rail connectivity, particularly to London and Birmingham Airport. Currently there are sufficient car parking facilities at both stations.

**(v) Parking Supply**

Parking availability is mostly good, with over 2,800 public car park spaces within Stratford town centre, as well as other privately owned car park sites and on-street parking. There are also an estimated 5,000 free spaces provided by local employers within Stratford-upon-Avon. Parking charges are relatively affordable; up to one hour free parking is available at Bridgefoot car park, while rates for longer stays of 12+ hours range from £4 up to £20. Signs on approach roads and across the town centre direct motorists to car parks and provide information on the availability of spaces. Free parking is available at the Maybird Retail Park for up to 4 hours.

**(vi) Role of Walking and Cycling**

There are walking and cycling routes in both the urban area and surrounding countryside. However there are missing links in the network and some existing facilities need upgrading to encourage more local journeys to be made by foot or cycle. For example, there is no dedicated provision for cyclists to travel from the south of the town to the town centre and there is insufficient provision for cyclists within the town centre.

**(vii) Security**

In light of recent terror attacks that have occurred both worldwide and within the UK, the security arrangements within Stratford-upon-Avon are under regular review. As a high profile visitor destination it may be necessary to introduce additional security precautions in the future that could have a bearing on the public realm and the movement of people and vehicles within central areas of the town.

## Objectives

### 1. Reduce high car dependency particularly for travel to work and school

With high car ownership and a substantial supply of affordable town centre parking there is little incentive to use alternative means of travel into the town. Achieving a significant switch to alternative transport modes requires a change to the whole philosophy of travel into and around the town and surrounding areas. Discouraging car journeys into the central area and diverting through traffic away from central areas will form part of the solution, but reliable and convenient substitute forms of travel offering a genuine alternative to the private car will have to be provided to change travel habits.

As a predominantly rural district car dependency is high and a high proportion of visitors travel by car. It is important to provide the opportunities and incentive to transfer from car to other forms of transport for the 'final mile' of the journey.

### 2. Reduce through trips for motorised traffic in Stratford Town Centre

There is very little long distance through traffic (i.e. traffic that is passing through the area) in Stratford town centre, however there is a large amount of more local traffic that needs to cross the town. This traffic may stay within the urban area or be travelling into, out of or through the town in order to complete a trip. This traffic has, in general to route over the existing bridges and through either the Bridgeway gyratory or Arden Street adding to congestion in and around the town. Future development within Stratford and surrounding areas will put further pressure on these routes unless alternatives are provided. To facilitate these cross town trips and reduce the volume of traffic travelling through the central areas of Stratford-upon-Avon new road links are needed between the key radials to route traffic away from the town centre. This will require at least one further river crossing.

### 3. Reduce the negative impact of traffic on air pollution

The County and District Councils aim to provide an attractive, clean and safe environment and are committed to protecting and, where necessary, improving local air quality. The level of air pollution experienced within the urban area of Stratford-upon-Avon generally, and the specific worst-case exposure locations, needs to be improved.

Traffic is the major cause of air pollution and emits pollution right by where people live, work and circulate and is made worse when traffic is slow moving or stationary. In order to improve air quality, measures will need to be implemented that reduce traffic generally, reduce congestion and improve traffic flows. In addition, detailed assessments of the impact of development proposals on traffic flows will be undertaken on an individual and cumulative basis through the planning application process. Specific measures will need to

be identified and put in place should air quality be predicted to worsen from the January 2010 situation as a result of such development. The most recent Air Quality Progress Report for Stratford-on-Avon District Council (May 2014) did not identify any significant changes to emission levels in Stratford-upon-Avon that would lead to a deterioration in air quality, having taken into account the scale and location of development identified in the Core Strategy.

**4. Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy**

2.5 million visitors a year come to enjoy the historic nature of the town and its facilities. Currently they enjoy car free areas such as Henley Street and, to a lesser extent, Waterside. However, the impact of traffic on routes to and from the Station and other key gateway points such as Bridgeway and Bridgefoot and within the main shopping areas can detract from the visitor experience. Visitors want access without the impact of traffic and congestion, including space to linger and enjoy their surroundings. Currently there is limited pedestrian circulation space on key routes in the town centre and some pavements become overcrowded during peak periods.

Consideration needs to be given to measures that improve the town centre environment such as giving greater priority and space to pedestrians and cyclists, reducing the volume of traffic and improving pedestrian routes into the town centre from key gateways. Any changes made to the transport infrastructure across the town must be sympathetic to the key characteristics and features of Stratford-upon-Avon and seek to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the town for the benefit of the local community and visitors.

**5. Provide increased resilience to the transport network**

Special events held throughout the year attract increased visitors. At present these are managed on an ad-hoc basis and frequently lead to increased congestion affecting the normal operation of the town and surrounding areas. Sufficient provision to cater for these visitors needs to be created within the transport system.

**6. Improve road safety for all users**

Reductions in traffic volumes and congestion together with improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists will improve safety for all. Any new infrastructure must prioritise safety.

**7. Promote social inclusion**

In a highly car dependent area the opportunities for people who have a disability or do not have access to a private car can be restricting. The transport system needs to cater for all groups and individuals to enable them to participate fully and actively within society.

**8. Encourage modal shift to active forms of travel**

Active travel in the form of walking and cycling enables people to build physical activity into their daily life and improves health and wellbeing. Modal shift from the private car to active forms of travel also reduces congestion and air pollution which has an important impact on health.

**9. Accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives**

The delivery of the housing and employment growth identified in the Stratford-upon-Avon District Core Strategy will increase pressure on the transport system. Analysis has been carried out to assess the impact this will have on the transport system and identify mitigation measures necessary to ensure the network operates satisfactorily in the future. Further work will be conducted as developments come forward through the planning process to establish the transport issues and identify measures necessary to deal with anticipated transport impacts. This must embrace the interventions set out in this strategy.

DRAFT

## The Strategy

### 1 Existing Stratford Transport Strategy

The existing transport strategy for Stratford-upon-Avon and the wider District is contained within the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26 (LTP). The strategy covers Southern and Western Warwickshire, which includes most of Stratford-upon-Avon District along with the rural west of Warwick District. It is based on the original Stratford Transport Strategy developed by the County Council in 2003. This was reviewed following an unsuccessful Major Scheme Bid to the Department for Transport and as part of the development of the Urban Design Framework for Stratford-upon-Avon in 2007. The review sought to establish the extent of support for extending pedestrian priority within the town centre without the additional highway capacity which would have been provided by the Stratford Western Relief Road (now known as the West of Shottery Relief Road).

The resulting strategy identified a number of schemes to address known transport issues. A number of these, such as Stratford Parkway and the improvements to Waterside/Southern Lane, have been delivered, while some other previously proposed schemes are no longer being pursued. Pressure for housing and employment growth across the District and particularly within Stratford-upon-Avon has increased considerably since the previous transport strategy was developed, and an adopted Local Plan (Core Strategy) is now in place to provide the strategic planning framework for the District's future development needs up to 2031. With increasing congestion within the town and problems which were prevalent in 2011 remaining today, the existing transport strategy needs to be revisited to take a more progressive, long term view of what transport interventions are needed to support the town and wider District.

The Stratford-upon-Avon Transport Strategy, which covers the town's immediate environs and key strategy links, updates the Southern and Western Warwickshire Area Strategy.

## 2 Key themes of the new strategy:

### Theme 1: Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon

#### (i) Aim

To improve the town's environment and economic vitality by:

- Reducing traffic within the urban area, and particularly in the historic core.
- Focusing long stay car parking provision on out of centre locations, including Park and Ride, whilst retaining short stay parking within central areas.
- Improving the opportunities for travel by public transport, on foot or by bicycle.
- Implementing the necessary highway and junction improvements to support the above demand management initiatives.

#### (ii) Context

In Stratford-upon-Avon, most trip attractors such as schools, shops and employment are located north of the river. These generate a significant demand for movement from residential areas south of the river and the rural areas to the south of the town as well as significant demand for cross-town movements north of the river, most of which have to pass through the congested town centre.

The above factors mean that a number of routes and junctions in the town experience significant traffic congestion during commuter and shopping peak periods, tourist/visitor peaks and major special events.

The significant scale of growth proposed in the adopted Core Strategy and the prospect of further growth in the future requires a radical and progressive approach to manage increasing traffic demands in the historic core of the town and on radial routes. There is a particular need to reduce the environmental impact of increasing traffic levels on Clopton Bridge, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, which carries approximately 23,000 vehicles per day including a large number of HGVs.

#### ***Previous Work***

Over recent years considerable work has been carried out by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) and Stratford-on-Avon District Council (SDC) to identify schemes to address existing transport problems and accommodate future transport demands arising from new development. This culminated in a series of Strategic Transport Assessments (STAs) that included assessing a



range of development scenarios in traffic models, the outcomes of which informed the transport evidence base for the Core Strategy that was adopted by SDC in July 2016. The STAs, which are available here <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-regeneration/transport.cfm>, identified key highway infrastructure interventions essential to facilitate the housing and employment growth identified in the Core Strategy. These are as follows:

- (a) **Stratford Transport Package.** Schemes to provide additional capacity at key pinch points on the local and strategic highway networks in and around Stratford upon Avon.
- (b) **West of Shottery Relief Road (WSRR)** - linking the A46 at Wildmoor with the B439 Evesham Road. This road has planning permission as part of development proposals on land to the west of Shottery.
- (c) **South Western Relief Road (SWRR)** – linking the B439 Evesham Road with the A3400 Shipston Road. This road is safeguarded in the Core Strategy but is still subject to detailed design and approval. This road will provide an additional river crossing.

In combination, the WSRR and SWRR will draw some traffic away from the town centre and the existing river crossings by providing a full western relief road between the A46 Alcester Road and A3400 Shipston Road which is essential to support the scale of development proposed at Long Marston Airfield to the south of Stratford.

The original STA (October 2012) and subsequent Phase 2 report (June 2013) considered a number of potential growth scenarios and identified that an additional highway crossing over the River Avon was required to accommodate the level of growth that was anticipated at this time. It was identified that without this there would be unacceptable increases in congestion around the existing river crossings. The STAs also concluded that growth to the south east necessitated a relief road on the eastern side of Stratford, whereas growth to the south west necessitated a relief road on the western side of Stratford.

It was identified that the trigger point for the SWRR would be reached when 400 of the 3,500 homes allocated to Long Marston Airfield had been built. The initial 400 homes have received planning permission. A planning application for the remaining homes and the SWRR is expected to be submitted in spring 2018.

The SWRR will accommodate the Long Marston Airfield traffic and deliver significant benefit to the operation of the highway network within the town centre and junctions to the west of Stratford.

In response to dialogue with the local community the District and County Councils published a joint evidence report on the SWRR in July 2017 to set out the background and evidence base for the road. The report can be found here:

(<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/206124/name/SWRR%20Evidence%20Report%20July%202017.pdf>).

### **Stratford Traffic Summits**

In response to local concerns that traffic congestion in and around Stratford-upon-Avon is having a detrimental effect on movement and the local economy, which would be exacerbated by new development, a series of Traffic Summits were organised by Nadhim Zahawi MP. These identified the following priorities:

- (a) To address traffic congestion problems on A3400 Birmingham Road.
- (b) The need for a Third River Crossing/Relief Road/Bypass.
- (c) The need for an overarching transport strategy.

### **Birmingham Road**

The County Council developed outline improvement options for Birmingham Road and these were the subject of a public consultation in January 2016. Since this time, funding has been secured from the Department for Transport and the County Council to deliver the major transport improvement scheme. The County Council is currently preparing the detailed scheme designs with delivery planned for 2019/20.

### **Additional Road Capacity**

A number of the STAs considered the role of an Eastern Relief Road (ERR), but did so within the context of a significant potential allocation of housing in southeast Stratford. The assessments consistently found that an ERR that connected the A422 Banbury Road with the A439 Warwick Road (full ERR) would not only accommodate this scale of development, but would also improve overall network conditions and present opportunities to make further advantageous changes to the transport infrastructure in central areas. The full ERR was shown to reduce congestion within central areas including Clopton Bridge, the Gyratory and Warwick Road. The June 2013 STA concluded that an ERR may provide the opportunity to introduce further pedestrian priority schemes within the town centre and to introduce an HGV restriction on Clopton Bridge.

A study commissioned by the County Council to evaluate the costs and benefits of providing additional highway capacity in the Stratford area was carried out in 2015-16. The study scope included considering relief road options and the effects these would have on congestion in the town. It reached the following conclusions:

- The SWRR is critical to mitigate against the Long Marston Airfield site and performs this role better than the ERR.
- The best results came from delivering both the SWRR and ERR, with queues and journey delays reduced significantly across Stratford, including in the town centre, on the gyratory, Warwick Road and at junctions to the south west of Stratford.

The ERR is not needed to accommodate the growth identified in the adopted Core Strategy, but it has been identified that an ERR would further relieve traffic congestion in the town centre and on Clopton Bridge by providing an alternative route to the M40. It was proposed to include an ERR as a measure in the strategy, but this was removed in response to a resolution made by Stratford District Council's full Council in April 2018.

### ***Further Highway Improvements***

There is limited scope to provide additional highway capacity in and around the town centre to absorb the anticipated increase in traffic volume without compulsory purchase of land and demolition of property. Previous attempts to promote an inner relief road in Stratford (Southern Relief Road Northern Extension) were not supported at Local Plan Inquiries during the late 1990s. Options for a second phase of works to further improve traffic flows at the southern end of Birmingham Road are being explored. This includes investigating whether an all-purpose link between Alcester Road and Birmingham Road could be constructed to take traffic away from the most congested southern section of Birmingham Road and enable the traffic lights at the junction with Western Road to be replaced by a left-in, left-out arrangement. An option to route this link via Wharf Road/Maybrook Road is not being progressed because of difficulties accommodating it within the Canal Quarter redevelopment. In addition, measures that make best use of the existing highway space across Stratford and improve traffic flow, particularly at junctions, will continue to be explored.

### ***Stratford town centre***

Relatively high volumes of traffic use the town centre streets to access local services and facilities or as a local through route. This level of traffic creates conflict between vehicles and pedestrians in the town centre that will worsen as traffic grows as a result of further development in the District. Over the last 15 to 20 years other major UK tourist destinations including York, Durham, Chester and Salisbury have improved the attractiveness and economic vitality of their historic centres by restricting general traffic, increasing pedestrian priority and investing in Park and Ride. The function and design of town centre streets in Stratford could be revised to: provide more pleasant streets with more space for pedestrians, better facilities for cyclists, lower traffic speeds and less street clutter; improve air quality; improve safety and accessibility for

cyclists and pedestrians, including people with disabilities; and enhance the setting of historic buildings. Approaches that could be considered to enhance the town centre environment include:

- Redesigning the way in which traffic accesses and moves through the town centre.
- Introducing additional vehicular access and loading restrictions. These could be applied to vehicle type or day of the week / time of day.
- Reallocating road space to provide more space for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The creation of shared space areas in which the level of segregation between pedestrians and vehicles is reduced.
- Full pedestrianisation of selected streets.

Security precautions may need to be accommodated within the town centre which could impact on public realm and the movement of people and vehicles within central areas of the town.

### **Parking**

The widespread availability of parking within Stratford (outlined in section 3) acts to draw traffic into the town and contributes to congestion on arterial routes and within central areas. The existing Park and Ride facility at Bishopton serves visitors approaching Stratford from the north of the river, but is underused in part due to the availability and relatively low cost of town centre parking and the lack of journey time saving from using Park and Ride. Focusing long-stay parking provision at out of town centre locations, including through the provision of additional and improved Park and Ride facilities would reduce the volume of traffic travelling into central areas and ease congestion. Short stay town centre parking is valued by businesses and the local community and will be retained through a combination of on-street parking and town centre car parks. Suitable car parking provision is also required for blue badge holders (disabled drivers and passengers) and to support Stratford's evening economy.

### **(iii) Objectives relevant to this policy**

- Reduce high car dependency particularly for travel to work and school trips.
- Reduce through trips for motorised traffic in the town centre.
- Reduce negative impact of traffic on air quality.
- Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy.
- Provide increased resilience to the transport network.
- Improve road safety for all users.

- Promote social inclusion.
- Encourage modal shift to active forms of travel.
- Accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives.

**(iv) Policies**

**Policy 1** The County Council, District Council and other agencies will work together to apply an integrated approach to managing the number, distribution and impact of vehicle movements within the urban area of Stratford-upon-Avon.

**Policy 2** Development proposals will be assessed for the effect they would have, individually and cumulatively, on the generation of traffic movements within and through the town and for their impact on the highway network. Where appropriate, a planning application should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and/or Travel Plan.

Contributions from developers to transport infrastructure will be sought through s106 Agreements, s278 Agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy, as appropriate. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan provides the basis for deciding how CIL payments are to be spent on transport-related projects in the town.

Measures that support the delivery of this policy include:

1. A full western relief road between the A46 Alcester Road and A3400 Shipston Road, including an additional crossing of the River Avon.
2. Further explore options for providing a link between Alcester Road and Birmingham Road to ease congestion on alternative routes.
3. Traffic management measures that improve traffic flow and the conditions for walking and cycling such as junction improvements, the use of modern technology and specific measures for buses. This will include the Birmingham Road corridor enhancements (planned for delivery in 2019/20).
4. Improve the infrastructure and facilities for cycling and walking.
5. Revise the function and design of town centre streets to reduce traffic and improve the public realm, including providing better conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.

6. Focus long stay parking at out of town centre locations, including through the provision of improved Park and Ride facilities.
7. Create additional resilience within the transport network to manage the influx of visitors associated with large events through the establishment of temporary Park and Ride facilities and enhanced public transport.
8. Review direction signs to route road users on key strategic routes and away from the town centre.
9. Use signage to encourage road users to park in Park and Ride facilities.
10. Provide frequent and swift bus services, with bus priority, between Park and Ride facilities and the town centre, via other key destinations.
11. Encourage sustainable travel options including:
  - a. Promote smarter choices through the 'Choose How You Move' initiative
  - b. Promote car sharing initiatives
  - c. Support workplace / school travel planning.

## Theme 2: Strategic Road, Rail and Air Links

### (i) Aim

To ensure Stratford-upon-Avon and the wider District benefit from good strategic connectivity to all key locations and to maximise the opportunities to access major new facilities such as HS2 and the UK Central development at Solihull

### (ii) Context

Good strategic connectivity is vital to ensuring that local and sub-regional economies are vibrant and can maintain and attract high quality, high value businesses who want to invest and grow. Good business to business connectivity is essential for companies such as Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) and its supply chain. The strong tourist economy of the area also necessitates good strategic connectivity, including access to aviation facilities to meet national and international travel demands.

Stratford District benefits from strategic road and rail connectivity, although both require further investment. The construction of the A46 Stratford Northern Bypass in 1986 and the arrival of the M42 and M40 motorways in the late 1980s/early 1990s delivered a major uplift in strategic road connectivity to large parts of South Warwickshire. Key accesses to the M40 are located at Junctions 15 (Longbridge), 14/13 (Leamington Spa) and 12 (Gaydon), all of which have seen some form of improvement in the last ten years. Smart Motorway provision (all lane running) has been provided on significant sections of the M5/M6/M42 Motorway Box and it is proposed to extend this from M42 Junction 3A to Junction 16 of the M40. There is an aspiration to extend this farther south to Junction 12 of the M40 and onwards to the A34 north of Oxford (Junction 9).

The strategic importance of the A46 as a trunk road has grown substantially in recent years as congestion on the M5/M6/M42 Motorway Box has increased. Major improvements have been delivered at M40 Junction 15 (Longbridge) and A45/A46 Tollbar End, with further improvements scheduled to take place in the near future at B4082 Walsgrave, A428 Binley, C32 Stoneleigh and A425/A4177 Stanks. Wider improvements to other sections of the A46 corridor have been identified, but do not currently form part of Highways England's investment plan. A Multi-Agency Group and associated Member Partnership have been established for the A46, on which both the County and District Council are represented. The long term vision and aim for the A46 is for a major improvement to the whole of the corridor between the M40 at Warwick and the M5 at Ashchurch in order to improve strategic connectivity to

the area and deliver a genuine alternative for traffic between the M1/M69 and M5.

Stratford-upon-Avon benefits from good connections by rail to Birmingham. There are regular but infrequent services to Warwick and Leamington Spa with journey times which are considerably greater than for the same journey by car. Longer distance journeys towards Oxford, the Thames Valley and London are less attractive and services to Coventry typically take more than 1.5 hours. There is an aspiration to improve all of these services. The town has recently seen a reduction in through off-peak services to the capital (a change at Leamington Spa is now required). Late evening and weekend services also require improvement, particularly to support the evening economy of the town including the RSC.

The reinstatement of the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line presents a potential, longer term opportunity to improve rail connectivity with locations including London and the Thames Valley which might deliver economic benefits to the local area. Further analysis and assessment of the economic case for reinstating the line would need to be made before the scheme could receive the support needed for progression. Warwickshire County Council will not commit resources to this work until such time that there is certainty over projects to upgrade the North Cotswold line between Oxford and Worcester. These improvements are needed to increase train frequency on the North Cotswold line from one to two trains per hour, and are prerequisites for reinstating through services on the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line. These projects would also require significant capital investment which has yet to be secured. Only when there is certainty that the North Cotswold Line upgrade will proceed will the County Council engage with work to analyse and assess the economic case for reinstatement.

In the meantime Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council are engaging with the North Cotswold Line Task Force on the wider Oxford to Worcester improvements. The additional capacity and increased service frequency that this project will deliver will be of benefit to communities in southwest Warwickshire who access rail services at stations such as Evesham, Honeybourne and Moreton-in-Marsh. The District Council is also commissioning a study into the feasibility of introducing a rail shuttle service between Honeybourne Station and the Garden Village new settlement and Long Marston Airfield.

The two Councils are also engaging with rail operators to explore alternative options so as to secure better rail connectivity between Stratford-upon-Avon, the Thames Valley and London.



Birmingham Airport in the adjoining Solihull Metropolitan Borough provides Stratford-upon-Avon and the wider District with access to a number of national and international flight destinations and serves an important role in bringing visitors into the area. The road connections between Stratford and the airport are currently relatively good. However, journey times are likely to increase as congestion increases on the M42 and the proposed HS2 interchange and the wider UK Central development progress. In order to provide an effective transport link for visitors, it will be vital that there is a viable public transport offer for making these journeys, with the provision of a quality rail service critical to this.

**(iii) Objectives relevant to this policy**

- Reduce through trips for motorised traffic in the town centre.
- Reduce negative impact of traffic on air quality.
- Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy.
- Provide increased resilience to the transport network.
- Accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives.

**(iv) Policies**

<p><b>Policy 3</b> The County and District Councils will work in partnership with other agencies (e.g. Transport for West Midlands, Highways England, the Rail Industry, Birmingham Airport, local authorities etc.) in order to facilitate and/or deliver improvements to the strategic connectivity of Stratford-upon-Avon and the wider District.</p>
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Measures that support the delivery of this policy include:

1. Enhance the capacity, safety and performance of the M40, including eliminating the on-carriageway peak time queuing at J14 of the M40 and provision of Smart Motorways between Junctions 16 (Henley-in-Arden) and 12 (Gaydon), with a longer term aspiration to extend this south to Junction 9 (Oxford).
2. Enhance the capacity, safety and performance of the A46 between the M40 and the M5. This will include junction improvements at Marraway (A46/A439), Bishopton (A46/A3400) and Wildmoor (A46/A422) and wider corridor improvements (e.g. dualling) to improve the strategic offer of the

route and add resilience to the Strategic Road Network (in particular the A42/M42 and Birmingham Motorway Box).

3. Improve the strategic rail offer of Stratford-upon-Avon, including the frequency and journey time of services to/from Warwick, Leamington Spa, Coventry, Birmingham, Oxford, the Thames Valley and London.
4. Engage with the work to upgrade the railway line between Oxford and Worcester which is a prerequisite for reinstating the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line. When there is certainty over this project, work with partners to review the economic case for reinstating the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line.
5. Provide improved rail connectivity between Stratford-upon-Avon and Birmingham International to improve access to Birmingham Airport, the proposed HS2 interchange and wider UK Central area.

### **Theme 3: Public transport provision within Stratford-upon-Avon and across South Warwickshire and neighbouring authorities**

#### **(i) Aim**

To provide a high quality network of public transport services within Stratford-upon-Avon and connectivity with key locations across South Warwickshire and neighbouring areas.

#### **(ii) Context**

Stratford-upon-Avon is relatively well served by public transport, although the level of connectivity varies. Demand is constrained by factors including frequency of services, duration and comfort of journey and high ticket costs as well as the comparative convenience and relative low cost of car travel. Local employers within the leisure and tourism sector have reported that public transport service gaps, particularly to and from Coventry and Birmingham and during the off-peak, impacts on their ability to recruit and retain employees.

Two railway lines terminate in Stratford-upon-Avon with regular rail services provided by West Midlands Rail to Birmingham via either Henley-in-Arden (the North Warwickshire Line) or Solihull, and regular but infrequent services by Chiltern Railways to Leamington Spa via Warwick. Connections to the wider rail network can be made via Birmingham, Solihull and Leamington Spa. Stratford Parkway was opened in 2013 on the northern side of Stratford to provide easier access to rail services for people living to the north and west of Stratford and alleviate congestion within Stratford-upon-Avon by reducing car journeys to the town station. The town station is due to be refurbished during 2018 to provide improved passenger facilities and experience with the work being funded by Warwickshire County and the Network Rail National Stations Improvement Fund.

Rail service improvements that could benefit current and potential passengers include:

- Additional peak time direct services between Stratford-upon-Avon and Solihull. This would be particularly beneficial in light of the planned expansion of Solihull town centre, part of the UK Central development.
- Additional direct services to and from Warwick and Leamington Spa, and improved onward connectivity to Coventry and Birmingham Airport. Direct services to Warwick and Leamington Spa currently operate approximately every 1.5 to 2 hours during the day. There are however, more frequent bus services between Stratford, Warwick and Leamington Spa that offer competitive journey times.

- Improving station facilities and accessibility of rail services on the North Warwickshire Line.

The bus infrastructure includes regular commercial services between Stratford-upon-Avon and Evesham, Alcester, Henley-on-Arden, Wellesbourne Warwick and Leamington Spa, all of which have available passenger capacity. Local services around Stratford-upon-Avon and evening services are limited. Feedback from the Stratford Traffic Summits suggested that better bus services were needed particularly to the east and north of the town. It is also important that new developments have regular and frequent bus services to the town centre.

A key barrier to bus use is journey length and issues of punctuality and service reliability which are exacerbated in Stratford-upon-Avon by congestion. Overcoming these problems has the potential to increase patronage, reduce operator costs and encourage operators to introduce additional services. Furthermore, improved journey time reliability enables operators to allocate less service 'catch-up' time during which buses layover in the town centre.

Service quality improvements, such as providing high quality and fully accessible buses, more frequent services and drivers trained in customer care, along with investment in roadside infrastructure at bus stops and improved waiting facilities have been shown to improve patronage and could do the same on routes into and out of Stratford. Bus passenger facilities in the town centre are currently insufficient for the volume of passengers. Options for improving this situation will be explored as part of any work to revise the layout and design of town centre streets. Consideration will also be given to any opportunities for providing a bus station within the town centre.

It should be noted that a 2011 study found very few feasible locations at which a bus station could be located and no economic business case for such a facility. It also found that a bus station would be unlikely to secure capital funding.

Most inter-urban public transport services are operated on a commercial basis by private companies with limited County Council involvement or support. Despite this the Council is able to influence service provision by, for example, engaging with operators and stakeholders and investing in service development infrastructure, such as bus stop facilities and Parkway facilities.

To be appealing public transport needs to operate as part of a relatively seamless journey whereby all elements of the journey connect effectively to provide a reasonable door to door travel time. This can be achieved through

careful timetabling and coordination of services to minimise waiting time between connecting services or by providing high frequency services. It can also be achieved by integrating public transport with other forms of travel, including walking and cycling, for example by providing cycle parking at a railway station that is connected to a network of high quality cycle routes..

**(iii) Objectives relevant to this policy**

- Reduce high car dependency particularly for journey to work and school trips.
- Reduce negative impact of traffic on air pollution.
- Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy.
- Improve road safety for all users.
- Provide increased resilience to the transport network.
- Promote social inclusion.
- Encourage modal shift to active forms of travel.
- Accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives.

**(iv) Policies**

<p><b>Policy 4</b> The County Council and District Council will work together and with other agencies and the public transport industry to develop a quality network of public transport services and facilities that meet the needs of current and potential passengers.</p>
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Measures that support the delivery of this policy include:

1. The introduction of enhanced or new public transport services to meet the needs of existing and potential passengers and employers.
2. The use of low emission vehicles will be promoted with potential use of electric buses in sensitive areas.
3. Introduction of new and improved Park and Ride facilities on the key radial routes in Stratford-upon-Avon.
4. Traffic management measures will be introduced to improve vehicle flow and prioritise buses to improve the punctuality, reliability and journey times of bus services. This will include providing frequent rapid bus routes for Park and Ride services.

5. Passenger facilities will be improved through the provision of modern buses, real time bus information and better bus stops and waiting areas. This will include further consideration of a town centre bus station.
6. Emerging or latent demand for bus travel will be met by adapting existing services or introducing new services. New developments in or near to Stratford-upon-Avon will have bus connections to the town centre, more evening buses will be provided and shuttle services introduced between key central destinations such as Bridgeway, town centre, railway station, Maybird Centre and Park and Ride sites.
7. The impact of buses on town centre locations will be reduced by encouraging operators to use the layover facilities next to the railway station and at Park and Ride sites.
8. Work with public transport operators to explore opportunities for introducing technological advancements that make public transport more convenient such as multi-operator ticketing and contactless payment.
9. Local rail services will be improved through the addition of a morning and evening peak time direct service between Stratford-upon-Avon and Birmingham via Solihull and additional direct services to Warwick and Leamington Spa.
10. The station facilities and accessibility of rail services on the North Warwickshire Line will be improved. Stratford town station will be refurbished in 2018.

## **Theme 4: Encourage walking and cycling, particularly in Stratford Town.**

### **(i) Aim**

To provide the local conditions and infrastructure to enable cycling and walking to be a genuine alternative to car travel and the natural choice for shorter journeys within Stratford-upon-Avon and by so doing to improve the town centre environment and economic vitality of the town and make a positive contribution to the quality of life and the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

### **(ii) Context:**

Cycling and walking are an ideal mode of transport for short local trips and the compact nature and mostly flat relief of Stratford-upon-Avon is particularly suited to cycling and walking. However the volume of journeys made by foot and bicycle is relatively low. Just 2.1% of adults living in Stratford-on-Avon District cycle for utility purposes at least once a week compared with 47.4% in Cambridge (the figure for Cambridgeshire is 15.6%). Achieving a significant shift from driving to cycling and walking requires changes to be made to the highway and town infrastructure to provide more facilities, space and priority for cyclists and pedestrians.

Increasing the levels of walking and cycling will reduce congestion, improve air quality and benefit the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors.

#### **Cycling**

Stratford-upon-Avon has the basis of an excellent network of cycle routes. For example, Summerton Way provides an off road route to the west of the town centre to Stratford College and there are quality off road routes to the south of Stratford, for example those that connect Waitrose to Swans Nest Lane and Banbury Road. The aim is to complete a network of high quality routes that enable people to make the majority of short journeys by bicycle.

Warwickshire County Council, working with Sustrans and the Stratford Cycle Forum, have developed a Cycle Network Plan for the town. This maps existing cycle provision and identified routes for development. The plan is reviewed periodically. Key gaps identified in the Cycle Network Plan that act to restrict cycling include:

- Safe and accessible routes across the River Avon: Lucy's Mill Bridge to the west is inaccessible to cyclists; cycling is not permitted on Tramway Bridge; and Clopton Bridge carries high volumes of motorised traffic including large numbers of HGVs, is narrow and does not have room for dedicated cycle lanes.

- A link from the town centre to the south-east of Stratford and Tiddington. Currently cyclists wanting to make this journey need to negotiate the heavily trafficked Bridgefoot junctions to the south of Clopton Bridge. The network plan suggests a new pedestrian and cycle bridge to the east of Clopton Bridge, however no feasibility work has been carried out on this option.
- The provision of cycling routes across the town centre that minimise potential conflict with pedestrians and motorised transport.
- Connections to visitor destinations including Mary Arden's Farm, Anne Hathaway's Cottage and Charlecote Park.

An increasing number of cyclists are prepared to cycle significant distances for leisure and as part of a commute. Stratford is well served by the National Cycle Network which direct cyclists along a combination of off-road routes and quiet roads suitable for cycling. Route 5 connects Stratford-upon-Avon to Shipston-on-Stour in the south and to Redditch in the north-west. Route 41 connects Stratford to Honeybourne in the west and Leamington Spa in the east. Opportunities exist to improve these routes, for example by improving the surface of the Stratford Greenway that is used by both route 5 and 41, providing additional surfaced off-road cycle routes and by making the existing routes more direct. There are also opportunities to supplement the existing National Cycle Network with signed routes to locations not currently served such as Ryon Hill Business Park and Alcester.

The type of cycle infrastructure that will be provided will depend on a range of factors including road conditions, traffic volume and speeds and the extent and layout of the highway. Encouraging cycling is not simply a case of providing routes, cyclists also require convenient and secure places to leave their bicycle at their destination. Signage that directs cyclists to primary destinations and provides distance and predicted trip duration gives them confidence and will be particularly helpful to visitors and new cyclists less familiar with the cycle route network and geography of the town. Cycle infrastructure must be maintained to a high standard to ensure it is safe and appealing to use.

The London bike hire scheme has generally been considered a success and similar provision could be made within Stratford-upon-Avon to enable visitors and residents who do not have one to make journeys by bicycle.

### ***Walking***

Key pedestrian routes within Stratford-upon-Avon such as Bridge Street, High Street and Tramway Bridge are frequently overcrowded. The existing layout of the town centre with narrow footways and high levels of car access creates



conflict between pedestrians and road users and restricts the free-flow and circulation of pedestrians. The existing pedestrian routes to the town centre from the station and coach and car parks on Bridge Foot require pedestrians to negotiate busy roads and junctions and do not create a positive first impression. The aim is to improve facilities for pedestrians to make walking a more attractive option by improving the routes between key destinations, ensuring routes are safe and fully accessible and by providing more space to circulate.

**(iii) Objectives relevant to this policy:**

- Reduce high car dependency particularly for journey to work and school trips.
- Reduce through trips for motorised vehicles in Stratford town centre.
- Reduce negative impact of traffic on air pollution.
- Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy.
- Improve road safety for all users.
- Encourage modal shift to active forms of travel.
- Accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives.

**(iv) Policies:**

<p><b>Policy 5</b> The County Council and District Council will work together and with other agencies to develop a high quality network of walking and cycling routes and related facilities that support and encourage walking and cycling.</p>
--

Measures that support the delivery of this policy include:

1. Complete a network of high quality and safe cycling and walking routes within Stratford-upon-Avon including:
  - Connecting the south of the town with the town centre.
  - Improved connections to visitor destinations
  - Improved routes into the town centre from gateway locations such as Stratford town railway station, car parks, Park and Ride sites and the Bridgeway coach park.
  - Provide cycle routes that meet user requirements, maximise safety and are designed in accordance with national guidance. Where appropriate and feasible, provide routes that segregate cyclists from other road users.

- Ensure that the design of highway infrastructure meets the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.
  - Ensure sufficient provision of conveniently located cycle parking facilities.
2. Improve provision for cyclists and pedestrians within the town centre by reallocating road space for walking and cycling, prioritising cyclist and pedestrian access and introducing 20mph speed limits in appropriate locations.
  3. Improve and develop the network of inter-urban cycle routes between Stratford-upon-Avon and neighbouring towns and other key destinations in the surrounding countryside including Alcester, Warwick, Wellesbourne, Long Marston, Charlecote and Ryon Hill Business Park.
  4. Improve integration with other transport modes including by providing a better route for cyclists and pedestrians between the railway station and town centre and fully connecting the Stratford town and Parkway railway stations to the cycle route network.
  5. Implement a cycle hire scheme.
  6. Improve route signage for cyclists and pedestrians.
  7. Offer cycle training to schools, businesses and individuals to help people develop the skills and confidence to take advantage of the cycle route network and surrounding road network.
  8. Promote the availability of cycle and walking facilities through measures such as:
    - Promoting Smarter Choices through the County Council's 'Choose How You Move' initiative.
    - Producing and distributing cycle route guides.
    - Encouraging businesses to develop and adopt travel plans.

## **Theme 5: Managing the impact of coaches and long distance buses.**

### **(i) Aim**

To positively manage coach and long distance bus access into Stratford-upon-Avon to minimise the impact these vehicles have on the town centre and to provide an appropriate level of service for operators and passengers.

### **(ii) Context**

Although tourism within Stratford-upon-Avon brings major economic benefits, it also causes environmental problems. One source of these is the large number of coaches that use unsuitable roads, particularly in the historic town centre, Old Town and through Shottery. Removing as many of these vehicles as possible and reducing the amount of time those that need to be in the town centre stop on the roadside will improve traffic flows and the pedestrian experience and improve air quality.

Providing appropriate facilities for coach operators is essential to ensure operators continue to bring visitors to Stratford-upon-Avon and that those visitors find this transport mode attractive. A coach park has operated off Bridgeway for many years with a visitor reception area in the adjacent Leisure Centre complex. It has plenty of space and is relatively accessible to coaches, but is too far from many of the town attractions for visitors, particularly those who are less mobile, to comfortably reach on foot. There are currently no designated drop off or collection stops closer to the town centre.

There is limited commercial coach travel to Stratford-upon-Avon, with National Express operating three services a day from London. These services stop at the coach park off Bridgeway.

A bus/rail interchange outside Stratford railway station, incorporating a bus lay-over facility, is provided as part of the redevelopment of the former Cattle Market site.

### **(iii) Objectives relevant to this policy**

- Reduce through trips for motorised traffic in Stratford town centre.
- Reduce the negative impact of traffic on air quality.
- Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy.

**(iv) Policies**

**Policy 6** The County Council and District Council will apply an integrated approach to managing the way in which buses and coaches access the town centre and other sensitive parts of the town. This will focus on achieving an appropriate balance between the needs of operators and passengers and improving the quality of the local environment.

Measures that support the delivery of this policy include:

1. Restrict coach access to the town centre and other unsuitable routes within Stratford-upon-Avon.
2. Provide appropriate facilities for coach passenger drop-off and collection with coach parking and layover retained within reasonable walking distance of the town centre. Provide a shuttle bus between the coach park, town centre and railway station.
3. A new access to Anne Hathaway's Cottage from the West of Shottery Relief Road will be provided as an alternative to the narrow and unsuitable residential roads in the west of Stratford-upon-Avon and Shottery.

## Theme 6: Managing the impact of HGVs

### (i) Aim

To develop Lorry Routing Strategies to manage/reduce Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) flows travelling through Stratford-upon-Avon whilst maintaining local access.

### (ii) Context

#### **Stratford-upon-Avon**

Freight access to town centres is essential to provide the goods and services for local businesses and consumers. However, the highly competitive nature of the road freight transport sector has often led to the use of larger vehicles in an attempt to increase efficiency. The presence of these vehicles in the historic town centre and on the narrow Clopton Bridge is particularly intimidating to pedestrians and cyclists, and has had a detrimental effect on the local environment, including air quality.

#### **Clopton Bridge**

Clopton Bridge has been structurally assessed as able to carry the HGVs using it. A 12 hour (07.00 to 19.00) survey was undertaken in June 2007 to identify the origins and destinations (ODs) of HGVs crossing Clopton Bridge. The total volume of HGVs crossing Clopton Bridge in that survey was 789 which is consistent with other survey data taken at this location. The survey showed:

- (a) More than half of the HGV traffic using the bridge had an origin or destination within Stratford town itself which is likely to reflect the need for lorries to make local deliveries;
- (b) The dominant through HGV traffic movement on Clopton Bridge was travelling between the A439 and the B4632 and vice versa, which is likely to reflect the importance of commercial activity at Long Marston Depot.

A survey carried out in May 2017 recorded 924 HGVs crossing Clopton Bridge between 07.00 and 19.00, which suggests there has been a significant increase in HGV traffic in Stratford-upon-Avon over the last decade. The County Council has previously considered introducing a weight limit on Clopton Bridge, however analysis showed that this would increase HGV traffic on already congested alternative routes and increase the environmental impact of HGVs on Stratford town centre. The County Council Cabinet therefore resolved in June 2013 to leave the bridge unrestricted.

The proposed West of Shottery Relief Road and South Western Relief Road, which in combination form a complete bypass to the west of the town, could divert some through HGV traffic away from Clopton Bridge and the town

centre. These relief roads are unlikely to enable a weight limit to be imposed on Clopton Bridge because the majority of displaced HGVs would reroute via the shortest alternative route to minimise journey length and fuel costs. This would be either via Seven Meadows Road and Birmingham Road or via the B4086 to Wellesbourne. Both of these routes have existing capacity issues and neither are suitable for large volumes of HGVs.

**(iii) Objectives relevant to this policy**

- Reduce through trips for motorised traffic in Stratford town centre.
- Reduce negative impact of traffic on air quality.
- Protect and enhance the historic core of the town centre and wider area and support the visitor economy.
- Provide increased resilience to the transport network.
- Improve road safety for all users.
- Accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives.

**(iv) Policies**

**Policy 7** The County Council, District Council and other agencies will work together to develop Lorry Routing Strategies to manage and/or reduce Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) flows through Stratford-upon-Avon and other sensitive locations across the District, whilst maintaining local access.

Measures that support the delivery of this policy include:

1. The provision of a full western relief road to reduce the level of HGV through traffic accessing central areas of Stratford-upon-Avon.
2. Give consideration to options for imposing restrictions on HGV access over Clopton Bridge.
3. Review weight and loading restrictions to limit goods vehicle access to the town centre.
4. Establish HGV routing agreements with local freight operators and developers to minimise environmental impacts whilst seeking to maintain efficient access.

5. Promote increased usage of dedicated commercial vehicle Satellite Navigation units by freight operators with neighbouring local authorities, local MPs and other agencies.
6. Manage access to industrial areas in a way which is consistent with the Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 Sustainable Freight Distribution Strategy.

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## Funding

The majority of measures identified in the Transport Strategy are dependent on obtaining the required funding. Securing this funding will be a challenge. There are limited sources of funding available for major transport schemes and those that do come forward tend to be highly competitive and heavily over-subscribed. Most recent major funding streams such as the Local Growth Fund and Housing Infrastructure Fund have been focused on supporting the growth agenda with funding submissions needing to demonstrate how schemes contribute economic benefit or deliver housing.

Funding can be secured for transport mitigation through the planning process when it can be demonstrated that infrastructure investment is required to accommodate the travel demands that will be generated by particular developments. It is this developer led funding that is paying for schemes including the Tiddington Road / Clopton Bridge junction improvements and the South Western Relief Road. As well as accommodating the additional travel demands, such schemes can sometimes also deliver general betterment to the transport network and have an overall advantageous impact. This type of funding is not normally available to pay for general improvements beyond those that can be directly linked to the impact of a particular development.

Warwickshire County Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council have enjoyed success at securing external funding for transport schemes, including from:

- The Growth Deal that is administered locally by Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
- The Department for Transport Pinch Point Funding, which is the primary source of funding for the Birmingham Road scheme.
- The Department for Transport Local Sustainable Transport Fund that funded the majority of Stratford Parkway.

The County Council has also invested internal funding into schemes, including contributing to the forthcoming Birmingham Road scheme.

Both Councils will continue to bid to funding streams when they become available. Successful funding submissions require a worked up scheme that can realistically be delivered within any time restrictions imposed by the funding. The Councils will also continue to work with partners such as Highways England and public transport operators to influence their investment plans and encourage the prioritisation of expenditure on schemes within the Stratford-upon-Avon area.

This strategy provides an important initial step for unlocking external funding opportunities by establishing an overall vision for the future transport system in and around Stratford-upon-Avon. It also provides a framework within which schemes can be considered and developed.



**Stratford-upon-Avon Area Draft  
Transport Strategy  
Consultation Evaluation Report**

**December 2017**



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## 1. Introduction

This report has been written as a companion to the Osiris MR document 'Draft Stratford-upon-Avon Transport Strategy Consultation Feedback (April 2017)' which provides independent analysis of the consultation on the draft strategy that took place at the beginning of 2017 and is included as an appendix to this report. This report has been produced with support and input from Atkins.

The purpose of this document is to set out and respond to the consultation feedback and outline the revisions that will be made to the Transport Strategy in light of the comments that have been made. The starting point is to acknowledge and thank all those people who gave up their time to attend meetings, consider the draft strategy and who responded to the consultation. The consultation generated an extremely high volume of feedback, with more than 900 responses from individuals or organisations.

### 1.1. Background

Warwickshire County Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council agreed to produce a joint transport strategy during the series of Stratford Traffic Summits hosted by Nadhim Zahawi MP that took place during 2014 and 2015. The purpose of the strategy is to identify the general principles that should underlie the future development of the town's transport network so that Stratford-upon-Avon can continue to thrive as a town that meets the needs of local people and as a visitor destination of international significance. Once adopted, the strategy will provide an updated local policy document that supplements the Southern and Western Warwickshire Area Strategy contained within the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26. The development of the strategy has been led by a Project Board with senior elected member and officer representation. The board's current membership is listed below.

- Stratford-on-Avon District Council:
  - Cllr Peter Richards, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Infrastructure.
  - Dave Webb, Executive Director
- Warwickshire County Council:
  - Cllr Jeff Clarke, Portfolio Holder for Transport
  - Mark Ryder, Head of Transport and Economy
- David Tucker, Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership & retired transport planner.

David Tucker's involvement was requested by Nadhim Zahawi MP so that he could input his considerable experience and knowledge of transport planning into the process of preparing the strategy and to represent the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership on the Project Board.

The strategy identifies and responds to the significant current and future challenges facing Stratford's transport system such as congestion, air quality, the availability of land on which to build additional infrastructure, pressure from housing and employment development and balancing the needs of local residents and visitors to Stratford. The strategy should be viewed as a framework or basis from which a more effective transport system can be developed.

One of the recurring comments made in the consultation feedback was that the proposals in the strategy were vague and lacked detail. The purpose of the strategy however, is to set the future general direction of the transport network in Stratford in order to achieve the goals set out in the strategy as objectives. Once the strategy is

agreed a series of defined work streams will emerge that will consider the available options and develop the detailed work programmes required to deliver the strategy. Stakeholder engagement and public consultation will form an integral part of this ongoing work, ensuring that the community continues to have a voice in the development of the plans.

In preparing the draft strategy the County and District Council have built on previous and ongoing work that considers the local and wider transport networks. This includes:

- The Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26, including the Southern and Western Warwickshire Area Strategy that covers Stratford-upon-Avon. (<https://apps.warwickshire.gov.uk/api/documents/WCCC-630-116>)
- The adopted Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011-31 that establishes the spatial vision for Stratford-on-Avon District up to 2031. (<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-regeneration/core-strategy.cfm?frmAlias=/corestrategy/>).
- The series of Strategic Transport Assessments that were prepared to inform the development of the Core Strategy (Local Plan). The assessments considered the implications of a range of land use allocations on the transport network, were informed by detailed traffic modelling studies and identified the transport requirements necessary to support the planned new development. <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-regeneration/transport.cfm>  
The identified transport requirements are listed in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan. (<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/templates/server/document-relay.cfm?doc=173542&name=Appendix%20%20Schedule%20of%20Infrastructur%20Projects%20June%202016.pdf>) and include:
  - The West of Shottery Relief Road
  - The South West Relief Road
  - A package of junction improvements within and around Stratford-upon-Avon known as the Stratford Transport Package.
- The work facilitated by the Town Council to prepare the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Development Plan, which reached consultation stage in May 2017.
- The emerging work by Midland Connect and the A46 Corridor Partnership Group on the strategic role and function of the A46.
- Investment in the local transport infrastructure, which over the last decade has included the Bishopton Park and Ride, Stratford Parkway and Stratford Station Access for All Bridge and bus interchange.

The strategy has taken account of the ongoing dialogue with residents and stakeholders about Stratford's transport system. This has included the views expressed at the Stratford Traffic Summits and the Core Strategy Examination in Public as well discussions with Stratford's key interest groups and organisations to better understand their concerns and requirements from the transport network. The Transport Strategy consultation was a continuation of this dialogue.

Dialogue and feedback has shown general consensus as to the key issues facing Stratford, with the primary concerns being congestion and the impact further housing and employment growth will have on the character of the town and a transport infrastructure already operating under considerable strain. There is however less agreement on how these issues should be tackled. In developing the strategy the

District and County Councils have sought to take an objective position and put forward a package of measures that they believe will best achieve the stated objectives.

## 1.2. The Consultation

Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet endorsed the draft Transport Strategy and approved the consultation in January 2017. At Stratford-on-Avon District Council the decision to approve the consultation was delegated to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and Infrastructure and the decision was also made in January 2017. These decisions followed a joint seminar for elected members from the two Councils held in November 2016.

During December 2016 and January 2017 meetings were held with a number of key organisations within Stratford to discuss the contents of the draft strategy and elicit feedback. This included the Town Council, Strat-Forward, Stratford Town Transport Group, Stratford Town Trust, the RSC, and Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

The public consultation was launched on the 9<sup>th</sup> February at the 4<sup>th</sup> Stratford Traffic Summit to an audience of approximately 250 people. The strategy was presented in summary to the audience and this was followed by a question and answer session hosted by Nadhim Zahawi MP. A further well attended public meeting organised by Tiddington Village Residents' Association took place in Alveston on 27<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the strategy and focused on the proposal for an Eastern Relief Road. The consultation closed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March after a 6 week period.

The consultation was widely publicised in the local media and local interest and stakeholder groups were contacted and invited to make a response to the proposed strategy. The primary means of responding to the consultation was via an online survey held on the Ask Warwickshire Website (<https://askwarks.wordpress.com/2017/02/10/stratford-upon-avon-area-transport-strategy-consultation/>), but responses were welcomed in any written format. The survey asked for an indication of the level of support for the strategy objectives and each of the proposed themes. There was also an opportunity to provide comments on the proposals.

A number of respondents were critical of the decision to structure survey questions around themes, citing that it prevented objections being registered against individual objectives or measures without having to object to all of the objectives or all of the measures within a theme. However, a balance was needed between the survey length and ease of completion. The authors were concerned people would not want to respond to each of the 50 proposed objectives and measures and therefore grouped them into categories. A comments field was provided to enable respondents to raise additional points and make detailed comment. Extensive feedback was provided using the comments fields and a detailed analysis of the feedback given has been undertaken.

In total 910 responses were received including:

- 651 responses to the online survey
- 26 via paper versions of the survey
- 170 responses on a pro-forma response sheet
- 15 responses on a second pro-forma response sheet
- 48 other responses received via email and letter.

The consultation feedback has been independently analysed by Osiris MR, a Market Research consultancy which is a partner to the Market Research Society (MRS) and operates within the MRS Code of Conduct and in accordance with ISO 20252:2012. The independent consultation report is provided in Appendix 1.

### **1.3. Analysis of the Consultation Feedback**

Sections 2 to 9 of this report consider the feedback to the consultation on the draft Stratford-upon-Avon Transport Strategy and explain how the strategy will be amended in light of the comments made. These sections also provide some additional supporting information that was not provided in the original strategy. This section will not detail and respond to every comment or suggestion made, but will instead focus on those subject areas that provoked a substantive volume of comments. The discussion of the consultation feedback is organised in the same way as the strategy and the strategy consultation survey form.

Three issues dominated the consultation feedback; these were:

1. The South West Relief Road and linked to this, but to a lesser extent, the West of Shottery Relief Road
2. The Eastern Relief Road
3. The reinstatement of the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne railway line.

Very few alternative suggestions for improving the transport network in Stratford-on-Avon to those contained within the draft strategy were put forward in the responses to the consultation. Those that have been made have been included in this report.

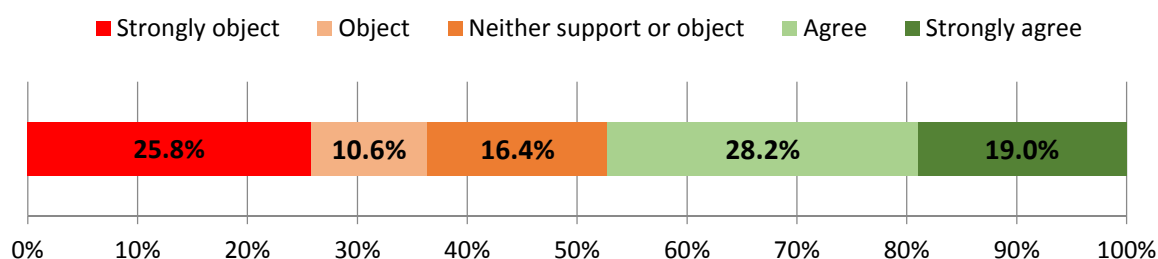
Unless stated otherwise all percentages provided within each theme relate to the total number of respondents who provided comments to each theme, they are not representative of the overall response to the consultation.

## 2. The Strategy Objectives

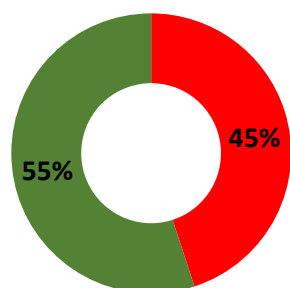
The first part of the consultation survey asked for feedback on the seven objectives proposed in the strategy. These were:

1. Reduce high car dependency particularly for travel to work and school.
2. Reduce through trips for motorised traffic in Stratford Town Centre.
3. Reduce the negative impact of traffic on air pollution.
4. Protect the historic core of Stratford Town and support the visitor economy.
5. Provide increased resilience to the transport network.
6. Improve road safety for all users.
7. Accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives.

**Figure 1: Level of support for the proposed objectives**



■ Slightly or strongly object  
 ■ Slightly or strongly support



If the 106 (16.4%) who neither supported nor objected to the strategy objectives are removed then 45% (250) slightly or strongly objected whilst 55% (304) slightly or strongly agree with the proposed objectives contained in the transport strategy.

*n – 644 respondents*

More people agreed with the proposed strategy objectives than objected to them, with 55% agreeing and 45% of people objecting.

Some respondents recorded that they did not feel they had enough information with which to reach a conclusion and were therefore duty bound to reject the proposed objectives.

*'While these seem to be very worthwhile objectives they are extremely vague and include no information about the evidence on which they are based.'*

This report will provide additional supporting information to further explain the reasoning for some of the proposals. This will include signposting readers to existing published sources of information such as the Strategic Transport Assessments which informed the transport requirements of the Core Strategy.

The survey did not include an option to respond on each individual objective and some respondents felt it necessary to record overall disagreement with the objectives even if they only disagreed with one of the seven objectives.



*'The lack of granularity in the questions makes it impossible to respond thoughtfully to the various individual elements. I therefore have no option but to strongly disagree in all cases. I might be sympathetic to some elements, but as I can't respond to these individual elements I'm obliged to strongly disagree to all questions.'*

Based on the comments made in response to the survey it seems reasonable to assume that this has inflated the level of objections. The opposite could also be true; that respondents who agreed with the majority of objectives chose to register overall agreement, but based on the analysis of the comments made this seems less likely to be the case. The objectives that drew the greatest number of adverse comments were numbers 2 and 7. The remaining objectives recorded very little negative comment.

A significant proportion of the objections were driven by disagreement with specific measures proposed within the strategy rather than the objectives themselves. This is illustrated by the fact that approximately half of those who opposed the objectives and provided comments cited the eastern or south western relief roads within their explanation. Examples include:

*'The objection is based on the Eastern relief Road. There has been no analysis to justify the inclusion of the eastern relief road. With associated housing it will make the traffic situation far worse.'*

*'While I agree with many of the aspirations of the Transport Strategy on reducing pollution and improving public transport, I strongly oppose the inclusion of the South West Relief Road in this plan.'*

A number of respondents, including some who supported the objectives, expressed doubt as to whether the objectives could be delivered by the measures proposed while others were sceptical as to whether relief roads are the answer.

*'Whilst the objectives may be good, the proposed implementation in the strategy is flawed and would not deliver the key objectives.'*

*'It is difficult to see how through trips can be reduced given the proximity of popular destinations to the Clopton Bridge and the centre of Stratford (e.g. the Maybird Centre, the park) - relief roads around the edges of the town will not reduce the traffic to central destinations.'*

The Councils believe that the strategy sets the right direction for transport in Stratford and that the proposed measures provide the best opportunity for achieving the objectives set out in the document.

A number of respondents who disagreed with the objectives, highlighted concerns with the level of development occurring in and around Stratford and the impact this will have on traffic, congestion and the environment in and around the town. Others highlighted concerns that the proposals, particularly the Eastern Relief Road, would only be delivered on the back of further development and that this would be self-defeating in that it would generate yet more traffic.

*'I'm afraid the detail of how you will achieve your objectives will lead to the loss of the 'soul' of the town. Once you surround a town with large over engineered concrete roads it continues to grow and we all end up in urban sprawl. I like many of the ideas in the objectives but roads are not the answer.'*

*'As the strategy says introducing the proposed ERR scheme would involve additional housing to fund it. This would just compound the traffic issues...'*

*'Trying to stop the flow of traffic passing through Stratford in creating bypasses is ridiculous as they would need financing and that would be by developers who would create more housing which means more traffic'*

The background and analysis that led to the inclusion of both the South Western Relief Road (SWRR) and Eastern Relief Road (ERR) in the strategy is discussed in more detail in section 3 of this report. However it is worth highlighting that the modelling work carried out to help inform the housing allocations within the adopted Core Strategy identified that the SWRR is required to accommodate the additional traffic that will be generated from the housing development at Long Marston Airfield. Furthermore, without provision of such a road there would be significant increases in congestion and journey delay, particularly to the west of Stratford and at Clopton Bridge. The modelling work that led to these conclusions is available in a series of Strategic Transport Assessments that are signposted and discussed later in this report.

It is not the purpose of the Transport Strategy to review the land allocations made within the Core Strategy or the transport requirements identified as being necessary to accommodate planned growth. The Core Strategy was subject to public consultation and was assessed by an independent Planning Inspector prior to being adopted. Part of the examination included reviewing the proposed transport requirements. The strategy has sought to capture these transport requirements and place them into the wider context of an overall transport strategy.

The proposal for the ERR is different to the SWRR in that it is not required to accommodate development and is not identified within the Core Strategy. An ERR could however be of benefit to the overall transport network in Stratford. Traffic modelling has indicated that delivering an ERR in addition to the SWRR, even if it was accompanied by additional housing growth, would relieve congestion in key areas of the town. This, the modelling suggests, would create the opportunity to introduce additional pedestrian priority schemes within the town centre and introduce HGV restrictions on Clopton Bridge. This is discussed in greater detail under Theme 1 in section 3 of this report.

A number of respondents, both those who agreed and objected to the objectives highlighted the need for measures that promote modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport. Some suggested that the objectives and strategy proposals were too car centric and that other solutions are needed, while others questioned how realistic the objective of reducing the impact of air pollution was given the level of development taking place in and around Stratford and the proposals for the new road infrastructure.

*'I strongly support measures which encourage cycling and walking. Car users need financial incentives to use Park and Ride.'*

*'Making the town centre and its access points better for pedestrians / mob impaired / bikes / buses HAS TO BE priority - only then will you start to see a drop off in the number of short i.e. less than 2 mile trips - all of which could be made without using private car.'*

The strategy includes a number of significant proposals to develop road infrastructure in and around Stratford-upon-Avon. These are designed to accommodate the

additional traffic that will be generated by development as well as to reduce overall congestion levels. However, the District and County Council are satisfied that the strategy has an appropriate balance between car travel and more sustainable forms of transport. In preparing the strategy the District and County Councils took the view that achieving modal shift is a vital component of the overall strategy and while not explicitly stated in these terms within the objectives it is implicit within objectives 1 and 3, and deeply rooted within objectives 4, 6 and 7. The development of public transport, walking and cycling form two of the six themes within the strategy and each is supported by a series of proposed measures.

A small number of respondents suggested that the planned housing and employment growth coupled with the proposals for additional road infrastructure would act against the objective of reducing the negative impact of traffic on air quality. As stated earlier, it is not the role of the transport strategy to challenge the growth identified in the Core Strategy. It has therefore been necessary to consider ways of accommodating the growth whilst also improving air quality. The strategy has done this by identifying measures that reduce the amount of stationary, queuing vehicles which is the main source of pollution from traffic. The strategy has also proposed measures to encourage modal shift, whilst recognising that the car will remain the primary form of transport for the majority of people living in a rural district such as Stratford-on-Avon. In addition, and following feedback to the consultation, the revised transport strategy will place greater emphasis on encouraging a switch to electric vehicles which will reduce the level of harmful pollutants being emitted within the town.

A small number of respondents expressed their opposition to objective 4; protect the historic core of Stratford Town and support the visitor economy, highlighting that they felt the needs of residents and the local community should be prioritised over the needs of visitors.

*'The road system should be for the benefit of those who live and work in the town. The tourists are an added bonus but most are only here for a few hours.'*

*'Need to ensure that the people of the town and district can use the town and be able to park to shop and use the banks etc and it is not just a tourist attraction.'*

*'... in terms of supporting the visitor economy - Councils seem to have forgotten that it is the residents who pay their Council Tax and yet our environment is compromised as the visitors are constantly pandered to...'*

The strategy has sought to balance the needs of residents of the town and district with visitors from farther afield and it is considered that overall the measures proposed will benefit all groups. It is recognised however that it will be important to maintain a dialogue with the local community to ensure their needs are fully considered as detail is added to the proposals put forward in the strategy.

Two respondents suggested extending the scope of the objectives. One of these suggested incorporating an ambition of making the town more attractive and accessible to visitors.

*'We support all the key objectives set out in the consultation document. In addition we would like the objectives to include specific references to improving the attraction of Stratford-on-Avon as a destination which is easy to visit.'*

Although not specifically stated in these terms, this is partly covered by objective 4 and is implicit within a number of the themes within the strategy, particularly theme 2 which contains the aim; ‘to ensure Stratford-upon-Avon and the wider District benefit from good strategic connectivity....’ Objective 4 will however be revised to reflect the need to not just protect the historic core, but to use the opportunity presented by the transport strategy to enhance both the historic core and the wider town area, which in itself would serve to make the town more attractive to visitors.

The second suggestion was to explicitly promote improved health and social inclusion through the objectives.

*‘The strategy ought to make explicit an objective to improve health, and support healthier behaviours, including active travel, and reduce the negative impacts of transport and travel on health. In addition the strategy needs to improve social inclusion. Not all adults are car owners. In fact, the visitor and retail economy in Stratford town centre depends to a very great extent on relatively low-paid, and relatively young staff. The Strategy makes no reference to this. Making significantly better provision for sustainable modes improves social inclusion...’*

These suggestions are referenced within the draft strategy to varying extents; social inclusion is implicit within a number of themes and measures within the strategy and improving the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors forms part of the aim of theme 4. It is agreed, however that both health and social inclusion should form part of the overall strategy objectives and the objectives will therefore be revised accordingly.

A further point that was made was that the objectives concentrate on improving Stratford-upon-Avon town centre and that some of the proposed solutions are to the detriment of outlying areas. This point is particularly linked to the planned SWRR and the proposed ERR and concerns about the impact of these roads on the wider environment of Stratford. Many of the current transport problems that the strategy is seeking to solve are focused on central parts of Stratford. The strategy has, however taken an area wide approach to identifying solutions. Inevitably some of the measures will benefit some people more than they will others, but overall it is considered that the emerging strategy is the correct approach for Stratford-upon-Avon and an approach that will bring the greatest benefit to the widest group of people.

## **2.1. Conclusion**

A greater number of respondents supported the proposed objectives than opposed them. The analysis of the feedback suggests that the disagreement with the proposed objectives was mainly due to opposition to some of the measures put forward to achieve the objectives rather than disagreement with the actual objectives. Respondents also requested that additional supporting information be presented within the strategy and this will be done.

Overall, it has been concluded that the objectives set the right direction for the transport strategy, however in response to feedback the following revisions will be made:

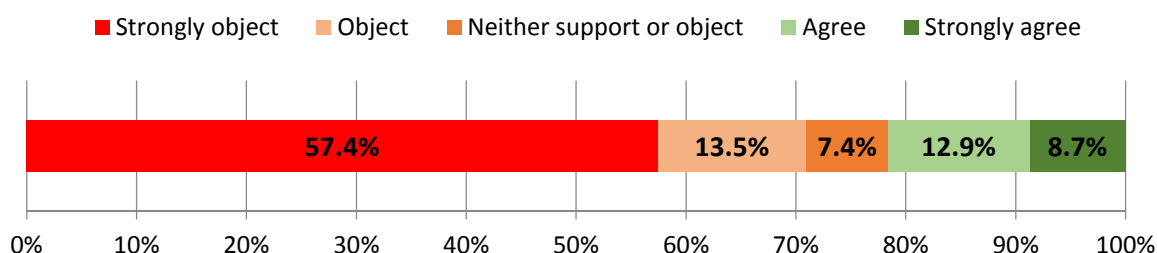
1. Objective 4 will be broadened to reflect the need to not just protect the historic core, but to use the opportunity presented by the transport strategy to enhance both the historic core and the wider town area.
2. An objective will be added to cover the health benefits that can be derived from an improved and more sustainable transport system.
3. An objective will be added that promotes social inclusion.

### 3. Theme 1: Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon.

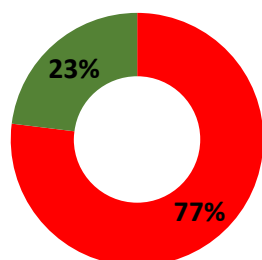
People were asked to indicate their level of support for the following measures that were proposed in theme 1 of the draft Stratford-upon-Avon Draft Transport Strategy:

1. A full western relief road between the A46 Alcester Road and A3400 Shipston Road, including an additional crossing of the River Avon.
2. A further relief road around the eastern side of the town to provide an alternative route to the M40 and reduce traffic in the town centre.
3. Provision of a link road with facilities for pedestrians and cyclists between Alcester Road and Birmingham Road via Western Road and either Hamlet Way or Wharf Road/Maybrook Road to ease congestion on alternative routes.
4. Impose restrictions on vehicular access to Clopton Bridge (requires delivery of an eastern relief road).
5. Traffic management measures that improve traffic flow and the conditions for walking and cycling such as junction improvements, the use of modern technology and specific measures for buses. This will also include the Birmingham Road corridor enhancements.
6. Improve the infrastructure and facilities for cycling and walking.
7. Revise the function and design of town centre streets to reduce traffic and improve the public realm, including providing better conditions for pedestrians and cyclists.
8. Focus parking at out of town centre locations, including through the provision of improved Park and Ride facilities.
9. Create additional resilience within the transport network to manage the influx of visitors associated with large events through the establishment of temporary Park and Ride facilities and enhanced public transport.
10. Review direction signs to route road users on key strategic routes and away from the town centre.
11. Use signage to encourage road users to park in Park and Ride facilities.
12. Provide frequent and swift bus services, with bus priority, between Park and Ride facilities and the town centre, via other key destinations.
13. Encourage sustainable travel options including:
  - a. Promote smarter choices through the 'Choose How You Move' initiative
  - b. Promote car sharing initiatives
  - c. Support workplace / school travel planning.

**Figure 2: Level of opposition and support for the proposed theme 1 measures**



■ Slightly or strongly object  
■ Slightly or strongly support



If the 46 (7.4%) who neither supported or objected to theme 1 of the strategy are removed then 77% (440) slightly or strongly objected whilst 23% (134) slightly or strongly agreed with the proposed measures in theme 1 of the transport strategy.

*n – 620 respondents*

There was a high level of opposition to theme 1, with 77% of respondents objecting to the proposed measures. As well as recording the highest proportion of objections, this theme received the greatest number of comments (436) of all the six themes. This highlights the contentious nature of some of the proposed measures within it. It is worth noting that 13% of people who made comments about this theme stated that they agreed with some but not all measures.

*'I support some but object to others but this survey doesn't provide the opportunity to separate them so I'm forced to object to all.'*

*'Some I support, but not all. This is a badly constructed question.'*

*'I feel unable to support when the question links all the objectives together.'*

The concerns raised were primarily focused on the proposals to construct relief roads to the west and east of Stratford-upon-Avon. Just under 10% (42) of the comments made about this theme objected to the general principle and proposed approach to building relief roads, while a further 35% (153) of comments specifically objected to the proposal to build an Eastern Relief Road and a further 12% (52) objected to the proposal for the South Western Relief Road.

This section of the report will consider each of these key areas, looking initially at responses to the general principle of relief roads and then responses made to each of the three individual components that make up the overall relief road proposal; the West of Shottery Relief Road (WSRR), South Western Relief Road (SWRR) and the Eastern Relief Road (ERR). The remaining measures presented as part of this theme received relatively few comments and will be considered in the final part of this section.

### **3.1. General Principle of Relief Roads**

Approximately 10% (42) of the comments made in response to this theme objected to the general principle of building relief roads around Stratford-upon-Avon.

The majority of comments in opposition to relief roads stated an objection to one or other of the proposed relief roads, but did not contain an outright rejection of the need for relief roads or the general principle of relief roads. Much of the opposition to both the SWRR and the ERR was based on the proposed locations/routes of the roads and the impact they would have on the specific area in which they are proposed. A small number of respondents pitted the two roads against each other stating they rejected relief road 'x', but supported relief road 'y'. This suggests acceptance of the need for additional road infrastructure, but a preference for one option over the other.

*'I suggest that the proposed relief road to the south-west is unnecessary and inappropriate. A suitable relief road to the east of the town connecting the A3400 to the A439 Warwick Road, picking up the Tiddington Road, should enable the majority of HGVs and through traffic to get to the A46 thus avoiding the town centre.'*

*'Whist I appreciate the need to reduce the amount of traffic in the town centre I fail to understand why you are considering putting a relief road between the B439 and Shipston Road..... One would hope that common sense would prevail and channel efforts into building an Eastern Relief Road so that traffic travelling from the Shipston and Banbury Roads towards the A46/M40 would be diverted around the town (saving Clopton Bridge)?'*

*'A relief road around the eastern side of the town is not necessary. All heavy traffic which currently travels from the M40 side of Stratford could easily be diverted via the A46 and a Western relief road.'*

Other people who objected to the measures in this theme accepted the need to build additional road capacity to relieve Stratford-upon-Avon's traffic problems, but suggested that the proposals needed to be amended. For example, 11 responses to the online survey suggested that the proposed relief roads need to be built farther away from the town and in the form of more ambitious bypasses, whereas 9 comments about the ERR said the road would only work if it included a river crossing and connected with the A439. These points will be picked up in further detail within the discussion of each of these roads.

*'Proposals for relief roads are too near town centre. Why are they not possible further away from the town centre?'*

*'A 'ring road' system is desperately needed to ease congestion on the approach roads into the town.'*

*'Take a blank sheet of paper and let's go for a bypass and not relief roads that actually will make the problem worse, because, like water, motorists will find the easiest and quickest way round. A bypass will allow a smooth flow round the town.'*

A relief road that is constructed closer to Stratford can be expected to attract more traffic than a bypass built farther away and will therefore have more potential to reduce traffic levels within the town. This is because a relief road, due to its proximity to the town, is likely to capture local redistribution of trips as well as through trips, whereas an outer bypass built farther out is likely to attract mainly through trips which do not have an origin or destination within the town. In addition, a bypass is likely to extend trip distance and, depending on conditions, journey time and will not therefore be sufficiently attractive to divert traffic away from shorter and more direct routes.

Twelve respondents to the online survey suggested that relief roads were not the right response to Stratford's problems because they would not address what they considered to be the primary cause of the congestion in Stratford, namely the high volume of traffic with origins or destinations within the urban area.

*'Studies have repeatedly shown that Stratford's congestion is caused mainly by internal traffic flows and that the proposed eastern and western bypasses will do little to alleviate this. Top priority should be 'measures which ease internal traffic flows.'*

*'Relief roads' will not help because traffic heading into town or crossing the town will still do so. Even if they use a relief road for part of that journey they still have to enter the town via existing congested approach roads.'*

*'Through trips are not the problem. People want to come into the town, not drive around it.'*

A large volume of traffic within Stratford is making crosstown trips or seeking to reach destinations within the town. However, a significant proportion of traffic is routing through the town and the volumes of traffic doing this will increase in the future, particularly as a result of development to the south of the river which generates traffic that will want to reach the A46 / M40 areas. Without additional road capacity, this will increase the pressure on areas that already suffer congestion, particularly around Clopton Bridge and junctions on the west of Stratford. The proposed relief roads will

provide traffic seeking to make these journeys a quicker and more attractive routing option and will take traffic away from congested areas which will enable the additional traffic being generated by growth to be accommodated and at the same time help alleviate some of the existing traffic problems within the town. This effect has been demonstrated through transport modelling and will be discussed in further detail later in this section.

A further small group of respondents (10) who objected to this theme did so on the basis that they felt existing road capacity could be released through greater investment in other forms of transport, such as public transport and cycling infrastructure. It was felt that this could negate the need for relief roads and provide a better solution to Stratford-upon-Avon's transport problems than building relief roads.

*'New roads create new travel opportunities, thus more traffic. An alternative to the car is needed.'*

*'Measures to improve local traffic flow within the town completely miss the point that congestion can only be alleviated by reducing traffic volume entering the town, which means a step change in public transport provision.'*

The Councils are satisfied with the range of sustainable transport improvements proposed within the strategy and believe that these will help deliver the strategy objectives. While sustainable transport forms an important part of the overall solution, it cannot solve all of the transport issues facing Stratford; additional road capacity needs to form part of the solution.

Some of the objections put forward against the proposals for relief roads (71) relate to the link with housing growth. These objections included opposition to the planned level of house building in the area and concerns that the proposals would result in even greater levels of house building either by creating new boundaries to the town that would lead to infill building or due to needing significant financial contributions from developers. There were also concerns that house building would generate additional traffic that would simply fill any additional road capacity and exacerbate the existing problems. These objections also included concerns as to the urbanising effect that relief roads would have on outlying areas and surrounding villages.

*'The real problem is Stratford Council giving the green light to huge housing developments that have overwhelmed the regional infrastructure.'*

*'Building fewer houses would help our poor infrastructure, not eating into valuable countryside.'*

*'I am very worried that the relief roads will damage the environment around Stratford and that they will then provide new boundaries so that even more unsuitable housing developments are allowed. Should we be thinking about a maximum desirable population for the town?'*

*'The proposed measures are costly and are unaffordable without significant contributions from developers in return for extensive numbers of houses.'*

*'Whilst broadly agreeing with the proposals, I would caveat this with a concern about the possible high level of housebuilding required to finance the two proposed relief roads.'*

*'And if such roads are developer-funded it will just create a lot of additional traffic from new housing.'*



The volume of houses that need to be built to meet local need was established through the adopted Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy process and set at 14,600 new homes within the District between 2011 and 2031. The Core Strategy also set out a policy for bringing these homes forward, including identifying strategic housing sites at Long Marston Airfield and Gaydon Lighthorne Heath. This level of housing growth, coupled with planned employment growth, will have an impact on the transport network, particularly given the existing transport issues experienced in the area. To this end, the County Council as Local Highway Authority worked closely with the District Council during the development of the Core Strategy to identify the transport infrastructure required to accommodate the planned growth and this is captured within the Core Strategy Infrastructure Delivery Plan. It is not the role of the Transport Strategy to revisit the housing need or land allocation policies contained within the Core Strategy, or to review the transport requirements identified as being required to accommodate the planned growth as these have already been through a thorough and rigorous process of assessment and review.

The concern that the proposed relief roads would open up additional land to development by extending the boundaries of town is understood and there are examples of where this type of infill development has taken place. However, the Core Strategy has set the local policy for land allocation up until 2031 and this will enable Stratford-on-Avon District Council to resist inappropriate development proposals. In the longer term such infill locations could become attractive propositions; however the long-term risk of development in these locations has to be balanced against the need to ensure that the local transport system continues to operate effectively.

The concerns that the proposed relief roads would require additional significant housing development beyond that already allocated within the Core Strategy relate primarily to the proposal for the ERR. The ERR was included within the strategy because traffic modelling has identified that an ERR in addition to the complete western relief road (SWRR & WSRR) would bring benefits in reducing traffic within central areas of the town. These benefits are discussed in more detail later in this section. The draft Transport Strategy stated that it would be likely that an ERR would need to be funded by development. There are however, alternative funding sources such as Government grants that could provide the necessary funding. There is no suggestion that an ERR would or could come forward alongside housing development within the current Core Strategy period; the adopted Core Strategy does not make provision for a development allocation that could progress an ERR. Given the potential benefits that such a road could deliver it is considered important that this remains an option for Stratford and part of the transport strategy. The strategy will be amended to state that potential funding options for an ERR will be explored and a broad overview of funding options for transport infrastructure will be provided in a new section within the revised strategy.

Other objections to the construction of relief roads (49) were based around concerns over the impact the roads would have on the environment and character of Stratford-upon-Avon. Points raised included:

- air quality
- loss of valued countryside
- impact on views
- increased noise and light pollution
- impact on historic settings

- impact on flooding.

These objections tended to be made in reference to either the SWRR or the ERR, however they share common characteristics and it is therefore appropriate to respond to these concerns in this section.

*'I'm afraid the detail of how you will achieve your objectives will lead to the loss of the 'soul' of the town. Once you surround a town with large over engineered concrete roads it continues to grow and we all end up in urban sprawl.'*

*'I think careful consideration should be made for the impact on existing residential areas (especially those close to town) to ensure that traffic (and therefore pollution etc) is not increased in these areas as a by-product of the proposal.'*

*'An Eastern relief road would be a bad idea, since this would involve ripping up the landscape surrounding Stratford that is a huge draw for both tourists and residents. I personally feel that it would be sacrilegious to scar the landscape by building a large, industrial road, forgetting the huge pollution caused by its construction.'*

*'The impact of a road to the south-west would have a devastating effect upon an area of great natural landscape beauty, the environment generally and local residents and, therefore, should not be considered as an option in the overall strategy considerations.'*

*'The planned road [SWRR] will have catastrophic environmental and visual impacts in an area of Stratford that we should be seeking to preserve for residents and visitors alike. '*

It is understandable that people who value the special qualities of Stratford-Upon-Avon will want to protect the town from further development and urban expansion. However, the strategy has had to consider a wider range of local, regional and national issues, including the need to support the planned economic growth and housing provision of the District by ensuring appropriate transport infrastructure whilst taking account of issues such as protecting and enhancing the environment. The District and County Councils believe the strategy has struck the right balance between these varying needs.

It should also be highlighted that schemes as significant as a relief road require planning permission and an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has to be submitted with an application for consideration by the Planning Authority. This ensures that matters such as ecology and nature conservation, noise, air quality and water environment are fully considered within the planning decision. In addition, a Sustainability Appraisal was produced during the preparation of the Core Strategy to assess the environmental impact of the strategic development proposals that included the Long Marston Airfield Site and SWRR. This was considered by the independent Planning Inspector who found the Core Strategy to be sound.

While few in number compared to comments opposing the relief roads, a small number of respondents did express support for the proposals.

*'Western relief road great -make it happen. Eastern relief road great - make it happen.'*

*'Relief roads are the only answer, vehicles not wishing or who have no need to enter the town could simply go round if the road system were available, hence lessening the traffic within the town centre.'*

*'I do not believe you can have an Eastern relief road without having a Western relief road!... Unfortunately, rightly or wrongly I believe long-term we will need both to deal with Stratford and the developing area of Long Marston and Quinton.'*

*'In addition to 'through' traffic, there are a large number of people living South of the river who commute to the North and West of the Town Centre (e.g. to Coventry etc.). These people require an Eastern route and Western route around the town as the Clopton Bridge is blocked during rush hour, especially for Banbury road traffic who cannot get across the roundabout at end of Shipston Road.'*

### **3.2. West of Shottery Relief Road (WSRR)**

A small proportion, just over 2% (10) of comments on this theme, expressed opposition to the West of Shottery Relief Road (WSRR). This road is a planning condition to mitigate against the impact of the 800 houses being built on the west of Shottery development. The 2km road will connect the A46 at the Wildmoor Roundabout with the B439 Evesham Road near the entrance to the racecourse. The road has planning permission and is proceeding through a technical approval process with the County Council. The planning condition requires the road to be completed either within two years of the start of construction or prior to the occupation of the 300<sup>th</sup> dwelling in the northern section. It is currently expected that construction will start in early 2018.

The primary objection to the WSRR is that it has been designed as an estate road and will not be suitable for the volume of traffic that will be attracted to it, particularly when traffic originating from the south of Stratford and developments around Long Marston is fed onto it by the SWRR. A small number of comments suggested the road would simply move congestion to another part of Stratford and there were concerns that the new road would increase congestion where it connects with the B439 via a new roundabout.

*'The western relief road around Shottery was originally planned as an estate road and should not be portrayed as being fit for purpose as part of a relief road, it will just move traffic congestion elsewhere. The western relief road is an estate road, not a main highway.'*

*'The Western Relief Road will not be suitable for heavy traffic and would present a high safety risk, with 3 traffic islands and a 30 mph speed limit, running through a residential area.'*

*'...Furthermore, the roundabout on Evesham Road with increased traffic along the proposed South Western Relief Road will increase the standing traffic queues up Bordon Hill during rush hours, encouraging the use of Luddington Road as a "rat-run".'*

The Draft Transport Strategy identifies that the WSRR will combine with the SWRR, which links the B439 Evesham Road with the A3400 Shipston Road and is a requirement of the Long Marston Airfield site, to form a complete western relief road. This is considered essential to support the scale of development being proposed at Long Marston Airfield and it has been demonstrated through modelling that the two roads will enable the additional traffic that will be generated by the development to be accommodated on the road network. It also shows that the network will perform satisfactorily.

The specification and standard to which the WSRR is being built makes it a suitable route for high volumes of traffic. The road consists of three sections. The most

northerly section runs south from the A46 Wildmoor Roundabout for 1km to a roundabout that provides access into the northern section of housing and is expected to have a speed limit of 50mph. A second section connects to a further roundabout that provides access to the rear of Anne Hathaway's Cottage and the final section connects to a new roundabout on the B439 by Luddington Lane. The second and third sections are expected to have a 30mph speed limit. The road will have a standard width of 7.3m, the same as Seven Meadows Road, widening on the southernmost section to accommodate three right hand turn lanes that provide access into the estate areas. While a small number of houses are expected to be built within close proximity of the southern section of the WSRR, the majority of housing will be set back from the road and all housing is accessed via minor estate roads.

### 3.3. South Western Relief Road (SWRR)

The inclusion of the South Western Relief Road in the strategy generated a significant volume of comments. It is important to stress that the SWRR was included in the strategy as essential infrastructure required to facilitate the housing and employment growth identified in the Core Strategy. Its inclusion brings the strategy into line with the adopted Core Strategy.

The vast majority of comments about the SWRR objected to the road and these made up 12% (52) of comments to this theme. The reasons for the objections varied but included suggestions that the road is not required, will not resolve existing congestion and has no evidence base. Concerns over the impact of the road on the environment and local community were also raised.

*'There is no study on traffic movement to support it. There is no doubt the new road will actually increase traffic, noise and pollution.'*

*'It is disproportionate to build the SWRR simply for traffic generated from the Long Marston Airfield development to gain access to Alcester and the A46.'*

*'Whilst the Western Relief Road [WSRR] from the B439 to the A46 is already approved, this additional road will be a disaster! It will relieve nothing!'*

*'The main issues that Stratford currently has is the congestion over the Clopton Bridge leading onto the Birmingham Road. This Western Relief road Strategy will have minimum effect on the issues that we have now and indeed the only real effect that it will have will be to deter people from using the racecourse and walking along the Greenway.'*

*'I feel the proposed route of the western relief road which is development led, will just move congestion to other parts of the town. IE: a roundabout at the bottom of Borden hill will just cause more problems on the Evesham Road with queuing well beyond Dodwell, and back towards town.'*

The SWRR will provide a new route between the A3400 Shipston Road with the B439 Evesham Road where it will connect with the West of Shottery Relief Road to provide a link to the A46 at Wildmoor. The two roads together combine to provide a complete western relief road.

The SWRR was identified in the Strategic Transport Assessments that were carried out to provide the evidence base for the Core Strategy as being required to mitigate the highway impacts of development to the south-west of Stratford-upon-Avon. These

reports are available here: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-regeneration/transport.cfm>.

The key points to emerge from this work are as follows:

- The original Strategic Transport Assessment (October 2012) and subsequent Phase 2 report (June 2013) identified that an additional highway crossing over the River Avon was required to accommodate the anticipated level of growth. Without this there would be unacceptable increases in congestion around the existing river crossings. It also concluded that growth to the south east necessitated a relief road on the eastern side of Stratford, whereas growth to the south west necessitated a relief road on the western side of Stratford.
- It was later identified that the trigger point for the SWRR would be reached when 400 of the 3,500 homes allocated to Long Marston Airfield had been built. The initial 400 homes have received planning permission. A planning application for the remaining homes and the SWRR is expected to be submitted in spring 2018.
- The SWRR would accommodate the Long Marston Garden Village and deliver significant benefit to the operation of the highway network within the town centre and junctions to the west of Stratford.
- The modelling identified that traffic travelling between south / southwest Stratford and the A46 / M40 would utilise the SWRR and WSRR in preference to existing routes through Stratford.

The road was subsequently included in modifications to the Core Strategy as an essential piece of infrastructure required to enable the full development of the identified strategic housing site at Long Marston Airfield on the understanding that the road would be provided by the site promoter. The Core Strategy safeguards the land required for the SWRR.

Prior to being adopted the various iterations of the Core Strategy went through a process of consultation and submission to the Secretary of State and this culminated in an Examination in Public conducted by an independent Planning Inspector. The identification of Long Marston Airfield as a strategic location for new development and the associated SWRR was found to be sound by the Inspector, who reached this conclusion having considered the evidence and heard the arguments both for and against the scheme.

Further evidence in support of the SWRR is provided in the findings of The Evaluation of Additional Road Capacity study carried out in 2015-16 to evaluate the high level impacts of the provision of additional highway capacity in Stratford. This took account of the Core Strategy aspirations and commitments and therefore incorporated the housing and employment allocations within the Core Strategy, including the Long Marston Airfield site. The study was commissioned by the County Council and carried out by transport consultants Atkins and Vectos. The study reinforced earlier findings that the SWRR is critical to mitigate against the Long Marston Airfield site. It also found that with the strategic land allocations made by the Core Strategy the SWRR performed better than an ERR. It was found to provide the most benefits for Stratford-upon-Avon town centre in terms of traffic reduction and therefore gave the best opportunity for potential demand management and associated public realm improvements in this area. It was also found to integrate well with the West of Shottery Relief Road.

In response to dialogue with the local community the District and County Councils prepared a joint evidence report on the SWRR. The South Western Relief Road Evidence Report (July 2017) sets out the background and evidence base for the road and is available online and is a useful starting point for reviewing the evidence and history that led to the SWRR being included in the Core Strategy and draft Transport Strategy. The report can be found here:

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/206124/name/SWRR%20Evidence%20Report%20July%202017.pdf>).

It should be noted that the transport assessments and modelling carried out to date have been done at a strategic level. The Long Marston Airfield site promoter will be required to carry out further detailed modelling work to assess and analyse the impact of the development and SWRR on the local transport network as part of the planning application for the additional 3,100 homes that is expected to come forward in spring 2018. This work will provide a further opportunity to understand and consider local impacts and may lead to further mitigation being required.

While few in number, some respondents did express support for the road.

*'I strongly support the WRR, part of which has planning permission (Shottery element) and part of which is safeguarded in the recently adopted Core Strategy and will be delivered as part of the Long Marston Garden Village'.*

The position of both Stratford-on-Avon District Council and Warwickshire County Council is that the SWRR is required transport mitigation for the Long Marston Airfield and will also help alleviate traffic congestion in Stratford-upon-Avon. The road forms part of the adopted Core Strategy and its inclusion within the Transport Strategy aligns the two strategies.

### **3.4. Eastern Relief Road (ERR)**

The Eastern Relief Road was the most contentious measure to be proposed both within this theme and the overall draft strategy and it also elicited the highest volume of comments. While a small number of respondents expressed support for the ERR approximately 35% of comments made in response to this theme specifically objected to the proposal. It was also the main subject of discussion at a public meeting organised by the Tiddington Village Residents' Association in response to the draft strategy. The meeting that was attended by approximately 200 people took place on the 27<sup>th</sup> February with attendees overwhelmingly registering their opposition to the proposal.

The main reasons given for objecting to the ERR were that the proposal lacked detail, the road is not required and that the impact of building the road would be too great, particularly if further house building was required to fund the road.

A number of responses to the consultation questioned whether the evidence base was sufficient to justify the ERR and the assertion that vehicular restrictions on Clopton Bridge are dependent on an ERR being delivered. Other comments suggested that the Western Relief Road (SWRR & WSRR) would perform the same role as an ERR.

*'There does not seem to be enough modelling or need for an eastern relief road.'*

*'Where is the evidence to show an eastern relief road would reduce traffic on the Clopton Bridge?'*

*As I understand it, no modelling has been done to assess the Eastern Relief Road or its impacts-how then can it be proposed as a scheme to help Clopton Bridge when this has never been tested?*

*'A relief road around the eastern side of the town is not necessary. All heavy traffic which currently travels from the M40 side of Stratford could easily be diverted via the A46 and a Western relief road.'*

*'In my view the already agreed WRR would probably obviate any need for the ERR for decades.'*

A number of the Strategic Transport Assessments (STAs) conducted between 2012 and 2015 to support the development of the Stratford-on-Avon District Council Core Strategy considered the role of an Eastern Relief Road, but did so within the context of a significant allocation of housing in southeast Stratford. These assessments can be viewed online: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-regeneration/transport.cfm>. The assessments consistently found that an ERR that connected the A422 Banbury Road with the A439 Warwick Road (full ERR) would not only accommodate this scale of development, but would also improve overall network conditions and that this would present opportunities to make further advantageous changes to the transport infrastructure in central areas. The full ERR was shown to reduce congestion within central areas of Stratford including Clopton Bridge, the Gyratory and Warwick Road. The June 2013 STA for example, concluded that an ERR may provide the opportunity to introduce further pedestrian priority schemes within the town centre and would provide the opportunity to introduce an HGV restriction on Clopton Bridge with minimal impact on HGVs or other road users.

The STAs identified that an ERR that did not include a further river crossing, and instead connected to the A429 at Wellesbourne via a route that took traffic north east from the A422 Banbury Road to the B4086 between Alveston and Tiddington and on via an improved B4086 Wellesbourne Road (partial ERR) was shown to be far less effective, leading to its exclusion from some of the assessments.

The 'Evaluation of Additional Road Capacity' study referred to above and carried out in 2015-16 reached the following conclusions that are relevant to the ERR being included in the Transport Strategy:

- The SWRR is critical to mitigate against the Long Marston Airfield site and performed better than the ERR in the context of the land allocations in the adopted Core Strategy.
- The best results came from delivering both the SWRR and ERR, with queues and journey delays reduced significantly across Stratford, including in the town centre, on the gyratory, Warwick Road and at junctions to the south west of Stratford.
- A partial Eastern Relief Road (route via Wellesbourne) would not address the key issue of a lack of cross river capacity, thereby limiting its ability to reduce the number of through trips in Stratford town centre.

The modelling work carried out over the last five years has shown that the ERR is not needed to accommodate the growth identified in the adopted Core Strategy. If it had been necessary, it would have been included as essential transport infrastructure required to mitigate the effect of the planned development. However, the STAs and the Additional Highway Capacity Study evidences that a full ERR delivered together with the SWRR and other transport mitigation identified through the Core Strategy process

will deliver improvements to the overall transport network in Stratford, even if accompanied by further housing. This is because the ERR would take traffic away from central areas and in so doing would free up existing highway capacity. The modelling identified that this could offer opportunities to introduce further pedestrian priority schemes within the town centre and to introduce HGV restrictions to Clopton Bridge.

The specific issue of restricting HGV access to Clopton Bridge is discussed further within the evaluation of responses to Theme 6 in Section 8 of this report. However, the general principle behind the proposal is that an ERR would provide the road capacity required to accommodate displaced HGVs travelling to / from the M40 with an acceptable alternative route. Without an ERR displaced HGVs would predominantly divert to the shortest alternative route; either via Seven Meadows Road and Birmingham Road or via the B4086 to Wellesbourne. Both of these routes have existing capacity issues and neither are suitable for large volumes of HGVs. Routes via the SWRR / WSRR, or to join the A429 farther to the south are unlikely to attract HGVs due to the additional distance that would be added to journeys. This is because HGVs will normally select the most direct available route to minimise fuel costs.

It is recognised that a significant proportion of HGVs that cross Clopton Bridge do so to reach destinations within the confines of the town and it would have to be accepted that the majority of these vehicles would use Severn Meadows Road as an alternative to cross the river and access the town. However, the number of these journeys can be predicted to reduce in the future as some businesses move out of town centre locations as part of the Canal Quarter regeneration plans. In addition, some of the vehicles currently using Seven Meadows Road can be expected to transfer to the SWRR & WSRR.

An ERR may also present opportunities to introduce more extensive restrictions at Clopton Bridge, such as only permitting buses, cyclists and pedestrians to use the bridge or reallocating road space to cyclists and pedestrians by reducing Clopton Bridge to single lane width. Further work would need to be carried out to understand the implications of all available options.

A small number of responses suggested that a decision on an ERR should be delayed until such time as the full Western Relief Road has been delivered and its effect evaluated.

*'Until the Western Relief Road is completed and its impact evaluated, it is foolish to begin an Eastern Relief Road.'*

*'Start with western relief road and see how this effects traffic before proceeding with any decisions for investment in an eastern relief road.'*

To date, only high level assessment and analysis of an ERR has been carried out. It is considered that this has provided sufficient evidence to justify the inclusion of the proposal in the strategy. This does not represent a green light for delivering the road, but it instead provides a framework within which further assessment of the feasibility of delivering an ERR can be carried out, including more detailed consideration of the benefits and impacts of an ERR.

A number of the objections to the ERR discussed the route proposals and included concerns that the strategy did not include route options.



*'The proposal for an ERR seems to be one of the major components of the Transport Strategy. However there is no information about the possible route.'*

*'The proposed eastern relief road would not work without a new bridge (which would cost millions), it would be a pointless waste of money and not help if the Western road is already planned/built.'*

*'The ERR goes to and from the wrong M40 connecting road i.e. Wellesbourne to Longbridge M40 island. The better route is to the Warwick Rd and A46.'*

*'An ERR that doesn't involve a new river crossing is an absurdity. Sending heavy traffic along the extremely twisting road past Charlecote Park is a ridiculous idea.'*

*'... a further bridge across the Avon is the best option, even taking account of the cost. Any alternative would only increase traffic on surrounding settlements such as Wellesbourne, Barford and Charlecote, which are already under strain.'*

The draft Transport Strategy proposes: 'A further relief road around the eastern side of the town to provide an alternative route to the M40 and reduce traffic in the town centre.' In so doing the strategy is seeking to establish the general principle that an ERR would be beneficial to Stratford-upon-Avon. There has been no detailed consideration of potential route alignments or design work on an ERR. It would have been premature to carry out any detailed feasibility or options appraisal work ahead of establishing the general principle and need for the road. The only work to date has been strategic level modelling that has been outlined within this report which has included a high level assessment of two indicative routes; a full ERR and a partial ERR.

The modelling that has been conducted to date has consistently found that a full ERR that includes a river crossing would have a more positive impact on the transport network than a partial ERR via Wellesbourne. At this stage therefore, it seems most likely that an alignment that included a river crossing would form part of a preferred solution.

A few respondents expressed concerns that an ERR would direct traffic along unsuitable roads such as the B4086 and Pimlico Lane. During the consultation there was discussion of a route that would follow the general alignment of these roads, however any route would need to be constructed to the standard necessary to safely carry the required volume of traffic.

### **3.5. Other Responses to Theme 1**

Of the 13 proposed measures within this theme, the WRR and ERR, including the proposals for Clopton Bridge, dominated the comments received, whereas the remaining 10 measures prompted relatively few responses in comparison. This could suggest that overall there was either support or indifference for these measures.

A number of respondents agreed that bus transport should be encouraged; suggesting that improved services, lower cost fares, electronic signage and contactless payment could help promote this. There was also a suggestion that in order to achieve an effective public transport network in and out of Stratford-upon-Avon, rail links should be included in planning. Other respondents discussed the importance of improving facilities for walking and cycling. All of these issues are explored in detail within the

specific subject themes (theme 2, 3 and 4) and to avoid repetition have not been discussed in this section.

### **Birmingham Road**

A number of comments (14 to the online survey) referred to Birmingham Road. Measure 5 of this theme in the draft strategy proposes traffic management measures to improve traffic flow and the conditions for walking and cycling, including along Birmingham Road. Comments about Birmingham Road included the need to prioritise improvements in this location and queries over the scheme proposals.

*'Birmingham road is the main issue in Stratford. Deal with this first then and see what impact that has on the other routes leading into the town centre.'*

*'The Birmingham Road is inadequate to support the level of development along it. These developments draw considerable custom resulting in congestion in both directions.'*

*'In my experience, the cause of the congestion is due to the retail, commercial and retail developments on the Birmingham Road - the Birmingham Road is unable to service the level of traffic to these destinations.'*

*'Traffic flow on the Birmingham road is just tinkering - you should not have allowed an out of town Retail Park - and you are allowing more home building.'*

The County Council presented proposals for improving traffic flows and conditions for walking and cycling on Birmingham Road at a public consultation held in early 2016. Since that consultation took place the County Council, in conjunction with Stratford-on-Avon District Council has secured funding to deliver an improvement scheme with the majority of the work expected to be delivered during 2019/20. The funding is being provided by the Department for Transport and the County Council. The County Council is currently preparing the detailed scheme designs, however the key elements are as follows:

- Convert the existing 2 lane outbound section to inbound from St Peter's Way to Joseph Way.
- Improve the pedestrian and cycle linkages between the Maybird Shopping Park and the northern part of the corridor.
- Widen the road to 2 lanes either inbound or outbound between Regal Road roundabout and the merge point north of Hamlet Way.
- New slip road into the Tesco site from Birmingham Road for inbound traffic.
- Relocate the pedestrian/cycle crossing from south of the Tesco roundabout to opposite the main pedestrian entrance to the Maybird site.
- Improve the pedestrian and cycle linkages between Stratford town centre and the Maybird Shopping Park.

These changes will improve the overall situation on Birmingham Road and help accommodate the predicted traffic growth. There is no suggestion however, that these improvements would in isolation resolve Stratford's congestion issues or be sufficient to accommodate the increase in traffic that will be associated with the planned housing growth in and around Stratford. A wider package of measures, as identified through the Core Strategy development process is required to achieve this.

One respondent suggested that bus priority should form part of the Birmingham Road scheme. This did not form part of the original proposals for Birmingham Road, but the

potential for incorporating such measures will be considered within the development of detail designs.

*'Stagecoach Midlands strongly agrees that the provision of bus priority on Birmingham Road, at least, will be essential if the Park and Ride is to function properly. Indeed, the future of the facility probably depends on this..... Bus priority on the Birmingham Road would also greatly benefit other bus services, including those run by other operators.'*

One respondent requested a footpath be provided on the western side of Birmingham Road between Bishopton Island and Worths Way

*'Footpaths need to be made from Bishopton Island meeting the Birmingham Road as there are none in place and this would encourage local residents to walk into Town.'*

A developer funded footway extension is being provided on the western side of Birmingham Road. This will extend the footway north from Worths Way to connect to the Stratford Leys housing development and Bishopton Lane.

### **Link Road between Birmingham Road and Alcester Road**

A small number of comments (6 to the online survey) referred to the measure for a new link road between Alcester Road and Birmingham Road via Western Road and either Hamlet Way or Wharf Road / Maybrook Road. Some comments were supportive (3), however other respondents objected (3) on the basis that the road would still feed traffic onto Birmingham Road and there were objections to the Hamlet Way route option due to the potential impact on the plans of the Heritage Steam Centre to develop the vacant site next to the railway station.

*'The Alcester/Birmingham link road can't come soon enough.'*

*'There is already a road from Alcester Road to Birmingham Road. What difference would another road make, it will still join traffic on Birmingham Road.'*

*'Link road from Station to Birmingham Road via Hamlet Way. This road proposal is objected to. The threat to the proposed Heritage Steam Centre by this road proposal, is objected to as this facility will be required to support increased heritage rail services to Stratford, which will require improved facilities for watering and turning steam engines on the proposed turntable..... Constructing a new road will not solve any congestion problems.'*

Options for a second phase of works to further improve traffic flows at the southern end of Birmingham Road are continuing to be explored. This includes investigating whether an all-purpose link between Alcester Road and Birmingham Road could be constructed to take traffic away from the most congested southern section of Birmingham Road and enable the traffic lights at the junction with Western Road to be replaced by a left-in, left-out arrangement. Consideration will be given to the Heritage Steam Centre's plans for land by the railway station and for attracting a greater number of leisure trains to Stratford along with other constraints. An option to route this link via Wharf Road/Maybrook Road is not being progressed because of difficulties accommodating it within the Canal Quarter redevelopment.

### **Traffic Lights**

A small number of comments (12 to the online survey) were made that suggested congestion would be reduced if traffic lights and signal controlled junctions and

pedestrian crossings were removed or at least better coordinated, including on Birmingham Road.

*'You need to get rid of all these extra traffic lights you have put in. The one on Arden Street by the hospital is pointless and just stops the traffic. You could also get rid of the one of two by the Maybird.'*

*'Remove the excessive amount of traffic lights on Birmingham road to allow the traffic to flow more smoothly. Consider a footbridge over the road from the Gower memorial rather than a pedestrian crossing.'*

*'Sequencing traffic lights on the Birmingham road at Arden street and Western road junctions should make some improvement to traffic flow.'*

*'If there is one major issue in the Town it is the Birmingham Road - the traffic lights have created chaos and are not properly timed.'*

*'The proposals seem to bear down on the poor motorist rather than help him/her. Better to reflect on the main cause of congestion - the multiple traffic lights and pelican crossings from the north of the Birmingham Road to the south of the Clopton Bridge and shortly to be joined by another, ill thought out one at the end of Tiddington Road. Better to follow the successful measures taken in Holland and elsewhere to remove all these lights and replace with tunnels for pedestrians and traffic islands.'*

*'The current situation I'm sure could be greatly improved by spending very little money, by coordinating the actions of traffic lights relative to real time traffic conditions, making some roads one way, making some roads left turn only.'*

Signal controlled crossings are required to enable pedestrians and cyclists to safely cross roads and there is therefore no proposal to remove any crossings. These would only be removed in locations where there would be no detrimental impact on pedestrians and cyclists. There is no proposal to replace crossings with subways or bridges for the following reasons:

- Space and cost requirements.
- People are put off using them (particularly subways) over personal safety concerns.
- They can be inaccessible to people with disabilities.
- They can lengthen journeys, resulting in pedestrians seeking alternative crossing points or being put off walking altogether.

In terms of motorists, it is generally accepted that signal controlled junctions improve overall traffic flow, for example by enabling drivers to access / exit side roads. They also tend to be more effective than small roundabouts particularly when traffic flows are high or where there is a dominant direction of traffic flow. Finally, the traffic lights on Birmingham Road are already linked as part of the Urban Traffic Management and Control system that operates in the town to help ensure the most efficient movement of vehicles. The system uses real-time traffic data so that it can respond to changes in traffic flows.

## **Parking**

A number of comments were made about the proposals for parking (24 to the online survey). The majority of these (21 to the online survey) discussed the provision of Park

and Ride, however comments were also made about town centre parking and two ideas were put forward to create new accesses to existing car parks to take traffic away from congested roads.

A number of the comments on parking were sceptical as to whether Park and Ride is a realistic solution to congestion within the town and it was suggested that parking needed to be retained near to or within walking distance of the town centre.

*'..people want to park in the town for long periods. If you remove that and expect them to drive to the park and ride and then have to pay for both parking and the bus it just isn't worth it for most people.'*

*'Park and Ride is a great idea that rarely works well. Much better to provide parking close enough for people to walk into the centre'*

*Park and Ride is unlikely to have much impact unless the parking becomes free or significantly discounted.*

*'Once in a car, people prefer to go to their destination, not change to a bus'*

*'Park and ride is a white elephant that is not used as it still requires driving to Stratford then parking and waiting for another half an hour to get into town. Why would people use that rather than just sit in traffic for another 20 mins and park in town?'*

*'I don't think people will use the Park and Ride, there are a lot of wealthy and lazy residents! They'll just pay to park whatever you charge.'*

*'...more thought needs to be given to locals (those who live in and around Stratford) who need easy access to town centre facilities/services for short periods of time.'*

*'Parking in the town centre and unrestricted access to the Clopton Bridge are important for the viability of the town.'*

Other comments about Park and Ride were more upbeat or put forward suggestions as to how it could be developed to be more effective. These included alternative parking locations, reduced costs and increasing the cost of parking in the town centre.

*'The cost of park & ride needs to be cheaper or comparable with driving and parking for a family otherwise you'll never persuade people to use it.'*

*'The park and ride is not in an appropriate location - visitors and commuters still have to travel almost entirely to the centre of town before using it. A park & ride location off the M40 junction, with FREE parking and minimal cost on the bus, would be far better. A second location before the Wildmoor Spa would also help.'*

*'Need a park and ride south of the river. The previous amenity was not signposted well, nor promoted'*

*'Make the Park and Ride more attractive. Oxford seems to get many tourists to use it as it is so convenient and much better value than parking in the city.'*

*'Car users need financial incentives to use Park and Ride.'*

*'I agree that parking charges in the centre of town should be high. Winchester has a scheme where the parking charges in the town centre are expensive and it is cheaper to use the Park and Ride service.'*

*'Perhaps restrict town parking for residents only to encourage visitors to use park and ride.'*

*'The on-street parking in the town centre does support a lot of business and Stratford hopes that the strategy will respect the need to retain areas of on-street parking as part of the working of a functioning town centre.'*

The Strategy highlights that current parking arrangements and availability within Stratford draws traffic into the town and that this contributes to congestion on arterial routes and brings traffic into the town centre. The proposed solution is to move long-stay parking away from central locations, including to edge of town Park and Ride facilities, although some of this provision could also be provided at car parks within reasonable walking distance of the town centre. Measure 8 of this theme proposed to 'focus parking at out of town centre locations, including through the provision of improved Park and Ride facilities'. This should have stated 'focus long-stay parking at out of town centre locations, ...' as was detailed in the commentary on this section. The wording of Measure 8 will be amended to reflect this.

It is recognised that short stay town centre parking is valued by business and the local communities and this would be retained in the town centre through a combination of on street parking and town centre car parks. The revised strategy will state that short stay parking should be retained within the town centre.

One respondent highlighted the importance of parking to the evening economy within Stratford. This will need to be factored into any changes to parking arrangements and will also be reflected in the revised strategy.

*'We ask that the aim of 'focusing car park provision on out of centre locations, including park and ride' is amended to reflect the importance of the evening economy and the need of theatre visitors to park in close proximity to the theatre for late night access.... The current Park & Ride options are not compatible with our audience requirements in the evenings.'*

The strategy recognises that there are a number of barriers that restrict use of the existing Park and Ride facility. These include the availability and relatively low cost of long stay town centre parking alongside the lack of journey time saving from using the Park and Ride service. If these issues can be overcome, then Park and Ride will have the ability to capture visitors to Stratford at the edge of town where they can transfer from car to public transport, reducing traffic travelling into the town centre. It is therefore considered important to retain the development of Park and Ride as a measure within the strategy. It is agreed that an additional Park and Ride facility located to the south of Stratford would be desirable. However this is unlikely to be a viable proposition until such time as the issues highlighted above can be resolved.

A few respondents queried whether the existing Park and Ride service could utilise rail services to provide a faster service and to reduce the number of buses on the road, while another response went further and suggested the addition of a single track shuttle between the Park and Ride and Stratford Station.

*'Is there any way that you can use the railway lines to ferry park and ride passengers in to town as opposed to buses that join the rest of the traffic in a jam.'*

*'There is no mention of providing a quick and relatively simple solution of a single track shuttle from Stratford Parkway to Stratford Town station.'*

People can utilise the rail service by travelling between Stratford Parkway and the town station. A rail only service however, would require the addition of a shuttle service that would be cost prohibitive to operate and extremely difficult to schedule around the existing timetable. Similarly the construction of a dedicated single track line is considered to be prohibitively expensive to deliver and operate. Finally, both of these solutions would also leave passengers with an additional 600 metre walk to the existing town centre bus stop at Wood Street which is likely to discourage use.

Two further suggestions were made that proposed creating new access points to the existing Leisure Centre and Recreation Ground car parks to remove traffic accessing these car parks from congested locations; namely the Gyratory and Shipston Road and the Clopton Bridge / Tiddington Road junction.

*'Access to the riverside car park from Seven Meadows Road or the Tramway Bridge on Shipston Road would be a good idea to ease Clopton Bridge use.'*

*'There is scope to create alternative access to Riverside south parking from Seven Meadows Road, allowing park and walk facilities and taking traffic off Shipston Road which bottlenecks over Clopton Bridge and the Tiddington Road junction area.'*

*'A good idea for the tourists would be a small new road that would come into the back of the leisure centre car park. You could filter traffic off the Warwick Road into the car park if it was well signposted.'*

Both of these suggestions have merit and while they have not been specifically named within the strategy they could be considered as part of an overall review of parking arrangements within the town. The access into the Recreation Ground car park has been proposed within the Stratford-upon-Avon Neighbourhood Plan and an access onto Shipston Road is used on a temporary basis as part of traffic management for large town centre events such as the River Festival. The County Council has previously looked in detail at a proposal to provide a new access route into the Leisure Centre car park and this could be revisited as part of a possible masterplan for this area of the town.

## **Town Centre**

Measure 7 of this theme proposed revising the function and design of town centre streets and this drew a low number of comments (10 to the online survey), with an equal split between those that were supportive and those that objected. A preference was expressed for an approach that maintains vehicular access. One response expressed concern that restricting car access to town centre roads would add to congestion in other locations. It is acknowledged that this is a potential outcome of interventions within the town centre and will need to be taken into account as work on this measure progresses.

*'The return of the town centre to a more pedestrian approach is welcomed.'*

*'Centre should be a pedestrian zone in the way that Coventry has implemented it (slow 20mph traffic, roads and pavements at the same level, reduction in street furniture).'*

*'...exclusion of the town centre to vehicles will be detrimental to locals who may need to use the facilities for quick jobs like banking, post office, dropping at charity shops etc.*

*'Pedestrian streets cause cars to be directed to other roads and therefore more congestion.'*

### **3.6. Theme 1 Conclusions**

Theme 1 received the highest level of objections of all the themes with 77% of respondents to the online survey objecting to it. This theme also received the greatest amount of feedback, with 436 respondents to the online survey leaving comments and this reflected the contentious nature of some of the proposals.

This theme also proposed the greatest number of measures, which were wide-ranging and included a number of dissimilar proposals. This made it challenging for respondents, who felt uncomfortable supporting or objecting to the complete theme, as some measures they agreed with and others they were opposed to. Based on the comments made, it can be seen that a significant proportion of people who registered an objection to the theme were doing so on the basis of rejecting some, but not all of the measures.

The feedback primarily focused on the proposals to construct relief roads to the west and east of Stratford (measures 1 and 2), along with the associated proposal to introduce traffic restrictions on Clopton Bridge (measure 4). The proposed ERR received a particularly high number of negative comments while the SWRR was also criticised. Within the feedback there was some recognition that additional road infrastructure is required to alleviate congestion within the town, but there was no consensus as to how this should be provided.

The SWRR was included in the draft strategy as essential transport mitigation required to accommodate the Long Marston Garden Village development. The ERR was included because of the overall network improvements it would deliver. The Councils consider that both roads should remain within the strategy on the basis that this provides the optimum highway solution and best possible outcomes for Stratford-upon-Avon. The SWRR is being brought forward by the developers of the Long Marston Garden Village. At this stage there is no plan for how an ERR would be brought forward or for the road alignment and design. Further work would be required to establish the business case for the road and to assess delivery options.

The following revisions will be made to theme 1 of the strategy in light of the responses made to the consultation feedback:

1. Additional explanation of the evidence base for the inclusion of the SWRR and ERR will be provided.
2. The commentary around the ERR will be revised to state that funding options for an ERR will be explored as part of any future work to analyse and assess the value and impact of a road.
3. The current status of the Birmingham Road Improvement Scheme as fully funded with delivery planned for 2019/20 will be reflected in the strategy.
4. Measure 8 on parking will be revised to state it is long-stay parking that will be focused at out of town centre locations. The strategy will also specify that short-stay parking will be retained within the town centre and that consideration will need to be given to how parking operates during evenings in order to support the evening economy.

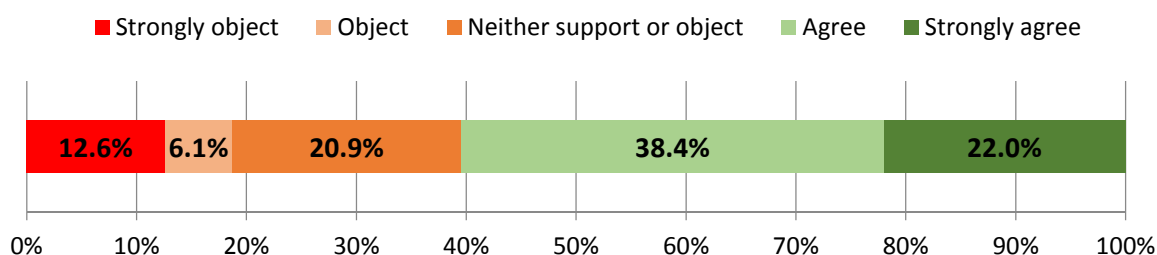


## 4. Theme 2: Strategic road, rail and air links.

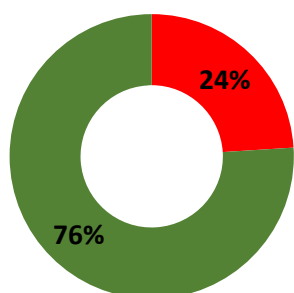
People were asked to indicate their level of support for the following measures that were proposed in theme 2 of the draft Stratford-upon-Avon Draft Transport Strategy:

1. The introduction of enhanced or new public transport services to meet the needs of existing and potential passengers.
2. The use of low emission vehicles will be promoted with potential use of electric buses in sensitive areas.
3. Introduction of new and improved Park and Ride facilities on the key radial routes in Stratford-upon-Avon.
4. Traffic management measures will be introduced to improve vehicle flow and prioritise buses to improve the punctuality, reliability and journey times of bus services. This will include providing frequent rapid bus routes for Park and Ride services.
5. Passenger facilities will be improved through the provision of modern buses, real time bus information and better bus stops and waiting areas.
6. Emerging or latent demand for bus travel will be met by adapting existing services or introducing new services. New developments in or near to Stratford-upon-Avon will have bus connections to the town centre, more evening buses will be provided and shuttle services introduced between key central destinations such as Bridgeway, town centre, railway station, Maybird Centre and Park and Ride sites.
7. The impact of buses on town centre locations will be reduced by encouraging operators to use the layover facilities next to the railway station and at Park and Ride sites.
8. Local rail services will be improved through the addition of a morning and evening peak time direct service between Stratford-upon-Avon and Birmingham via Solihull and additional direct services to Warwick and Leamington Spa.
9. The station facilities and accessibility of rail services on the North Warwickshire Line will be improved

**Figure 3: Level of opposition and support for the proposed theme 2 measures**



■ Slightly or strongly object  
■ Slightly or strongly support



If the 127 (20.9%) who neither supported or objected to theme 2 of the strategy are removed then 24% (114) slightly or strongly objected whilst 76% (368) slightly or strongly agreed with the proposed measures in theme 2 of the transport strategy.

*n – 609 respondents*

The majority of respondents to the consultation supported the proposed measures for the strategic road, rail and air links with 76% of respondents expressing agreement with these and 24% objecting. Analysis of the 229 comments made in response to the proposals within this theme raises some interesting points and these are considered below. As with other sections of the consultation, there was some dissatisfaction with the survey design and the fact that this prevented people from registering their views on each of the proposed measures.

*'I think it is really poor to link rail and road improvements under the same heading. Rail links need clearly improving but this is totally different to road developments. The proposals need to be seen independently...'*

*'I strongly agree with the improvement of rail links but strongly object to the enhancement of capacity on the M40. Bad survey design or was that the intention?'*

This point has been acknowledged and was responded to in section 1 of this report.

## **4.1. Road**

### **SMART motorways**

In relation to Measure 1; proposals to improve the performance of the M40, a small number of responders questioned the value of upgrading the M40 to SMART motorway, but this was balanced by other comments supporting the proposal.

*'M40 does not need to be a 'Smart Motorway'. And I disagree with the managed motorway proposal for the M40'*

*'I would support the smarter motorway proposal which has worked well on the M42.'*

The County and District Councils support Highways England's plans to adopt SMART motorway within Warwickshire as an effective and cost effective method of increasing capacity and easing congestion on this section of the M40. This measure will therefore be retained within the strategy.

### **M40 Junction 15 to Junction 14**

A number of respondents raised concerns over the operation and safety of the M40 between J15 (A46 Longbridge) and J14 (A452 Europa Way) where at peak times queues of traffic exiting the motorway at J14 can extend back on to the live lane.

*'Junction 14 is simply dangerous many mornings with traffic backing on to the main carriageway. This should be a priority.'*

*'As a regular user of the M40, the key target for safety improvements should be the proximity of the Warwick and Leamington junctions. Exiting the M40 at the Leamington junction is almost impossible at peak times with those joining the motorway from the Warwick/A46 junction queuing along the hard shoulder to the Leamington junction effectively blocking the exit for those travelling from the north.'*

This is a valid concern. Previous attempts to improve traffic flow along the A452 to reduce the queuing back onto the M40 by upgrading the Grey's Mallory and Gallows Hill roundabouts and changing the layout of a roundabout at the end of the M40 junction 14 off-slip were successful. However, since that work was completed traffic volumes have increased significantly and the problem has re-emerged. The County Council has further plans to enhance the capacity of the A452 Europa Way and is

embarking on a programme of improvements linked to housing and employment growth that will be delivered over the next four to six years. This work is expected to resolve the issue of traffic queuing back onto the M40 and will be added to the revised strategy.

### **The A46 corridor**

Comments on Measure 2; the proposals to enhance the A46 between the M40 and M5 as part of a larger project to provide an expressway standard road between the M69 and M5 sparked a number of comments with polarised views being expressed. Those who supported the proposal highlighted:

- The need to resolve queuing and congestion on the A46, particularly at the Bishopton roundabout.
- Concerns over the safety of the A46, such as collisions at the Bishopton roundabout and the resulting disruption this causes, inappropriate overtaking on the wide single carriageway sections and the nature of the road between Stratford and Alcester.
- One respondent suggested that the A46 should have been built to dual carriageway standard originally.

*'Making the A46 dual carriageway with proper slip road junctions (not congestion causing roundabouts) would be a vast improvement and greatly help the development of the area.'*

*'The A46 needs to be improved to allow for bigger and greater quantities of traffic. The number of accidents on the Bishopton roundabout where through traffic, particularly need the whole width of the roundabout to continue on the A46. Traffic backs up in all directions.'*

*'At the very least, the A46 needs to be made into 3 lanes with restricted overtaking in turn. As it is, journeys are a lottery as to whether someone will try to kill you. People overtaking rely entirely on others moving out of their way/people not moving around in the lane in order to complete the manoeuvre.'*

*'The northern by-pass should have been dual-carriageway from its inception from Longbridge right through to Tewkesbury!'*

Other respondents voiced concerns or disagreed with the proposed upgrading of the A46 with a range of points being made in opposition including:

- A general principle that transport policy should be centred on discouraging car based travel rather than building new or bigger roads.
- Concerns over the environmental impact of expanding the road including the loss of countryside, the effect on ecology and air quality and the impact on homes and villages near the road.
- A view that the M42 and M5 should remain the preferred route for long distance and through traffic.
- Concern that improvements to the strategic road network will encourage more car journeys to Stratford-upon-Avon and further exacerbate the existing traffic problems within the town.

*'... we should be encouraging cars off the road not making them bigger. They will just fill up again.'*

*'I object to the upgrading of the A46 as it will destroy much of the environment.'*

*'I do not support transport development which simply turns the area into an albeit accessible... but ugly, overcrowded urbanised area like so many others as a result!'*

*'I don't understand why we are inviting long distance traffic into Warwickshire when it has no need to be here. The HE [Highways England] should solve M42/M5 problems in the M42/ M5 corridor.'*

*'While upgrading of the A46 between the M40 and the M5 sounds like a good idea, it will introduce an M25 effect. At present much long distance East / West traffic uses the M42 rather than the A46. If you make it dual, you will quickly find that the volume of traffic using it, will fill it to capacity and introduce all sorts of overspill issues to the towns and villages along its route.'*

*'Objectives 1 and 2 will only encourage more and more road traffic and assist road access into Stratford. In any case, experience shows that new and improved major roads soon reach capacity and move congestion elsewhere.'*

*'Enhancing capacity of surrounding infrastructure will only have the effect of making the bottle neck that is Stratford upon Avon even worse than it is now. Especially in the holiday and bank holiday season.'*

The County and District Council are supportive of the proposal to upgrade the A46 between the M40 and M5 and have both joined a multi-agency working group and elected members partnership that have been set up to consider this project. The scheme is also supported by Midlands Connect, a partnership of local authorities and local enterprise partnerships from across the Midlands. The primary drivers for the project are:

1. To unlock growth and encourage investment along the route of the road by improving the regions' transport links.
2. To support the visitor economy in Stratford and the wider area.
3. To provide increased capacity on the strategic road network as one of a number of proposals to manage growing pressure on the M5 / M6 / M42 Motorway Box

This project is still at a very early stage. At the current time there is no detailed proposal on the table and it is accepted that this is a long term project.

## **4.2. Rail**

The majority of the comments made in response to the proposals for the strategic rail offer supported the measures set out in the strategy, although some respondents wanted the strategy to go further.

*'To relieve the traffic congestion in Stratford there needs to be full consideration of the ways to reduce the number of cars. An obvious consideration is to improve rail services.'*

### **Service Improvements**

A number of responses highlight that improved rail services have an important role to play in supporting Stratford's tourist economy.

*'Stratford is one of the major tourist destinations in this country, the present transport links such as rail are sadly lacking.'*

*'Bearing in mind the importance of the town for tourism, rail services need to be improved with greater frequency of trains to Birmingham and beyond.'*

The quality of the rail service between Stratford and London sparked a number of comments. A small number of responses were complementary of the service whilst others expressed support for measure 3, the proposal to improve the frequency and journey times of services to London and other locations.

*'As a regular rail user I believe the services to London are already excellent I would see further improvements as unnecessary.'*

*'The current rail services from Stratford to London are inadequate. The alternative is to use the service from Warwick Parkway.'*

*'There are no suitable late night services for evening theatre visitors to return to London and the daytime services have become distinctively unattractive.'*

Warwick Parkway was acknowledged by a number of respondents as providing a good option for people wanting to travel to London by rail, with a number of people questioning why a direct integrated bus service is not provided between Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick Parkway.

*'Warwick Parkway provides suitable access to London...Why on earth as part of an integrated transport plan is there not an hourly off peak and half hourly at peak coach shuttle from Warwick Parkway into the centre of Stratford town centre for tourists & commuters? ...This would take traffic off the A46'*

The County and District Councils suggest that service improvements should focus on providing an acceptable town to town rail service rather than investigating alternative options. At the current time the only mechanism for bringing such a service forward would be for it to be delivered by an operator as a commercially viable service. The County Council can suggest this to operators, but it seems unlikely that there would be sufficient demand from passengers for a service to be forthcoming.

A number of respondents referred to the need to improve rail services with nearby employment centres to support rail commuting for people who commute into and out of Stratford. It was also highlighted as a way of widening the labour market for businesses in Stratford. The service to Birmingham was top of the list of destinations that respondents said need improvement, but mention was also made of services to Solihull and Coventry. The need to improve these services is acknowledged in the strategy in measure 3 of this theme and is also touched on in theme 3.

*'It is essential to improve the capacity and speed of the rail links to Birmingham, the current service is far too slow and infrequent to be attractive for commuting and local tourism, and hence the pressure on the road network'*

*'Improvement of rail services to Coventry, Birmingham and Solihull, particularly for people working in these towns, would have a noticeable impact on transport journeys.'*

*'This would not only enable Stratford to attract more visits from major population centres, but also open up a wider recruitment pool for ..... businesses.'*

A small number of respondents gave their support for the measure 4 that proposes improved rail connectivity between Stratford and Birmingham Airport.

*'A direct train journey to Birmingham airport would save a lot of traffic doing the same journey.'*

*'Having a rail link from Warwick Parkway to Birmingham Airport would be good.'*

## **HS2**

A few people expressed opposition to HS2 within their consultation response. HS2 is a national scheme being promoted by the Government and it therefore lies outside of the District or County Council's sphere of influence and beyond the scope of this transport strategy. The County Council took a strong line in opposing the construction of HS2, however its current position is to seek to work with HS2 and the communities directly affected by the route to minimise its impact and secure the best possible outcomes for Warwickshire residents.

### **Stratford to Honeybourne Railway Line**

Within the responses to the survey, 66 people expressed a view that the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line should either be reinstated or further feasibility work be carried out to establish the viability of the line and that this should be reflected within the Transport Strategy. The justification for this being to:

- Improve rail services to Worcester, the Thames Valley and the South West
- Serve the planned large communities at Meon Vale and the Long Marston Airfield
- Support the tourism sector
- Take traffic off the roads.

*'Why no reference to restoring the Stratford Honeybourne rail link, this would be one of the best mechanisms to restore connectivity to Stratford with Oxford and London and should not be dismissed.'*

*'I agree with objective 3, but there is no indication of how to achieve it. .... The only, and very attractive, alternative would be to reopen the Stratford-Honeybourne-Oxford route, but there is no support in this strategy for that - why? why? There's no other way to achieve objective 3.'*

*'Having recognised that rail services from Stratford to Oxford, Thames Valley and London are slow, "the aspiration to improve all of these services" will only be achieved through reinstatement of the Stratford-Honeybourne-Oxford / Worcester rail link, which the Strategy fails to mention.'*

In addition to the responses to the consultation survey, 170 copies of a proforma calling for the reinstatement of the railway line were received. This called for:

*'Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council to seek, promote and pursue with all other interested parties and stakeholders a GRIP4 Study that considers reinstating the railway from Stratford-upon-Avon's existing railway station to the existing branch line at Long Marston and the renewal / upgrade of the line between Long Marston and Honeybourne. Once such a study has been completed and received then our local authorities and other stakeholders can comprehensively consider if the railway instatement should be promoted and developed.'*

Comments were also made that opposed the reopening of the railway line. These were a smaller number compared to those in favour of the line, but this is perhaps

unsurprising given that the strategy made no direct reference to reinstating the line. Previous experience tells us that this is an issue that divides opinion and it seems reasonable to assume that the inclusion of a proposal to reinstate the line would have provoked a greater adverse reaction.

*'The No Avon Line Group strongly objects to any future proposal to build such a rail link from Stratford-upon-Avon station to Honeybourne.'*

*'Although pleased to hear that the Honeybourne rail link is not a priority, I feel that the Council should abandon its neutral stance and declare that The Greenway will be protected for future generations as a leisure, cycling and environmental facility. Any pressure to reinstate this line seems to be coming from outside rail enthusiasts, not the people of Stratford who would suffer the consequences of proceeding with this unnecessary and expensive "white elephant" proposal.'*

The draft version of the Transport Strategy did not make specific reference to the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line. However measure 3 of this theme provides a broad commitment to improve the strategic rail offer of Stratford-upon-Avon, including to destinations to the south such as London and the Thames Valley. The strategy did not detail how this would be brought forward, but instead provided a wide policy area within which the Councils would operate.

In response to the volume of comments received on the Stratford to Honeybourne line the updated strategy will explain the joint position of the two local authorities on this issue. This will acknowledge that the reinstatement of the line might deliver some economic benefits, particularly by improving connectivity with London and the Thames Valley, and that it is therefore not being ruled out at this time. However, further analysis and assessment of the economic case for reinstating the line would need to be made before the scheme could receive the support needed for progression. Warwickshire County Council will not commit resources to this work until such time that there is certainty over projects to upgrade the North Cotswold line between Oxford and Worcester. These improvements, which involve redoubling certain remaining sections of single track line and signalling improvements, are required to increase train frequency from one to two trains per hour, and are prerequisites for reinstating through services on the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line. These projects would also require significant capital investment which has yet to be secured. Only when there is certainty that the North Cotswold Line upgrade will proceed will the County Council engage with work to analyse and assess the economic case for reinstatement.

In the meantime Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council are engaging with the North Cotswold Line Task Force on the wider Oxford to Worcester improvements. The additional capacity and increased service frequency that this project will deliver will be of benefit to communities in southwest Warwickshire who access rail services at stations such as Evesham, Honeybourne and Moreton-in-Marsh. In the short term, the possibility of providing some form of rail based shuttle service between Long Marston Garden Village and Honeybourne Station could be investigated, and both Councils would support this work should a scheme promoter come forward. The District Council is commissioning a study into the feasibility of providing such a service. The two Councils are also engaging with rail operators to explore alternative options to secure better rail connectivity between Stratford-upon-Avon, the Thames Valley and London.

The measures for strategic rail links proposed in the draft strategy support this overall approach and do not therefore need to be revised. However, the strategy will be updated to include reference to engaging with the work to upgrade the North Cotswold Line.

A small number of respondents highlighted that the strategy needs to deliver a fully integrated transport network whereby the different forms of transport are closely connected and enable travellers to move seamlessly between the different forms of transport. For example some respondents suggested that rail and cycling could be more closely integrated by providing better cycle parking at stations and by increasing the number of cycles that are carried on trains. Such measures are included within the strategy but in response to this feedback transport integration between transport modes will be given greater coverage within the strategy.

*'Integration of the different transport modes is essential to the proposal's success. Rail links need car parks, car parks need good road access.'*

*'Rail services must increase their capacity to take more than two bicycles per train, for a cycling culture to change'*

#### **4.3. Air**

There were relatively few comments made about air connectivity, but those that were made highlighted the need for improved rail links between Stratford-upon-Avon and Birmingham and Heathrow Airports. This aspiration is shared by the County and District Councils. The draft strategy discusses improving connectivity with Birmingham Airport, but does not directly reference Heathrow Airport, instead referring to services to London in a broad sense.

#### **4.4. Theme 2 Conclusions**

There was overall support for the proposed measures within this theme, with 76% of respondents agreeing with them. Comments focused on a desire to see a proposal for reinstating the Stratford-upon-Avon to Honeybourne railway line to be added to the strategy. Other comments discussed the need to improve public transport connectivity with surrounding towns and cities, the need for greater integration between transport modes and the need for lower cost public transport.

In response to this feedback the main changes that will be made to the strategy are:

- The strategy will recognise the need to eliminate on carriageway peak time queuing at J14 of the M40.
- An explanation of the Councils' current position in relation to the Stratford-Honeybourne railway line will be provided.
- Further reference will be made on the potential opportunities to enhance transport integration between transport modes.

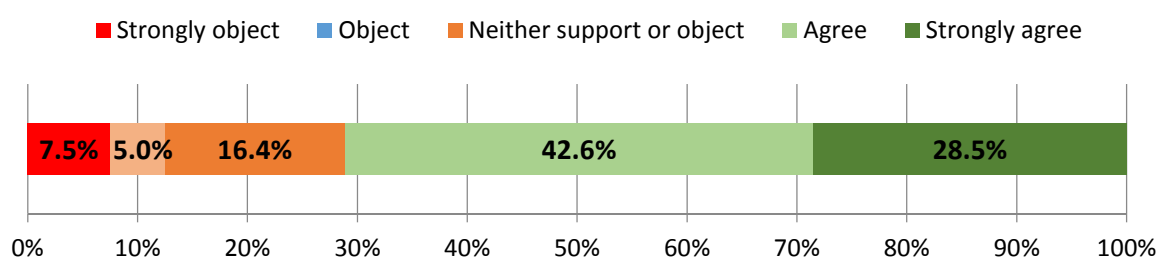


## 5. Theme 3: Public Transport Provision within Stratford-upon-Avon and across South Warwickshire and Neighbouring Authorities

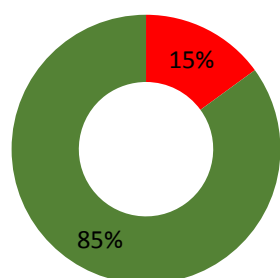
People were asked to indicate their level of support the following measures that were proposed in theme 3 of the draft Stratford-upon-Avon Draft Transport Strategy:

1. The introduction of enhanced or new public transport services to meet the needs of existing and potential passengers.
2. The use of low emission vehicles will be promoted with potential use of electric buses in sensitive areas.
3. Introduction of new and improved Park and Ride facilities on the key radial routes in Stratford-upon-Avon.
4. Traffic management measures will be introduced to improve vehicle flow and prioritise buses to improve the punctuality, reliability and journey times of bus services. This will include providing frequent rapid bus routes for Park and Ride services.
5. Passenger facilities will be improved through the provision of modern buses, real time bus information and better bus stops and waiting areas.
6. Emerging or latent demand for bus travel will be met by adapting existing services or introducing new services. New developments in or near to Stratford-upon-Avon will have bus connections to the town centre, more evening buses will be provided and shuttle services introduced between key central destinations such as Bridgeway, town centre, railway station, Maybird Centre and Park and Ride sites.
7. The impact of buses on town centre locations will be reduced by encouraging operators to use the layover facilities next to the railway station and at Park and Ride sites.
8. Local rail services will be improved through the addition of a morning and evening peak time direct service between Stratford-upon-Avon and Birmingham via Solihull and additional direct services to Warwick and Leamington Spa.
9. The station facilities and accessibility of rail services on the North Warwickshire Line will be improved

**Figure 4: Level of opposition and support for the proposed theme 3 measures**



■ Slightly or strongly object  
■ Slightly or strongly support



If the 98 (16.4%) who neither supported or objected to theme 3 of the strategy are removed then 15% (75) slightly or strongly objected whilst 85% (426) slightly or strongly agreed with the proposed measures in theme 3 of the transport strategy.

*n – 599 respondents*

There was a high level of agreement with the measures proposed for improving public transport provision in Stratford-upon-Avon with 85% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the proposal. This theme received the fewest comments with just 102 responses, of which 15% expressed support for the proposals. Some of these comments highlighted that investment in public transport would relieve congestion and help address air quality issues.

*'This is where we should be investing our thoughts and funding. Give people an alternative or something to accompany the car and we will use it. It's a leap of faith but one that must be taken.'*

*'Improving public transport and encouraging people out of individual cars is the way forward - reducing congestion and improving air quality'*

*'Frequent and RELIABLE public transport should be a top priority.'*

A warning note was sounded by one bus operator over the risk that increasing levels of traffic congestion pose to service delivery.

*'Should traffic congestion continue to worsen as it has been, there is the strong possibility that the operation of the bus network will prove to be practically impossible on a commercial basis, leading to reductions in service and, potentially, the loss of all public transport in the town....'*

### **Service Improvements**

A small number of respondents highlighted specific public transport connections that they felt needed improvement with routes to and from Evesham, Alcester, Wellesbourne, Warwick, Leamington Spa, Coventry, Solihull and Birmingham all being mentioned. Such improvements are broadly covered in both measure 1 of this theme which identifies the need to introduce 'enhanced or new public transport services' and measure 8 which identifies the need to improve local rail services to Birmingham via Solihull, and to Warwick and Leamington Spa.

*'Something needs to be done about the lack of links between Stratford and the surrounding towns. It is not easy or quick to get from Stratford to Leamington or Coventry by public transport causing a negative impact on flexibility of the labour force to access the local job market.'*

*'Well overdue for locals needing to get to local towns quickly such as Warwick, Leamington and Coventry.'*

*'Would be good if local rail services could be improved so that they could be used for locals to go to work in Birmingham, Solihull etc.'*

*'... there are no suitable public transport options for people travelling from Coventry to work standard day-time hours in Stratford'*

The consultation highlighted the need for better public transport to assist employers within the leisure and tourism sectors to recruit and retain workers into lower paid positions. Issues that were raised included the availability of public transport services in the off-peak, including early morning and late at night, particularly services to Coventry and Birmingham. The need for service provision to meet this demand will be recognised within the revised strategy and the Councils will work with employers and

public transport operators to explore potential service improvement options that could be brought forward.

*'The lack of affordable, consistent alternative options mean that many evening economy workers cannot use alternative means to the car to get to and from work.'*

Just over 39% of the comments made in response to this theme referred to the value of reinstating the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line as a means of improving local public transport and encouraging a shift from road to rail travel within their responses. This issue was discussed in detail in section 4 of this report and no further commentary will be provided in this section of the report.

### **Low Emission Vehicles**

A few respondents expressed their support for measure 2 of the draft strategy which proposes the promotion of lower emission buses and consideration of electric buses in sensitive areas within the town to improve air quality.

*'Zero emission buses would be a great solution for Stratford'*

Improvements have been made over recent years as operators have introduced newer buses with cleaner engines to their fleets, but this continues to be an area where further progress could be made. The rural nature of Warwickshire and funding constraints will limit the Councils' ability to influence this area, but the Council will continue to seek opportunities as they arise.

### **Park and Ride**

Measure 3 of this theme advocates the introduction of new and improved Park and Ride facilities to encourage a switch to public transport for the final leg of the journey into the town centre. This elicited a number of comments that considered the general role of Park and Ride within the overall strategy. To avoid repetition of earlier discussion these comments have been considered within the commentary on feedback to Theme 1.

### **Bus Priority**

A small number of comments supported measure 4, which included the proposal to introduce bus priority solutions to improve bus service punctuality, reliability and journey times. As reported in section 3.5 of this strategy, a suggestion to deliver bus priority measures as part of the Birmingham Road scheme has also been put forward and will be considered as part of the scheme development.

*'... there must be an advantage to taking the bus in speed of access to the town. Separate bus lanes or routes should be put in place to ensure this is the case.'*

*'The Park and Rides will never work if the buses travel at the same speed as the rest of the traffic.'*

The limited availability of highway land and land in general within Stratford-upon-Avon will restrict opportunities to introduce bus priority measures within the highway network. However, there is a clear principle that public transport needs to offer user benefits compared to car travel to encourage modal shift. One way in which this can be achieved is providing journey time advantages by giving public transport priority over other traffic where appropriate to do so. This therefore remains an aspiration for the Councils and will be retained within the strategy.

## Facilities for Bus Passengers, including a Bus Station

There was some support expressed for proposals to improve facilities for bus passengers, as proposed in measure 5 of this theme. However 18 responses to the online survey suggested that the draft strategy should also include the provision of a bus station as a measure. This point was also made a number of times during the public and stakeholder meetings that took place ahead of and during the draft strategy consultation.

*'The town has no bus station, and using streets as bus points is not good.'*

*'Buses should not be allowed to stop in Bridge Street. The street gets clogged with buses side by side and causes traffic to back up over the bridge. A bus station would be the obvious answer.'*

*'You need to bite the bullet and restore the bus station to replace the bus stops on Wood Street and the bottom of Bridge Street, which cause huge pedestrian congestion.'*

*'There should be a dedicated bus station as this will relieve town centre congestion caused by buses parking up on Bridge Street and Wood Street.'*

*'... delivery of the draft Transport Strategy objectives demands an explicit focus on the improvement of the on-street experience of bus passengers in and around the town centre'*

It is acknowledged that the current on-street arrangements do not provide a good quality passenger waiting environment and is not suitable for bus layover in between services. It is also recognised that the planned housing growth in and around Stratford is likely to put additional pressure on the existing facilities. The County Council has considered options for delivering a bus station in the past and reached the conclusion that while a bus station offered some benefits it was highly unlikely that one could be delivered due to constraints of funding and land availability. A feasibility study commissioned by the County Council and carried out by JMP Consultants reached the following conclusions in 2011:

- The contribution that buses make to traffic issues and congestion is negligible overall, however there are a small number of bus stop locations where at certain times of the day there are some local problems, particularly with pedestrian movements.
- A bus station would have to be within easy access of the shopping area.
- Bus operators were concerned that the introduction of a bus station would increase mileage and journey times and have an impact on costs and the profitability of some routes.
- 14 potential locations for a bus station were considered within the study of which only one location, Windsor Street car park, was considered acceptable by bus operators.
- There is no economic business case to support the development of a bus station.
- An assessment of funding options led to the conclusion that a bus station would be unlikely to secure the required capital funding.

The situation has not progressed in the intervening years since this study was carried out. The draft strategy did not therefore include a proposal for a bus station.

It is noted that there is local support for a bus station and that a bus station would bring some social and local amenity benefits to the town. In response the strategy will be

updated to include an aspiration for a bus station, while recognising the significant barriers that stand in the way of bringing this forward. In the meantime the County and District Councils will continue to explore opportunities to improve facilities for passengers as outlined in measure 5 of this theme. The proposal to revise the function and design of town centre streets that is included in theme 1 of the transport strategy will also present an opportunity to review the arrangements and facilities for buses and passengers within the town centre.

Two further suggestions were put forward that would make bus travel more convenient for passengers; these were contactless payment and the availability of through tickets that can be used on all services regardless of operator.

*'Buses should utilise contactless payment'*

*'Changing bus companies means having to pay twice'*

The Councils recognise that it would be advantageous to introduce integrated ticketing between different modes of public transport and operators along with contactless payment and other technological advancements that make travel easier. The Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26 includes a commitment to work with train and bus operators to explore opportunities for bringing forward ticketing improvements such as these. An example of an existing Warwickshire scheme is the Leamington Spa & Warwick PLUSBUS ticket for rail travellers. This adds unlimited bus travel on participating operators' services around the urban area. A range of day and season ticket options are available. Similar ticketing options could be beneficial in Stratford-upon-Avon and the strategy will therefore be updated to reference such opportunities.

### **Cost of Fares**

A number of comments highlighted that the cost of bus travel is a barrier to achieving modal shift.

*'Reduce the cost for public transport. People will only use them instead of a car if they are a viable financial alternative. The bus from the Salmon Tail to Bidford is nearly £5, this is not a viable alternative to my car!'*

*'The strategy does not mention the cost of public transport. Public transport can be expensive. I cannot visit my son in Leamington as that costs £8,90 for a day return.'*

*'I would also have liked to have seen lower costs included as an aim as I personally see the cost of using public transport as a barrier.'*

The draft strategy highlights that the cost of fares can be a barrier to public transport travel, but it did not propose a solution to this problem. This is primarily because the Councils have few options available to influence ticket price. The strategy sets out that most public transport services are operated on a commercial basis by private companies. Although the County Council does subsidise some services, for example the Park and Ride service, there is limited funding available to subsidise public transport and this situation is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future. The strategy therefore focuses on those areas that the Councils are able to influence and which can serve to make public transport more appealing and increase patronage, for example measures that improve bus service reliability, punctuality and journey times.

## Other Comments

One organisation, while agreeing with the broad thrust of this theme asked for greater ambition to be shown within the measures.

*'... are strongly supportive of this Theme and would wish to see it playing a more significant part in the Strategy going forward. Compared with the section dealing with roads there seems to be less ambition expressed in the measures ..... Access to the town by bus and rail would reduce traffic demands generally in the town.'*

Just over a fifth of responses made to this theme expressed doubt as to whether the proposals for public transport could be delivered given the rural nature of Stratford District, the reliance on the car for travel and reducing public finance.

*'Whilst I agree in principle with the measures many of them rely on the cooperation of Public Transport providers. Without guarantees that they will implement the measures e.g. more regular services, better and cleaner vehicles these measures cannot be achieved.'*

*'We are currently seeing local bus services being reduced due to lack of funding. Again, the question of how you overcome funding issues springs to mind if you are going to achieve these proposals. Without a good and frequent service, no one will be enticed out of their cars and how is this going to be achieved if the funding is not available.'*

*'Bus services are in decline and Warwickshire County Council have little influence yet propose improved bus services they cannot deliver.'*

The draft strategy stresses that most public transport services are operated on a commercial basis by private companies with limited County Council involvement or support. Despite this the Council is able to influence service provision and will continue to do so by, for example, working closely with operators and investing in service development infrastructure. There has already been some success with this approach in Stratford, for example the County Council led the development of the Park and Ride and Stratford Parkway Station and is supporting improvements to the town railway station that are expected to be delivered in 2018. The County Council has also worked with bus operators elsewhere in the county to deliver quality bus corridors which provide a total up-grade of bus travel on selected corridors and this is an approach that can be explored for services in and around Stratford. Under this model the Council invests in infrastructure, such as improved waiting facilities and better passenger information, and the bus operators provides high quality buses and more frequent services. The Council also encourages measures to enable good accessibility by bus services to and from new developments, which can include securing funding from developers towards costs.

A small number of respondents questioned the value of investing in public transport, suggesting that most people would continue to choose to travel by car, regardless of the public transport offer.

*'The public transport is adequate. A huge investment would produce a very small return, so not worth doing.'*

*'Whilst a public transport alternative is essential for those who don't have access to a car the very nature of where people live and the employment/shopping opportunities mean that the majority will revert to the car for most trips and given the scale of proposed new developments the traffic problems will only get worse.'*

Public transport is considered an essential component of the overall transport mix within Stratford-upon-Avon and is therefore a key element of the overall strategy. As a predominantly rural district, Stratford-upon-Avon has a high level of car dependency and the strategy highlights that car ownership in the district is high compared to county-wide and national levels. It is accepted that the private car will remain a primary mode of travel for many people. However, public transport can offer a viable travel alternative, and as was pointed out by one of the respondents, is vital for those who do not have an alternative travel option. Car users can also be encouraged to transfer to public transport for the final leg of their journey into the town and this is included in the strategy as a measure to develop the Park and Ride offering as part of the approach to reducing congestion and improving environmental conditions within the town.

### **5.1. Theme 3 Conclusions**

There was a high level of support for the proposed measures within this theme with 85% of respondents agreeing with them. Comments made highlighted specific routes where it was considered service improvements are required and a number of the responses proposed a bus station as a solution to congestion and air quality issues within the town centre and to improve facilities for passengers. Some doubt was expressed as to the deliverability of the measures proposed.

Public transport is a key component of the overall strategy and it is considered that the measures proposed in the draft strategy will enable public transport to make a significant contribution to achieving the strategy objectives. The primary revisions that will be made to the strategy in light of the responses made to the consultation feedback are:

- Recognition that off-peak inter-urban public transport service improvements are required to support employers in the tourism and leisure sector.
- A measure will be added that proposes a bus station, but the strategy will recognise that there are significant barriers that would need to be overcome in order to bring this forward.
- A measure will be added that supports the introduction of technological advancements that make public transport more convenient such as multi-operator ticketing and contactless payment.

## 6. Theme 4: Encourage walking and cycling

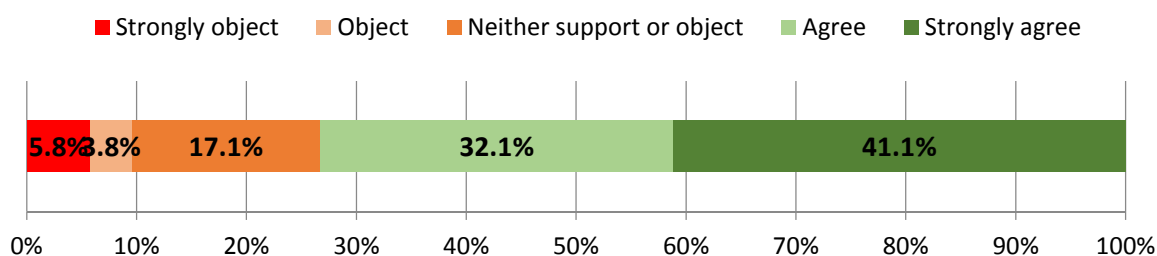
People were asked to indicate their level of support for the following measures that were proposed in theme 4 of the draft Stratford-upon-Avon Draft Transport Strategy:

1. Complete a network of high quality and safe cycling and walking routes within Stratford-upon-Avon including:
  - Connecting the south of the town with the town centre.
  - Improved connections to visitor destinations
  - Improved routes into the town centre from gateway locations such as Stratford town railway station, car parks, Park and Ride sites and the Bridgeway coach park.
  - Provide cycle routes that meet user requirements, maximise safety and are designed in accordance with national guidance. Where appropriate, provide routes that segregate cyclists from other road users.
  - Ensure that the design of highway infrastructure meets the needs of pedestrians and cyclists.
  - Ensure sufficient provision of conveniently located cycle parking facilities.
2. Improve provision for cyclists and pedestrians within the town centre by reallocating road space for walking and cycling, prioritising cyclist and pedestrian access and introducing 20mph speed limits in appropriate locations.

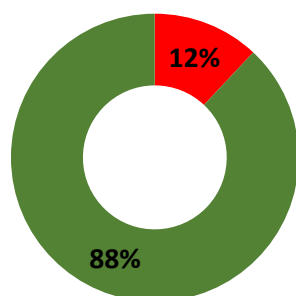
Improve and develop the network of inter-urban cycle routes between Stratford-upon-Avon and neighbouring towns and other key destinations in the surrounding countryside including Alcester, Warwick, Wellesbourne, Long Marston, Charlecote and Ryon Hill Business Park.
3. Improve integration with other transport modes including by providing a better route for cyclists and pedestrians between the railway station and town centre and fully connecting the Stratford town and Parkway railway stations to the cycle route network.
4. Implement a cycle hire scheme based on the London scheme, with docking stations provided at strategic locations across the town.
5. Improve route signage for cyclists and pedestrians.
6. Offer cycle training to schools, businesses and individuals to help people develop the skills and confidence to take advantage of the cycle route network and surrounding road network.
7. Promote the availability of cycle and walking facilities through measures such as:
  - Promoting Smarter Choices through the County Council's 'Choose How You Move' initiative.
  - Producing and distributing cycle route guides.
  - Encouraging businesses to develop and adopt travel plans.



**Figure 5: Level of opposition and support for the measures proposed in theme 4**



■ Slightly or strongly object  
 ■ Slightly or strongly support



If the 103 (17.1%) who neither supported or objected to theme 4 of the strategy are removed then 12% (58) slightly or strongly objected whilst 88% (440) slightly or strongly agreed with the proposed measures in theme 4 of the transport strategy.

*n – 601 respondents*

There was overwhelming support for the measures proposed to encourage walking and cycling, with 88% of respondents in support of this theme. There were a total of 244 comments made to the online survey on this theme.

*'This is probably the most deliverable and effective method of delivering real benefits to our town. It should be the first strategy and achieve a real focus. In particular, cycling offers real potential and the town is mainly flat.'*

The most frequently mentioned topic within the responses was the safety and security of both cyclists and pedestrians, which was raised by 37% of respondents. There were many more comments made regarding cycling than walking.

## 6.1. Cycling

There were a variety of comments regarding current cycling conditions in Stratford-upon-Avon, 37% (90) of which primarily concerned on-road conditions including traffic and the condition of the road surfaces. A further 21% (50) of comments highlighted the need for improved or additional cycle routes, including issues with disconnected cycling networks and cycle lane provision, which supports the proposed measures 1, 3 and 4. There were also a small number of comments regarding the importance of cycle facilities such as the availability of secure bicycle storage and cycle-hire schemes.

Many of the suggestions received from respondents were in line with the commentary on this theme and the measures proposed in the strategy. This included the development of an extensive, interconnected and safe cycle network across the town with better links to neighbouring areas.

### Integrated Cycle Network within Stratford-upon-Avon

A number of respondents supported the proposals to enhance the cycle network within the town (measure 1) and to make the town centre more cycle friendly (measure 2). The need to improve links to Tiddington and other areas to the south / east of Stratford were specifically mentioned within the feedback in order to increase cycle trips to and

from the town centre. Other respondents highlighted that missing links and gaps within Stratford's cycle network create a barrier to cycling, particularly where cyclists are forced to join or cross busy roads.

*'Tiddington Road needs an urgent cycle lane (like the Banbury Road) as it's dangerous for cyclists, with most cyclists using the path.'*

*'A cycle route from Tiddington into the town centre is a priority as the road is not safe for cyclists, and cyclists impede traffic flow.'*

*'As a cyclist, I do not cycle in Stratford-upon-Avon as much as I would if there was a safe cycle network connecting the south of the town to the town centre, as well as within the town.'*

*'Current cycle lanes are on-road and therefore just get driven in by cars, cycle-lanes are dotted about and end without warning, any trip into Stratford-upon-Avon requires either crossing busy junctions or getting off and having to cross with pedestrians.'*

*'Current provision for cyclists is woeful. Cycle routes, where they exist, are fragmented and cyclists face dangerous journeys due to competition for road space with motorists and pollution.'*

Five comments were made regarding the gyratory, with some respondents stating that better cycling provision is required in this area; either making it safer to cycle on, or to improve other nearby links to negate the requirement to cycle on it.

*'...lack of dedicated cycle routes - especially around the gyratory.'*

*'Gyratory to improve safety of cyclists and encourage more use.'*

Comments also supported the proposal to address the gaps and missing links within the cycling network. One issue that drew a number of comments was the limited options for cyclists to cross the River Avon. Comments made by 3% (7) of respondents recognised the requirement to establish a safer alternative to Clopton Bridge, with suggestions made including building a new bridge or improving Lucy's Mill Bridge.

*'A pedestrian footbridge at Luddington lock could open up additional access to riverside footpaths and the green way creating additional circular walks and improved cycle/foot access.'*

*'...building a cycle and pedestrian bridge as safe alternative to Clopton Bridge'*

*'Upgrade the historic and iconic Lucy's Mill Bridge. An essential pedestrian, wheelchair, and walking cyclist link between North and South of the River Avon.'*

*'You must take into account the crossing at Lucy's Mill Bridge. This should be an essential part of the walking/cycle route. It's an iconic structure which forms an important crossing at present, but only for fully abled people. It's not DDA compliant and needs to be upgraded as a matter of priority.'*

The County Council has developed a Cycle Network Plan for Stratford-upon-Avon in collaboration with Sustrans and the Stratford Cycle Forum. This maps the existing cycle provision within the town and identifies routes for development. In so doing, it addresses the identified missing links and gaps within the network. The network plan was not outlined within the draft strategy, but will be referenced in the revised version

to provide further explanation of the plans to improve the network. The Network Plan will be reviewed and updated periodically.

The strategy acknowledged that the limited options for crossing the river is a significant barrier to cycling in Stratford-upon-Avon and is an issue that needs to be resolved. The strategy did not propose a specific solution. The network plan however, identifies a possible location for a new pedestrian and cycle bridge just to the east of Clopton Bridge. No feasibility work has been carried on a bridge in this location, or any other potential solutions close to the town centre, and it is therefore premature to include this as a named scheme within the strategy.

Lucy's Mill Bridge is a narrow pedestrian bridge located by Severn Meadows Road, about 600m downstream from the Tramway Bridge, that is accessed by steps and is therefore not suitable for bicycles, push chairs, wheelchairs or people with impaired mobility. Given its location, there does appear to be merit in providing a solution to a suitable river crossing at this location. At the current time there are several significant constraints which would need to be overcome before an improvement scheme could be delivered. Given these challenges, the upgrading of Lucy's Mill Bridge has not been included as a named scheme within the strategy, however there is sufficient scope within the measures for a scheme at Lucy's Mill Bridge to be forthcoming should solutions be found.

### **Inter-urban Cycle Routes**

A significant number of respondents made comments in support of creating new routes or improving existing routes to neighbouring areas, which substantiates the improvements to inter-urban routes proposed in Measure 3.

*'It's not so much the cycling in Stratford-upon-Avon that is the issue, it is cycling to Stratford-upon-Avon.'*

*'...there is no safe direct route for cyclists between Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick.'*

### **Integrating Cycling with other Transport Modes**

A few comments referenced measure 4, which proposes better integrating cycling with other transport modes, including by better connecting the existing railway stations with the cycle network and by providing better cycle / pedestrian routes between the town centre and town station. One respondent agreed that links to the railway station could be improved, though more respondents suggested combining this with a bike hire scheme, which it was suggested could help mitigate against the difficulties associated with taking bicycles on trains.

*'Stratford is a small town, and a lot of trips to the town including the rail station could be made by cycle if safer routes could be provided.'*

*'Have bike hire stations and trams to the town centre from both park and rides schemes and the station.'*

### **Cycle Hire**

A larger number of comments were made in support of the concept of extending cycle hire in Stratford-upon-Avon, which is proposed in measure 5 of the draft strategy as well as providing cycle routes to visitor attractions within Stratford and the surrounding

area which is included in measure 1 and 3. A number of these comments suggested this would be beneficial for tourism and would help tourists to reach visitor attractions.

*'There should also be more opportunities for cycle hire and better facilities & routes for pedestrians especially to Anne Hathaway's Cottage & Mary Arden's Farm.'*

*'Introduction of the "Boris Bikes" to provide visitors other options along with these cycle routes'*

*'Suggest including the tourist industry to help fund a tourist bike route between the major tourist attractions in Warwickshire - so a clear route to travel from Warwick castle to Stratford-upon-Avon and Wilmcote/Shottery.'*

*'Provision of cycle hire like the TfL cycle hire system allowing visitors to access Anne Hathaway's cottage and Mary Arden's house quickly and without additional bus congestion. Some near town villages could also be provided with these for example Shottery, Luddington, Bishopton, Tiddington and Alveston to reduce short commutes.'*

The strategy proposes implementing a cycle hire scheme based on the London model, with docking stations provided at strategic locations across the town. Cycle hire remains an attractive proposition requiring further consideration.

### **Facilities for Cyclists**

A number of respondents commented on the cycling infrastructure that has been provided in Stratford and the facilities that they felt were important to encourage cycling. These included maintenance of cycle routes, cycle parking and type of cycle routes and are discussed below.

### **Maintenance of Cycle Routes**

Respondents highlighted that cyclists face dangers from vehicles, but also poorly maintained cycle lanes.

*'...cycle paths need better maintenance - currently they are a hazard for cyclists due to the levels of grit and debris that builds up.'*

*'The current cycle lanes are inadequate, dangerous, poorly thought out and badly maintained. They are not fit for purpose.'*

*'The so-called cycle paths vary from 'dodge the pot holes' on the Banbury road to 'dodge the pedestrians' on Birmingham road.'*

Cycle lane maintenance is not specified as one of the Theme's supporting measures, however it is an important aspect of achieving a high-quality cycle network that can encourage and sustain cycling in the future. Unobstructed and well-surfaced facilities are important to cyclists, on all route types. This will be reflected in the revised strategy.

### **Types of Cycle Routes**

A number of respondents discussed the suitability of different types of cycle routes, with a preference expressed for off-road segregated cycle routes over on-road cycle lanes and shared use paths that allow cyclists and pedestrians to mix. The majority of comments on this particular issue were from respondents who felt shared use paths were an inappropriate solution due to the conflict that can occur between pedestrians

and cyclists. Most of these comments felt cyclists on shared use paths presented a danger to pedestrians. One respondent suggested a potential solution to this issue would be to reduce the width of some pavements to accommodate dedicated cycle routes. A small number of comments suggested cycle routes that take cyclists away from busy roads and provide a nicer environment will experience higher levels of use.

*'If you want to get school journeys and local commuters cycling, it's got to be segregated and safe.'*

*'One thing more than any other has proven to increase cycling rates – protected cycle lanes.'*

*'Painting a white line down a busy road will not encourage anyone to use it. Unless a substantial investment in new cycle paths is made this measure will have zero impact on traffic movements.'*

*'Putting cycle lanes on busy narrow roads does not work. Cyclists will avoid these and travel on pavements rather than risk injury from vehicles on the road.'*

*'More could be done to develop cycle routes away from arterial roads to make it a more pleasurable and less dangerous experience.'*

*'To be effective and safe cycle routes need to be away from those used by motorised vehicles.'*

*'Providing lanes on existing pavements is an accident waiting to happen. Cyclists already ride over Clopton footbridge regardless of the amount of pedestrians. Tiddington Road footpath is also used as a cycling route.'*

*'Cycle lanes already provided are unsuitable. They are either too narrow or on pavements.'*

*'Cycle ways should be a priority by looking at pavements that could be reduced to have dedicated cycleways would the town, especially to the schools.'*

Off-road dedicated cycle lanes often represent the most favourable option for encouraging cycling, however the type of cycling infrastructure that is provided is influenced by a range of factors including road condition, traffic volume and speed, the extent and layout of the highway and funding. In certain circumstances off-road dedicated cycle lanes are either not the appropriate response, or it is not feasible to provide them and alternative options have to be considered. The draft strategy states (measure 1) that 'where appropriate, provide routes that segregate cyclists from other road users'. This will be amended to state 'where appropriate and feasible...'

### **Information and Facilities to Support Cycling**

Ensuring sufficient cycle parking facilities (measure 1) and information provision (measure 6 & 8) are important components of a successfully functioning cycle network. Only a few comments were made in the consultation on these points, including a suggestion that developers should provide network maps. In fact developers already distribute the Stratford-upon-Avon Cycle Route Map to first occupants of new houses on developments as part of 'Welcome Packs' that they are required to distribute.

*'Cycle parking facilities which include built in locking and security could help make cycling more attractive. More and better signing, better cycle parking, make developers include network maps and cycle parking on the new developments that the town will undoubtedly get'*

### **Other Comments**

Although most comments called for additional and improved cycle routes, 5% stated that the roads and footpaths in the town centre are too narrow to modify with additional cycle lanes and 3% who stated cycling is not popular enough to warrant the implementation.

*'Most roads and footpaths in the town centre are too narrow to adapt.'*

*'There is no point drawing cycling lanes which leave the road too narrow for normal traffic.'*

### **20mph zone**

Three respondents objected to measure 2 that proposes introducing a 20mph speed limit within the town centre.

*'20mph is just ridiculous, 30mph is slow enough and in a lot of the town when congested you are doing a very slow crawl at 5mph max anyway. No need for it.'*

*'The use of 20mph limits is under review in many cities/towns. It already takes longer, increasing pollution, to get from the south side of the river to the A46 without lower speed limits. Any further restrictions on traffic in the centre will lead to further delays as just divert the traffic to side roads.'*

It is considered that this proposal will improve general conditions and safety for cyclists and pedestrians within the town centre and discourage traffic from using town centre roads as a through route. This measure will therefore be retained within the strategy.

## **6.2. Walking**

Although cycling related comments dominated the feedback gathered under this theme, 4% (10) of comments made concerned pedestrian safety. These comments mirrored some of the comments on cycling, such as concerns over conflict between pedestrian and cyclists on footpaths. Respondents stated that a number of cyclists cycle on pavement, which is dangerous for pedestrians. They also highlighted that even where shared use cycle footways have been implemented, this is still hazardous.

*'Needs to be dedicated cycling lanes as too many cyclists currently cycle on pavements which is dangerous for pedestrians.'*

*'...lots of cyclists still don't use the cycle routes and ride on the pavements, as a pedestrian this is dangerous.'*

Cyclists are not permitted to cycle on pavements unless it has been dedicated as shared use. It is acknowledged that conflict can occur between pedestrians and cyclists on these facilities, however shared use paths are often the most appropriate and feasible means of providing cycling facilities.

Two comments were also made stating that to improve cycling in the area, cyclists should know how to cycle on-road in order to protect pedestrians. This reflects measure 7 in the Strategy, which proposes cycle training.

*'Cyclists are the bane of a pedestrian's life... make them take a test first before being allowed to cycle on road'*

*'Ensure cyclists are subject to Road Traffic Act laws in order to protect pedestrians.'*

Pedestrianising the town centre received comment from eight respondents, causing both agreement and contention amongst some of them, who either felt it may improve safety for pedestrians, or felt it would disadvantage residents and could potentially worsen congestion and consequently discourage visitors.

*'...there are lots of people that think we should pedestrianise the town centre for all but public transport! This would make use of the park and ride system and reduce traffic.'*

*'Yes the town centre could be pedestrianised but at what cost to residents?'*

*'Blocking any other road in the centre would increase traffic problems and prevent people choosing to come into town - thus affecting the economy and driving residents to out of town shopping centres'*

*'Look into free parking at both Park & Rides and sign posts to encourage people to walk/cycle into town. Southern P&R to town is easily manageable for many of the population but visitors to Stratford-upon-Avon are not aware of this. How about sign posts & information points for tourists to encourage them to walk.'*

The Strategy does not specifically propose pedestrianisation, but does seek to improve provision and conditions for pedestrians and cyclists. Further work will be carried out in the future to develop proposals for bringing forward these improvements.

### **6.3. Theme 4 Conclusions**

This theme received the greatest level of agreement of the six proposed themes, with 88% of respondents supporting it. Cycling proved to be a more contentious topic than walking, with a much greater number of comments received. The main views to emerge from the responses were:

- A level of dissatisfaction in the limited cycle infrastructure currently available, which the strategy is aiming to resolve.
- A dislike of on-road cycling.
- Criticism of shared use paths that mix pedestrians and cyclists.
- Concern over the volume of cyclists riding on pavements.
- A clear preference for off road segregated cycle lanes.
- The need for improved maintenance of cycling provision, particularly where cycle lanes are provided on-road.

The following revisions will be made to the strategy in response to the feedback received:

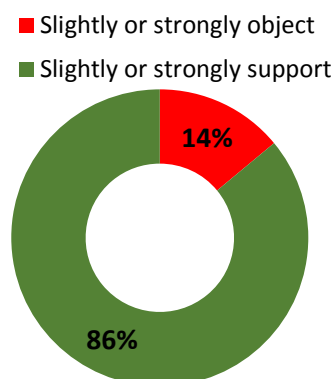
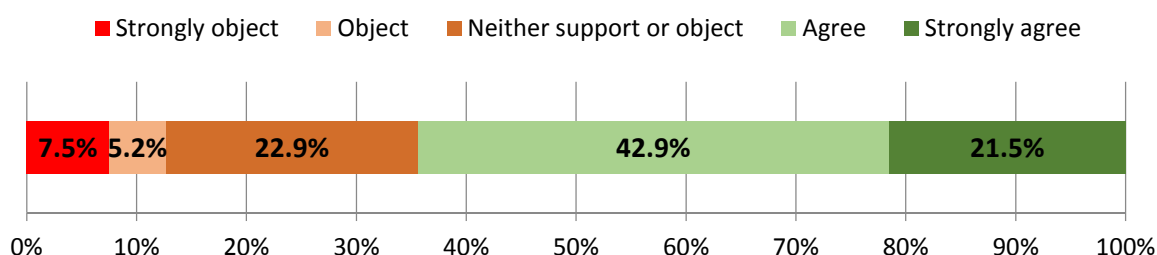
- The Stratford-upon-Avon Cycle Network Plan will be referenced.
- The strategy will make reference to the importance of maintaining cycling infrastructure to a high standard.

## 7. Theme 5: Impact of coaches and long distance buses

People were asked to indicate their level of support for the following measures that were proposed in theme 5 of the draft Stratford-upon-Avon Draft Transport Strategy:

1. Restrict coach access to the town centre and other unsuitable routes within Stratford-upon-Avon.
2. Review current coach parking facilities at the Leisure centre and develop appropriate facilities for all coach drop off, collection and layover. Provide a shuttle bus between the coach park, town centre and railway station.
3. A new access to Anne Hathaway’s Cottage from the West of Shottery Relief Road will be provided as an alternative to the narrow and unsuitable residential roads in the west of Stratford-upon-Avon and Shottery.

**Figure 6: Level of opposition and support for the proposed theme 5 measures**



If the 137 (22.9%) who neither supported nor objected to theme 5 of the strategy are removed then 14% (76) slightly or strongly objected whilst 86% (386) slightly or strongly agreed with the proposed measures in theme 5 of the transport strategy.

*n – 599 responses*

There were 162 comments received in response to this theme and similar to theme 4, theme 5 also received a high level of support, with 86% of respondents stating they approved of the proposed measures, and just 14% opposing them.

The reliance on coaches for tourism was the predominant focus within the responses, with 11% of respondents highlighting the importance of the visitor economy to Stratford-upon-Avon and acknowledging that coaches play an important role in bringing tourists to the town and enabling them to access the town centre. This point was also raised by a number of businesses within the town centre that asked that their operating and access needs are considered in the future.

*‘It must be remembered that tourism is the lifblood of Stratford-upon-Avon. Many visitors arrive by coach. They must not be discouraged.’*

*‘Restricting coaches that bring in valuable source of revenue (i.e. tourists) is a very bad idea. If you make it coach unfriendly tour operators will find somewhere else to visit.’*

*‘Access by coach is vitally important for SBT and other similar organisations in the town. We recognise the need to manage coach traffic in the town centre, but ask that solutions take*



*account of visitors' requirements.... The strategy should also recognise that coach tour operator's work on very tight timetables and if a visit to Stratford takes too long they would miss the town out of an itinerary.'*

The strategy acknowledges that appropriate facilities are required to ensure coach operators are not deterred from bringing passengers to Stratford. Detailed proposals for arrangements for coaches would be developed in consultation with stakeholders.

## **7.1. Coach and Bus Routes**

Measure 1 of this theme proposes restricting coach access to the town centre and other unsuitable routes within the Stratford-upon-Avon area. Shottery Road was highlighted within the comments as an unsuitable route, primarily due to it being too narrow to safely accommodate large vehicles.

*'Buses and coaches should not use Shottery road as substantial parts are too narrow.'*

*'The level of large buses and coaches is ridiculous. So many bringing in children from far afield, and winding through the narrow streets around Shottery particularly.'*

*'Shottery really suffers from all the coaches.'*

As proposed in measure 3, the issue of coaches on Shottery Road, many of which use it as a route to Anne Hathaway's Cottage, should in part be solved by the West of Shottery Relief Road, which is expected to provide direct access to a new coach and car park at Anne Hathaway's Cottage. During the consultation it was reported that a significant proportion of coaches simply drive to and past the cottage to allow passengers to see the attraction. This will need to be considered as the detail for delivering the measures identified within this theme are developed.

Other unsuitable routes highlighted by respondents included roads with traffic calming, as they already have existing traffic problems, and roads running through the Old Town. A comment was also made that highlighted a need to improve access to the Windsor Street coach facilities, particularly Guild Street Roundabout.

*'We live on a road that has speed bumps and yet it is frequented by double decker buses and coaches (at speed) as the bumps don't seem to affect their vehicles.'*

*'Stop coaches coming through the town centre and using unsuitable roads in Old Town.'*

*'No coaches should be allowed on roads not fit for them.'*

*'Coach parking facility on Windsor Street is laughable as departing coaches struggle to negotiate the Guild St roundabout.'*

This is useful information that will feed into future work to develop the detailed proposals for delivering these measures.

## **7.2. Coach Parking Facilities**

Appreciating that tourism is fundamental to Stratford-upon-Avon's economy, some respondents were sceptical of the suggestion to restrict coach access to the town centre, although sympathetic to the need to prevent the use of unsuitable routes.

### **Park and Ride Facilities**

Of the comments received, 25% (40) were made by respondents who suggested ideas to mitigate the impact of coaches and long distance buses in the town centre. The most popular method of reducing coaches in the town centre was increasing the use of the park and ride facility for tourists.

*'All tourist coach travel should not be allowed into the town centre, drop them off at the park and ride and make them use the service.'*

*'Perhaps restrict town parking for residents only to encourage visitors to use park and ride.'*

*'Coach station to be situated at the park and ride.'*

This could be problematic, as it is likely that when a coach, or multiple coaches, arrives and passengers disembark they would overfill the shuttle buses, potentially leaving people behind. This could also be mirrored on the return journey, where timing issues could arise if a large number of passengers were trying to return to the Park and Ride car park simultaneously. This concept was supported by comments made underlining the need for a capable Park and Ride bus service, so not to discourage coach operators and visitors.

*'Buses to transfer people into town would need to be prompt, regular and quick otherwise coach companies will continue to try to get close to town.'*

*'If only on a day trip I don't see passengers on a long journey taking a shuttle bus.'*

It is not proposed to progress the concept of using Park and Ride facilities as a coach interchange at the current time.

### **Coach Drop Off, Collection and Layover Facilities**

The coach parking facilities in Windsor Street were raised in five comments, with some suggesting these are inadequate and in need of improvement. However, respondents generally felt the existing coach facilities at the site should be retained as an area to pick-up and drop-off passengers. One comment suggested it should accommodate more coaches, whilst another stated that drivers should be encouraged to use the larger Leisure Centre car park for layovers.

*'Current facilities in Windsor Street are inadequate.'*

*'Do some work in the Windsor Street area to provide more spaces for coaches and make that end of the Birmingham Road more attractive. E.g. Provision of trees etc. to make it more visually attractive.'*

*'The coach station in Windsor Street should be retained, with coaches being encouraged to use the Leisure Centre car park after they have dropped off their passengers.'*

It should be noted that the coach facility in Windsor Street is owned by the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust and used for drop off / pick up of coach parties visiting the attraction. It is not a general facility for all coaches.

Measure 2 proposes to review the current coach parking facilities at the Leisure Centre and to develop appropriate facilities for coach drop off, collection and layover. This provoked a number of responses with some of the responses suggesting that the Leisure Centre Coach Park is too far from the town centre for many passengers and suggestions that a more central drop off / pick up point should be provided. These comments included specific mention of needing to recognise that passengers with

impaired mobility need to be catered for. Other responses suggested that the existing Leisure Centre coach park should be improved.

*'...the present coach park at the leisure centre is too far away for many of the older tourists, they need a much more central drop off/pick up point. Tourism is vital to Stratford-upon-Avon.'*

*'Coach drop offs could be developed at the Pen and Parchment with layover at the leisure centre.'*

*'We would ask that the present layover arrangements are maintained and enhanced at the Leisure Centre and would not see out of town solutions with shuttle buses as appropriate for evening audiences given the volume of people whose needs would need to be serviced at the same time.'*

*'Making sure that any coach parking/drop off is situated so these visitors don't have to walk a long way in order to get to the places they have come to see is a must.'*

*'Many coach passengers have poor mobility so need easy drop off points, even if bus/coach moved to parking to return at agreed times to collect.'*

*'Coaches need good access to the town. A lot of people using the coaches are elderly or infirm. They need easy access to the sites they are visiting and their transport.'*

*'All aspects of the overall Strategy should respond to the access needs of everyone – residents, workers, visitors – and particularly those with special access requirements.'*

It is recognised that it is imperative to ensure the access needs of everyone is taken into account and this is an issue that needs to be reflected throughout the transport strategy. The strategy will also be revised to state that a coach pick up / drop off facilities should be provided closer to the town centre. It should be noted that the strategy proposes an alternative option to a town centre pick up / drop off facility in the form of a shuttle bus that would operate between the Leisure Centre coach park, town centre and railway station, however this proposal did not draw any comment.

### **Railway Station Interchange**

A number of comments stated it would be beneficial for more long distance coaches and buses to use the interchange facilities at the railway station to reduce the need for coaches and large buses to make trips into the town centre and to encourage integration between bus/coach and rail travel. Improvements in the interconnection between buses and the railway station have also been considered in Theme 2, in addition to the provision of a dedicated bus station.

*'The coaches and buses would have been better served on the land near the railway station and not on the inner relief road.'*

*'The town should have a proper coach / bus station preferably close to the railway station.'*

*'Scheduled National Express coaches should use the new interchange at the station. This would represent sensible use of the facility. The new interchange is much closer to the town centre than the Leisure Centre and has a taxi rank. National Express coaches do not lay over in Stratford-upon-Avon, so there is no need for a longer-term parking facility. There would be no need for a shuttle bus if most local bus services and all National Express services used the railway station.'*

More bus services are now using the railway station interchange, however most services still need to travel through the town centre. The station is considered too far away from the town centre to act as a town centre stop, and buses using the railway station interchange will have to negotiate the bottom end of Birmingham Road, an area that experiences high levels of congestion.

The small number of long distance buses that currently serve Stratford-upon-Avon stop at the Leisure Centre. This provides a more accessible stopping point for these buses that travel to and from the M40 than the railway station interchange. It also avoids the need to negotiate the town centre, which would extend journey times.

### **7.3. Theme 5 Conclusions**

There was a high level of support for this theme with 86% of respondents supporting the proposed measures. There were 162 comments received in response to the theme with the majority of these reflecting what has been proposed in the Strategy. The main points that were made in the responses were as follows:

- There was awareness that tourism should not be disadvantaged as a result of restrictions being imposed on coaches in the town centre and other sensitive areas.
- A number of respondents suggested that coaches should use the Park and Ride facilities, but that this would require a more efficient and accessible service.
- Locations that were highlighted as unsuitable for coaches include Old Town and Shutterly.
- A town centre coach drop off / collection point with a nearby layover facility would be beneficial. The Leisure Centre Car Park is too far from the town centre to be used for drop off / collection.

The comments made in response to this theme have reflected what has been proposed in the Strategy, and therefore the suggested measures for managing the impact of buses and coaches will be retained. In response to the comments the following changes will be made to the strategy:

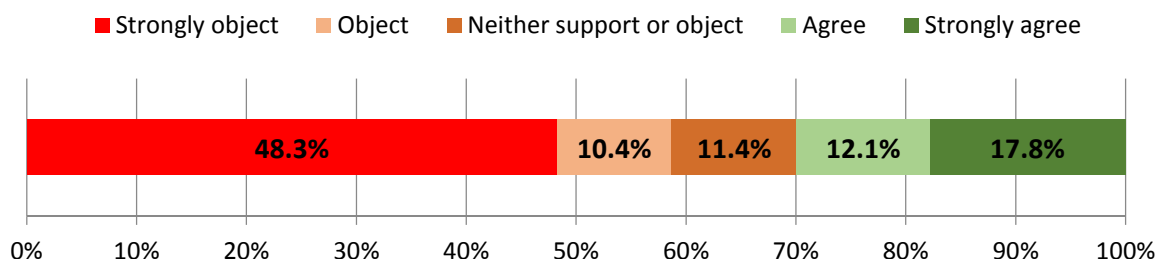
- The strategy will propose that a coach pick up / drop off facility should be provided closer to the town centre.
- The strategy will make reference to ensuring that equality of access is provided.

## 8. Theme 6: Managing the impact of HGVs

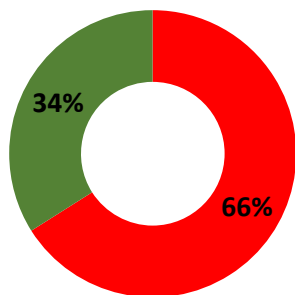
People were asked to indicate their level of support for the following measures that were proposed in theme 5 of the draft Stratford-upon-Avon Draft Transport Strategy:

1. The provision of Western and Eastern Relief Roads to reduce the need for HGV through traffic to access central areas of Stratford-upon-Avon.
2. Impose restrictions on HGV access over Clopton Bridge (requires delivery of an eastern relief road).
3. Impose weight restrictions to limit goods vehicle access to the town centre.
4. Establish HGV routing agreements with local freight operators and developers to minimise environmental impacts whilst seeking to maintain efficient access.
5. Promote increased usage of dedicated commercial vehicle Satellite Navigation units by freight operators with neighbouring local authorities, local MPs and other agencies.
6. Manage access to industrial areas in a way which is consistent with the Local Transport Plan 2011-2026 Sustainable Freight Distribution Strategy.

**Figure 7: Level of opposition and support for the proposed theme 6 measures**



- Slightly or strongly object
- Slightly or strongly support



If the 68 (11.4%) who neither supported or objected to theme 6 of the strategy are removed then 66% (76) slightly or strongly objected whilst 34% (386) slightly or strongly agreed with the proposed measures in theme 6 of the transport strategy.

*n – 596 respondents*

Theme 6 received the second highest level of objections of the six themes within the strategy, with 66% of respondents opposing the measures proposed.

There were 371 comments in response to this theme, with all comments relating to measures 1 to 3. As per theme 1, contention was primarily focused around the relief roads that are proposed in measure 1 of this theme to reduce the need for HGV through traffic to access central areas of Stratford-upon-Avon, with 36% (133) of comments made disagreeing with the ERR and 22% (80) stating that the proposed measures would not enable the strategy objectives to be met. A further 24% (64) of comments said that traffic modelling / surveys needed to be carried out or that the case had not been made.

## 8.1. Relief Roads

A detailed explanation of the reasons for including the ERR and WRR in the draft transport strategy has been provided in section 3 of this report and this included an overview of the transport assessments and modelling work that provides the background and evidence base for these proposals. It also responds to a number of points that were also made in response to this theme, including concerns about the environmental impact of relief roads and the potential for further development that could accompany an ERR. This explanation will not be repeated here, but in summary the key points were:

1. The West of Shottery Relief Road is a planning condition of the housing development at Shottery and will connect the A46 with the B439 Evesham Road. It has planning permission and is required as mitigation to accommodate the 800 homes on this development.
2. The South Western Relief Road will link the B439 Evesham Road with the A3400 Shipston Road. It has been identified as an essential scheme to accommodate the traffic generated by development to the southwest of Stratford and will provide betterment to the operation of the highway network within the town centre and at junctions to the west of Stratford.
3. Initial modelling has suggested that delivering an Eastern Relief Road that links the A422 Banbury Road with the A439 Warwick Road in tandem with the SWRR and other transport mitigation identified through the Core Strategy process will deliver improvements to the overall transport network in Stratford, even if accompanied by further housing. The modelling indicates that these improvements will provide opportunities to introduce further pedestrian priority schemes within the town centre and to introduce an HGV restriction on Clopton Bridge.

## 8.2. Clopton Bridge Weight Restriction

Comparably to measure 4 in theme 1, which proposes vehicular restrictions over Clopton Bridge, measure 2 in theme 6 specifies the proposal to restrict HGVs on the bridge. Both of these measures state that in order to achieve this it would require the delivery of an ERR. Although over 5% of comments agreed that introducing HGV restrictions on Clopton Bridge would be beneficial, a large number of comments also disputed the need for the ERR.

*'I agree that Clopton Bridge is not suitable for HGV traffic but I strongly object to using this as an excuse to start building roads around the town.'*

*'In principle I feel that HGV through traffic should be restricted. However, I don't believe that an ERR is the only way to impose restrictions on Clopton bridge.'*

*'It has not been explained why restrictions on HGV on Clopton Bridge requires an ERR.'*

*'This is trying to get you to sign up for an ERR through the back door. How can you jump from restricting HGV access on Clopton Bridge to needing to be an ERR to deliver it?'*

*'I would support the restriction of HGVs on the Clopton Bridge but I am not in favour of ALL the relief road suggestions in the strategy - this is a very misleading question.'*

There has previously been a high level of support for a weight restriction on Clopton Bridge and based on the comments received on this theme it remains a popular proposal. It is the ERR that the draft transport strategy states is required to bring

forward the restrictions that is the primary source of objection to this theme. In 2013 the County Council received a petition with over 2,000 signatures that stated:

*“We the undersigned are concerned about the increasing number of very large lorries using Clopton Bridge in Stratford. We consider that they are a major nuisance for residents of Stratford and visitors to our historic town and a danger to both pedestrians and cyclists using the bridge. We also believe that these heavy lorries are a significant cause of air and noise pollution. We request that the County Council consider this matter, with a view to finding a way in which restrictions can be placed on access to the bridge to reduce the size and number of lorries using it.”*

At the time it was decided that Clopton Bridge should be left unrestricted. It was considered that the alternative available routes would have caused an even greater impact on the environment of the town centre and increased congestion on already congested routes. There were two alternate routes that lorries could reasonably have used and it was expected that the majority would have transferred to Seven Meadows Road and Evesham Place. The second alternative route that would have been used by some lorries making through journeys was Tiddington Road and the A429 at Barford.

A 12 hour (07.00 to 19.00) HGV survey was carried out in June 2007 to determine the origin and destination of HGVs crossing Clopton Bridge. The results of this survey are shown below. Despite being 10 years old it is considered that this survey remains broadly representative of HGV trip patterns. The total number of HGVs crossing Clopton Bridge was 789 in a 12 hour period, an average of 1 HGV every 53 seconds. A traffic survey carried out at Clopton Bridge in May 2017 recorded a total of 924 HGVs using Clopton Bridge during the same 12 hour period, an average of 1 HGV every 47 seconds and a 17% increase on the 2007 figure.

The key findings from analysis of HGV traffic on Clopton Bridge from the 2007 survey was as follows:

- 56% (443 HGVs) is travelling between all locations south of the river and the direction of Stratford town centre. This suggests that more than half of the HGV traffic on Clopton Bridge has a destination or origin within Stratford.
- 44% (346 HGVs) is travelling between A439 and all locations south of the river. The bulk of this traffic (235 HGVs) is travelling between A439 and B4632. This probably reflects the importance of commercial activity at Long Marston.
- 71% of all HGVs crossing the River Avon in Stratford use Clopton Bridge (789 HGVs) and 29% (322 HGVs) use the A4390 Seven Meadows Road.

A number of comments were made about the SWRR and WSRR, with some respondents stating they are unsuitable routes for HGVs and others suggesting that they would remove the need for the ERR.

*‘The SWRR is not a suitable route for a relief road. The ERR option should be implemented as it takes all the traffic out on the major roads. The SWRR will place all the traffic on to the very congested Evesham Road and dump it into a housing estate.’*

*‘I strongly believe that the agreed WRR would solve most of the HGV issues without the need for an ERR’*

The standard of the WSRR which traverses the Shottery housing development was discussed in section 3.3 of this report where it was stated that the road would be suitable for the volume and composition of traffic that would use it. The addition of the

WRR does provide an additional route for HGVs. This can be expected to attract HGVs that currently route along Seven Meadows Road and Alcester Road to reach the A46 for travel to or from a westbound direction. However, the WRR is unlikely to be the preferred route for HGVs displaced by a restriction on Clopton Bridge due to the additional distance it would add to journeys. These vehicles are still more likely to transfer to Seven Meadows Road and Evesham Place for access to and from locations within Stratford or Tiddington Road and the A429 at Barford for travel to and from the A46 / M40 at Longbridge. As discussed above, this would have an even greater impact on communities, the environment and congestion than the current arrangement. The level of displacement onto these routes is considered unacceptable.

An ERR would provide HGVs travelling between the south of the river and the A439 Warwick Road with an attractive direct alternative route for making this journey and it can be reasonably assumed that the vast majority of these vehicles would route via an ERR if Clopton Bridge was closed to them. This movement accounted for 44% of HGVs crossing Clopton Bridge in the 2007 survey.

This remaining 56% of HGV traffic that crosses Clopton Bridge is unlikely to use the ERR and would transfer to alternative routes. This issue was highlighted by a number of respondents who stated that this would simply move the problem to other parts of the town, as has been discussed above in the scenarios of no relief roads and just a WRR.

*'I understand from traffic surveys that a large proportion of HGVs which were surveyed had their destination as Stratford.'*

*'If HGVs are restricted over Clopton Bridge they may reroute over more unsuitable roads.'*

*'Most HGV's are delivering to businesses in town. They will still need to enter Stratford-upon-Avon whether there are relief roads or not.'*

*'The relief roads currently proposed will move HGV issues to other parts of the town.'*

It is accepted that the majority of HGVs that cross Clopton Bridge to access locations within Stratford would primarily transfer to Seven Meadows Road / Evesham Place and that this would place pressure on these roads. However, this would in part be offset by the transfer of both HGVs and other traffic from these routes to the WRR.

It has been concluded that the combination of ERR and WRR provides the opportunity to consider the imposition of a weight restriction on Clopton Bridge, but that this could not be provided without the additional capacity and route options that these roads would provide.

Those in favour of the WRR and ERR and the Clopton Bridge HGV restrictions recognised the positive impact these roads would have on traffic and air quality in the town centre.

*'We own & operate have vehicles as part of our business but can see that Clopton Bridge is a bottleneck and hazard for them cyclists on the bridge are a danger the lorry's have the Severn meadows bridge already existing to get to the Evesham road & onward to the M5 there needs to be a new road constructed to get south of the river have s out toward the M40/M42/M6 via Barford or somewhere in that direction'*



*'...supportive of this theme and acknowledge the need to shape traffic flows and air quality in the core of the Town.'*

*'In order for these HGVs to avoid Stratford-upon-Avon town centre there needs to be suitable alternatives for them to use, like the relief road.'*

*'Large HGVs should be banned from Clopton Bridge. They make it unsafe for cyclists as the bridge is too narrow.'*

*'I wince when I see some of the traffic on Clopton Bridge. Anything that can reduce the need for heavy traffic across this bridge is to be welcomed.'*

*'HGV use of the Clopton Bridge has increased exponentially since it was last measured. I feel strongly that weight restrictions are needed NOW to reduce pollution and other dangers to pedestrians-and to the bridge!'*

### **8.3. Town Centre Weight Restriction**

Measure 3 of this theme proposes the introduction of weight restrictions to limit goods vehicle access to the town centre and this provoked a number of responses. Some of these comments queried how deliveries would be made to town centre businesses and warned that restrictions would have a detrimental impact on businesses, whilst others suggested that timed restrictions should be introduced.

*'Unless delivering to specific locations within town, all HGVs should be prohibited from town.'*

*'What about vehicles delivering into Stratford? Will they still have access?'*

*'We are a tourist destination, full of restaurants and vibrant shops who all need deliveries so I'm not sure that weight restrictions should be imposed either.'*

*'Any restriction on lorries will cause business to close and relocate leading to a "Ghost" town centre.'*

*'The number of lorries and vans visiting the town centre during the day could be reduced if restrictions were placed on the times deliveries could be made. Other towns restrict these deliveries to early morning and there is no reason why Stratford could not do the same.'*

*'Yes but your measures do not go far enough. Deliveries should be timed for overnight for a start.'*

*'Restrict delivery vehicles to early morning and late evening.'*

The town centre already has a 7.5 tonne weight restriction in operation, but vehicles above this weight are permitted to access central areas for loading and unloading. The strategy acknowledges that local businesses need to be able to bring freight into the town centre, however under the current arrangement large goods vehicles are able to enter the town centre where they are intimidating to pedestrians and cyclists and have a detrimental effect on the local environment and ambience. In practice traffic laws prevent the introduction of total bans on HGV access to any roads, even for stated periods of time. However, it may be possible to review and extend the loading restrictions that currently operate within the town in order to further restrict and better manage the locations and timings at which on street loading and unloading can take place. The County and District Councils would like to review these arrangements as

part of the proposals to revise the function and design of town centre streets in measure 7 of Theme 1.

The wording of measure 3 of this theme will be revised to recognise that a weight restriction already exists and that the focus of work in this area will need to be reviewing loading restrictions.

#### **8.4. Theme 6 - Conclusions**

Similar to the responses received for other themes, theme 6 also received objections to the proposal of an ERR, and requested that more data is collected before further consideration is given to the relief road. Similarly, mixed views were also obtained on the SWRR, which included suggestions that the delivery of this might eliminate the need for an ERR.

Although many agreed that Clopton Bridge was unsuitable for HGV traffic, some respondents were doubtful that a restriction would work, because a significant proportion of HGVs have a destination or origin within the town. Similar to theme 1, comments highlighted that people are uncertain as to why an ERR would be required in order to alleviate pressure on the Clopton Bridge, and feel the traffic could be accommodated on existing roads.

The following revision will be made to the strategy in response to the feedback provided:

- The wording of measure 3 of this theme will be revised to reflect that a weight restriction already exists and that the focus of work will be reviewing loading restrictions.
- The figures presented in the strategy for HGVs crossing Clopton Bridge will be updated to reflect the 2017 data.

## 9. General Comments and Suggestions

The final question of the consultation asked for any further comments or suggestions on transport issues in the town that had not already been covered. A total of 285 comments were made to this section via the online survey. A high proportion of these comments summarised or reinforced comments that respondents had made in response to specific themes and as per the overall consultation feedback, the responses to this section were dominated by a small number of issues; concerns over the level of housing growth, the relief roads and the Stratford to Honeybourne railway. Only comments on subjects not covered elsewhere within this evaluation report have been considered within this section. The independent analysis of the consultation feedback by Osiris MR grouped into this section all consultation responses received via means other than the online survey, such as email, letter and pro-forma of which there were 233. For the purpose of this report these comments have been considered as part of the analysis of the feedback to the individual themes and only included in this section if the issue had not been dealt with elsewhere.

### 9.1. Electric Vehicles

The use electric buses was proposed in the draft Strategy to help improve air pollution (theme 3, measure 2); however, this idea was expanded on by respondents to this section who suggested the use of other electric vehicles. This issue was also highlighted during the consultation launch. One proposed approach was to promote the use of electric cars, which would be supported by the provision of free parking and charging points. The use of electric delivery vehicles was also suggested in some comments to help reduce air pollution in the town centre. Finally, one respondent also suggested that electric bicycle hire be considered. This may be a more attractive option to visitors and infrequent cyclists, who may not feel comfortable cycling using a non-assisted bicycle due to fitness concerns or the topography of the area.

*'Electric buses and better links a good idea.'*

*'Pollution may be lowered by electric vehicles.'*

*'Free parking for electric vehicles would be good. If electric buses are viable, then definitely adopt them.'*

*'Electric vehicles should be encouraged through provision of charging points, parking charge relief and perhaps even council tax relief. As a relatively affluent area with a road user profile of many short journeys SUA is well placed to move to electric vehicles'*

*'Should include explicit support for infrastructure to enable electric car usage.'*

*'Genuine alternatives for servicing local businesses, such as inner town centre electric delivery vehicles, need to be provided.'*

*'Electric cycle rental networks should be considered too.'*

The take up of electric vehicles will support the strategy objective of reducing the negative impact of traffic on air pollution and the revised strategy will therefore place greater emphasis on encouraging and supporting a shift to greater use of electric vehicles. This will pick up on the themes covered in the County Council's recently adopted Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy. This document sets out a vision for providing the infrastructure necessary to enable residents, businesses and

communities to use electric vehicles every day and for any purpose. This is in line with recent Government commitments to electric vehicles which include a plan to ban the sale of new diesel and petrol cars in the UK from 2040.

## 9.2. Traffic Calming

Three comments requested greater levels of speed enforcement and traffic calming within the town.

*'Tackle speeding around edges will bring in huge amounts of money. Where are visible police? Speed cameras on Birmingham Road are a joke! Needed on fast roads.'*

*'More emphasis should be put into speeding problems on smaller roads that are largely unmonitored e.g. speed cameras, speed bumps and more police on foot.'*

*'We urgently need traffic calming measures on the Shottery Road and a safe place for children to cross from Seymour Road cut way. The bend by the girls school is really dangerous because it's blind, we have cars regularly travelling at >40mph. I don't like crossing as an adult, let alone children, I fear it is only a matter of time before a child is severely hurt or killed on this road.'*

One of the objectives of the draft strategy is to improve safety for all road users and while the strategy does not present detailed proposals for how this will be achieved road safety is a guiding principal of the strategy and is implicit in many of the proposed measures.

## 9.3. Clopton Bridge / Tiddington Road junction

Concerns with the traffic management scheme that is being implemented at the junction of Tiddington Road, Banbury Road and Clopton Bridge were raised by four respondents to the consultation.

*'Traffic lights at the end of Tiddington Road will only make traffic queues longer.'*

*'Putting traffic lights on Clopton Bridge is ridiculous. It was suggested at the February 9th meeting that "we will put them up and see what happens, then adjust as necessary". This just about sums up the overall approach to WCC & SDC's traffic proposals.'*

*'Cannot see how traffic lights will help traffic from the south side when crossing Clapton Bridge. Think these will be a disaster and should be trialled before wasting money on something which will be found useless in practice.'*

This scheme was not specifically mentioned in the draft transport strategy, but is expected to be implemented during 2018. It is being brought forward as a condition of the planning permission that was granted to the Arden Heath Farm site in southeast Stratford on appeal by a Planning Inspector.

Traffic modelling identified that capacity issues at Clopton Bridge would constrain development opportunities to the south of the river and that a junction improvement scheme was required to accommodate the additional traffic that will be generated by the development of the 270 homes at Arden Heath Farm combined with other development to the south of the river. Traffic modelling has confirmed that traffic will flow more steadily through the revised junction design and better enable the junction to manage the additional level of traffic.

The scheme involves introducing traffic signals to better manage conflicting traffic movements. It also adds a right turn movement from Tiddington Road onto Clopton Bridge which reduces the number of vehicles making a U-turn at the downstream Banbury Road/Shipston Road roundabout. The scheme also provides safe crossing points for cyclists and pedestrians. The combined effects of the new development and junction design are predicted as follows:

- Reduced queues and delays on the Banbury Road approach to the roundabout.
- Relatively balanced delays on all approaches to the Banbury Rd / Bridgefoot / Tiddington Rd junction.
- Increased queues on Tiddington Rd & Clopton Bridge, but no significant increase in average journey time.
- Improved pedestrian and cyclist safety.

This is a significantly better outcome than would be the case if the junction was left in the current arrangement. The junction arrangement was considered in the 'Stratford on Avon District Core Strategy Strategic Transport Assessment: Further Assessment of Traffic Implications in Stratford-upon-Avon. November 2015'.

<https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/205918/name/ED1472%20Further%20Assessment%20of%20Traffic%20Implications%20in%20SuA%20Nov%202015.pdf>

The nature of the junction means that it would not be possible to operate the traffic lights on a temporary basis as was suggested by one respondent in order to trial the arrangement. This is because the traffic signals are required to operate at all times to enable all road users to safely negotiate the junction. In addition, as detailed above, the junction has been the subject of considerable modelling and testing.

*'Proposed traffic lights for Tiddington/Banbury/Shipston roads should first be tested with temporary lights to see if this is a suitable option.'*

#### **9.4. Redesigning the Gyratory**

Two respondents to the consultation suggested that changes should be made to the gyratory in order to improve traffic flow in this area.

*'What about redesigning the gyratory? Bearing in mind people have to use the gyratory to get to Bridgefoot car park and to the leisure centre, this road design is no longer suitable.'*

*'The gyratory also needs to be adjusted so cars have to drive 20 meters before merge and weaving so that the traffic keeps moving.'*

The draft transport strategy does not specifically reference changes to the road layout on the gyratory but there may be opportunities to review this area as part of the following work streams that are expected to emerge from the strategy:

1. Consideration of the function and design of town centre streets (theme 1, measure 7)
2. Further work on an Eastern Relief Road which it is predicted would take traffic away from this area (theme 1, measure 2 & 4).

The specific suggestion of extending the traffic separation further around Bridgeway from Warwick Road was also raised during stakeholder engagement ahead of the consultation on the draft transport strategy. The main issue with doing this is that it

would reduce the opportunities for traffic seeking to cross lanes to access the Leisure Centre and Bridgeway car parks.

## 9.5. School Transport

There were a number of responses that suggested traffic congestion caused by parents dropping off and picking up children from school needed resolving. One respondent proposed penalising parents for using cars to transport only one child, and encourage them to use other transport such as mini buses. Another suggestion was to provide free school travel by rail and bus.

*'Stop the recent trend of parents driving children to school and to help commuters working within the town and local area get to places without using cars?'*

*'Parents could be penalised for using cars with only one child and encouraged to use mini buses or communal ways of getting their children to and from school.'*

*'Free school travel on rail and bus.'*

*'Is there any way of using the Park & Ride facilities for school pick-ups to avoid parental parking in residential roads. e.g. if shuttle buses could take children to Park & Ride where they could be collected.'*

The strategy acknowledges issues around school transport and highlights the opportunity to reduce car usage and congestion by encouraging school journeys to be made by more sustainable modes. The strategy includes an objective to 'reduce high car dependency particularly for travel to work and school'. The strategy includes measures that will support this, such as providing improved cycling and walking facilities and better public transport services in order to encourage modal shift. However, it needs to be recognised that school transport is part of the overall demand for access to the network and that some parents are limited in the options available to them.

## 9.6. Wider Area Issues

A number of respondents used this section to raise concerns about transport issues in the wider district area and this included considering the impact that any measures introduced as part of the strategy would have on surrounding areas.

*The strategy focuses solely on the town, which includes one fifth of the population of the district, not the district as a whole.*

*The progressive development of the town should be performed in full consideration of the surrounding areas that are impacted and should also benefit from similar measures (bike routes, restricted HGV traffic, relief roads).*

*'Extend the plan to cover the District not just the town. Town plan will make the rural issue far worse.'*

It was always intended that this strategy would be narrowly focussed on addressing the specific transport issues that are experienced within Stratford-upon-Avon. In so doing the strategy has solely considered the town and the town's immediate environs and key strategic links. This approach is set out in the draft strategy and is consistent with the commitment made at the early Stratford Traffic Summits. This is not to suggest that the issues identified as affecting the wider area do not need resolving, but

simply that they necessarily fall beyond the scope of this particular strategy. It is accepted, however that consideration needs to be given to the implications that any changes to the transport network in and around Stratford will have on the wider area.

Examples of some of the wider area issues that were raised in the consultation feedback are highlighted below:

*'A resolution is needed to the junction/crossing through Binton and Billesley Manor - it is a death trap.'*

*'The progressive development of the town should be performed in full consideration of the surrounding areas that are impacted and should also benefit from similar measures (bike routes, restricted HGV traffic, relief roads).'*

*'Properly take into account the significant extra road traffic that will be generated by 3000 new homes at GLH. These residents will quickly realise that their most direct route to Stratford will be through either Lighthorne or Gaydon & Kineton, converging on Wellesbourne and then on to Stratford. Developer assertions that they will go via Longbridge are very much mistaken.'*

*'As well as managing the traffic within Stratford, this strategy should also take into account traffic calming measures (cameras not speed bumps) for all local villages, such as Lower Quinton. The speed of traffic through local villages is very dangerous.'*

*'30 mph speed control is needed on the main roads in Welford on Avon. Often lorries speed and will kill someone.'*

*'Stratford District has very real rural transport issues that are addressed in part though not entirely by the draft strategy document..... Cost and availability of public transport coupled with our large rural district are two of the reasons why our CAB has several outreach offices and succeeds in raising funds for projects to take our services to clients who cannot get to us..... It has an impact on health where people have to travel to visit hospitals and GP surgeries. There are also difficulties around claiming welfare benefits, signing on at the Jobcentre, attending medical assessments etc. We also see problems for people accessing school transport, and using public transport for getting to and from work. Our clients report being trapped in their homes or villages by lack of reliable and affordable transport options. They report problems finding and keeping jobs, looking after their health, getting advice, socialising and generally playing a full part in the life of the local community.'*

## **9.7. Funding**

Two respondents to this section of the strategy highlighted funding availability as a significant barrier to implementing the identified measures. Questions as to how specific measures would be funded were also raised in response to specific themes and measures throughout the strategy, including cycling and walking infrastructure, public transport improvements and road construction.

*'Like many people in the town, I am concerned that a high percentage of the proposals need a considerable amount of funding to bring them to fruition. For this reason, I am concerned many will not be built or introduced in the short, or even medium term. What assurances can you give that this will not be the case?'*

*'I admire much of the strategy but question where the funding is coming from.'*

Securing funding to bring forward all of the measures identified in the strategy will be a significant challenge. Potential sources of funding include a range of government grants, developer contributions, partner support and internal District and County Council funding streams. In order to secure external funding it is necessary to have worked up and costed 'shovel-ready' schemes that can realistically be delivered within any time restrictions imposed by the funding. This was the case for the recent successful bid to the Department for Transport's National Productivity fund for the Birmingham Road Improvement Scheme. There is clearly more scheme development work to do to get all of the proposed strategy measures to this stage however by providing an overall vision and plan for Stratford the transport strategy provides an important initial step for unlocking these funding opportunities.

An additional section will be added to the revised strategy that considers funding opportunities and the work that is required to ensure Stratford is best placed to take advantage of any funding opportunities that present themselves.

## **9.8. Conclusions**

The general comments and suggestions section of the consultation provided respondents with an opportunity to make comments on transport issues that had not already been covered. The majority of comments made to the online survey in this section reinforced or summarised points made elsewhere within their feedback. The feedback provided in this section was dominated by comments on the more contentious issues including road construction, housing growth and the Stratford to Honeybourne railway line. However a number of additional topics were covered, including electric vehicles, traffic calming and school transport.

In response to the feedback to this section the following revisions will be made to the transport strategy:

1. Greater emphasis will be placed on encouraging and supporting a greater use of electric vehicles including through the provision of infrastructure required to support these vehicles.
2. A section will be added that considers how the measures outlined in the strategy will be funded.



## **Appendix 1 – Independent Analysis of Consultation Feedback**

# Draft Stratford-upon-Avon Transport Strategy

## Consultation Feedback April 2017

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## Background

The County Council made a commitment to produce a new transport strategy for the Stratford-upon-Avon area at the third Stratford Traffic Summit (March 2015) hosted by Nadhim Zahawi MP. The existing transport strategy for Stratford-upon-Avon and the wider District is contained within the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan 2011-26 (LTP). With traffic congestion increasing and pressure on the transport network growing there is a need to revisit the existing transport strategy to take a more progressive, long term view of what transport interventions are needed to support the town and wider District.

The draft Stratford-upon-Avon Area Transport Strategy sets out Warwickshire County Council and Stratford-upon-Avon District Council's shared transport strategy for Stratford-upon-Avon and the town's immediate environs and key strategic links. It identifies the general principles that need to underlie the development of the town's transport network over the next 15 to 20 years. Once adopted, the strategy will provide an updated local policy document that supplements the Warwickshire Local Transport Plan.

The draft strategy reflects the outcomes of the three Stratford Traffic Summits hosted by Nadhim Zahawi MP during 2014 and 2015 and has been informed by meetings held in 2015 with a number of Stratford organisations and interest groups.

The strategy proposes the following objectives:

- a) To reduce high car dependency, particularly for travel to work and school.
- b) To reduce through trips for motorised traffic in Stratford Town Centre.
- c) To reduce the negative impact of traffic on air pollution.
- d) To protect the historic core of Stratford Town and support the visitor economy.
- e) To provide increased resilience to the transport network.
- f) To improve road safety for all users.
- g) To accommodate future development without compromising the above objectives.

To achieve these objectives the strategy proposes six general themes, against which a number of specific approaches are outlined. The themes are:

1. Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon
2. Strategic road, rail and air links
3. Public transport provision
4. Encourage walking and cycling
5. Managing the impact of coaches and long distance buses
6. Managing the impact of HGVs

The proposed approaches are not a definitive list of schemes, but an overview of the direction that will be taken to achieve the objectives. Further work will need to be carried out to develop detailed scheme proposals and identify funding.

The draft Transport Strategy was presented to a number of Stratford organisations and interest groups during a round of meetings held during December 2016 and January 2017. The consultation was launched on the 9<sup>th</sup> February at the 4<sup>th</sup> Stratford Traffic Summit to an audience of approximately 250 people. A further well attended public meeting took place in Alveston on 27<sup>th</sup> February to discuss the proposal for an eastern relief road. The consultation closed on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

## Report Context

This report has been compiled by Osiris MR Limited using data, survey responses and response letters collated by Warwickshire County Council. The information provided is based entirely on this information.

Osiris MR is a full service Market Research consultancy based in Nottingham. As company partners to the Market Research Society (MRS) we work within the MRS Code of Conduct and in accordance with ISO 20252:2012.

This report has been analysed and compiled by a professional market researcher certified by the Market Research Society.

## Survey detail

The consultation period ran for six weeks from 9 February 2017 until 23 March 2017. Respondents were encouraged to reply utilising an online survey which was hosted on the Ask Warwickshire website. Written responses using the online survey format were accepted during the consultation period.

Additional written responses, in both email and letter formats were included as “General Comments” to the consultation.

The survey is split into 8 sections consisting:

1. Strategy objectives
2. Theme 1: Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon
3. Theme 2: Strategic road, rail and air links
4. Theme 3: Public transport
5. Theme 4: Encouraging walking and cycling
6. Theme 5: Coaches and long distance buses
7. Theme 6: Managing the impact of HGVs
8. Comments and suggestions

All sections bar section 8 ask for an indicated measure of support for the proposed measures. These range from Strongly Agree to Strongly Object. Additionally there is the ability to provide comments on the proposed measures

Other pertinent information

The consultation received

- 651 responses are via a full online survey
- 26 via paper versions of the full survey
- 170 responses on a pro-forma response sheet
- 15 responses on a 2<sup>nd</sup> pro-forma response sheet
- 48 other responses ranging from emails to a 43 page objection

In total 910 responses were received although not all respondents answered all questions. Each question will therefore show the total number of respondents used to create the percentages. The 233 (25.6%) responses which were received as additional correspondence will be analysed with the final any other comments question.

In order to help to analyse the data any verbatim comments were reviewed and allocated group codes. Whilst removing the granular detail of the comments it allows like comments to be grouped and considered whilst allowing the individual comments to be looked at again in greater detail later.

## Strategy Objectives

This first part of the survey asks respondents to indicate the level of support for the proposed objectives contained in the transport strategy

Q1 Please indicate your level of support for the proposed objectives contained within the Transport Strategy:

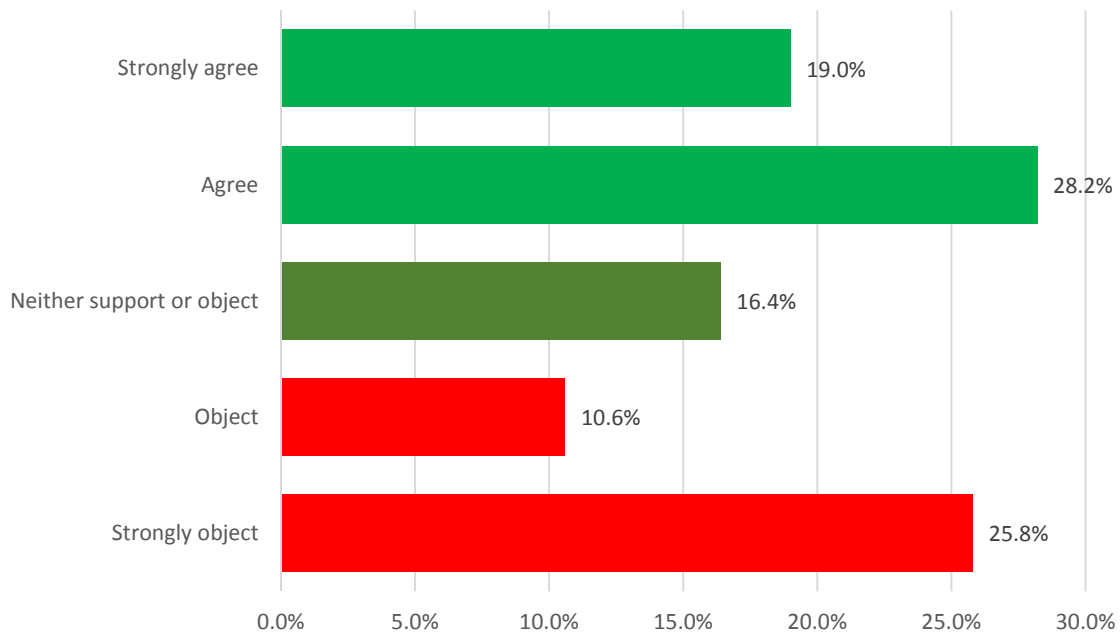


Fig Objective 1.1 – 644 respondents

The proposed objectives are supported in principle by 47.2% of respondents who either *agreed or strongly agreed*.

16.4% of respondents neither supported nor objected to the proposal and 36.4% of respondents *objected or strongly objected* to the proposed objectives.

Whilst less than 1 in 2 openly support the proposed objectives more respondents are in favour than not.



Q2 Do you have any comments on the proposed objectives?

Comment	Count	%
Not all objectives can be met by the strategy	57	16.5%
Agree in principle	46	13.3%
Objectives will increase traffic	42	12.2%
This requires a full rigorous traffic/transport study	37	10.7%
Further information required	35	10.1%
Will be used to allow further future development	30	8.7%
Eastern Relief Road is not a viable solution	29	8.4%
Need to improve public transport services	25	7.2%
Proposal will affect the flood plain	21	6.1%
Proposal will cause ecological harm	20	5.8%
Need to facilitate improved traffic flow through town first	17	4.9%
Disagree	17	4.9%

Fig Objective 1.2 – 345 respondents

In analysing the open comments 16.5% of the respondents cited that not all of the objectives can be met by the strategy whilst 13.3% agree in principle to the objectives.

There are a number of mixed respondent views following which either disagree with some of the objectives, various aspects of the objectives or totally disagree with the scheme (4.9%)

It is interesting that 12.2% of respondents see that the objectives will actually increase the traffic volumes and 10.7% would like a full transport study before committing themselves with a comparative number asking for more information.

A number of respondents have summarised thus

*“I have very grave concerns about the proposal for the South West 'Relief' Road and its validity. Not only have we seen no traffic study but no impact surveys either. I live in Luddington and I'm very concerned that it's a poor choice driven by funding from Developers...”*

*“It simply won't help”*

*“Strategy objectives are not fully compatible e.g. #7 How can development on scale we are currently experiencing be accommodated without compromising air quality? To provide*

*increased resilience to the transport network - on the basis of the lack of joined up thinking regarding traffic in S-O-A this is a vacuous vague concept. “*

## Theme 1: Manage traffic and travel in and through Stratford-upon-Avon

Q1 Please indicate your level of support for the proposed measures for enhancing strategic road, rail and air connectivity:

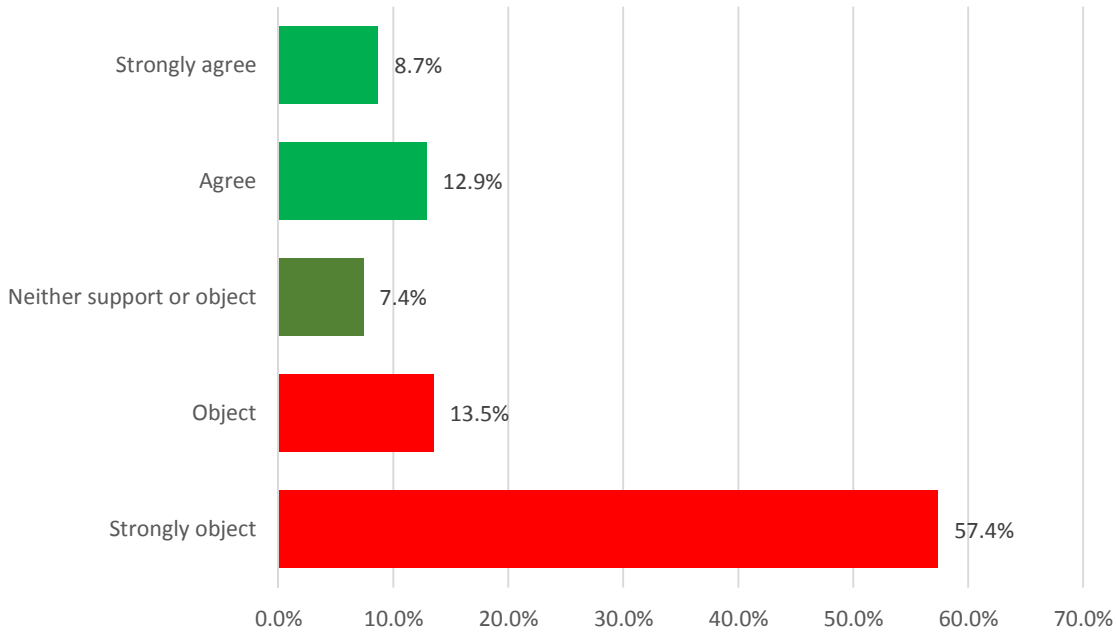


Fig Theme 1.1 – 620 respondents

70.9% of respondents either object or strongly object with this measure, with just over a fifth (21.6%) showing any agreement.

Q2 Do you have any comments on the proposed objectives?

Comment	Count	%
Don't support Eastern Relief Road	153	35.1%
This will not ease traffic problems	84	19.3%
New houses = more traffic = urbanisation	71	16.3%
Proposals are badly thought out	69	15.8%
Need proper analysis/research/no evidence provided	65	14.9%
This will push traffic to unsuitable areas	64	14.7%
I agree with some measures but not all	57	13.1%
This will cause significant ecological cost and increase flood risk	49	11.2%

Fig Theme 1.2 – 436 respondents

Over 1/3 of respondents (35.1%) state specifically that they are not in favour of the Eastern Relief Road as proposed, with 19.3% identifying that the measures will not alleviate the traffic problems.

16.3% of respondents have identified that more houses will create more traffic and equate to the urbanisation of the wider Stratford-upon-Avon area.

14.9% are asking that a full study be conducted to measure “properly” the need.

11.2% believe that the measure will come at a significant ecological cost and increase the flood risk in the area.

13.1% have identified that whilst they don't agree with all of the proposals they could support some.

*“Eastern Relief Road is a totally useless proposal”*

*“I do not believe an ERR is required and disagree that you need an ERR to restrict access to Clopton Bridge...”*

*“The proposal for an ERR seems to be one of the major components of the Transport Strategy. However there is no information about the possible route and no assessment of the likely impact of an ERR on a range of measures, including the economic, environmental or social impact on Stratford or on local residents, businesses and infrastructure. There is no indication of how an ERR would be funded. If this is to be through housing no information is included or of the impact any additional traffic generated for the local area and for Stratford as a whole.”*

## Theme 2: Strategic road, rail and air links

Q1 Please indicate your level of support for the proposed measures for enhancing strategic road, rail and air connectivity:

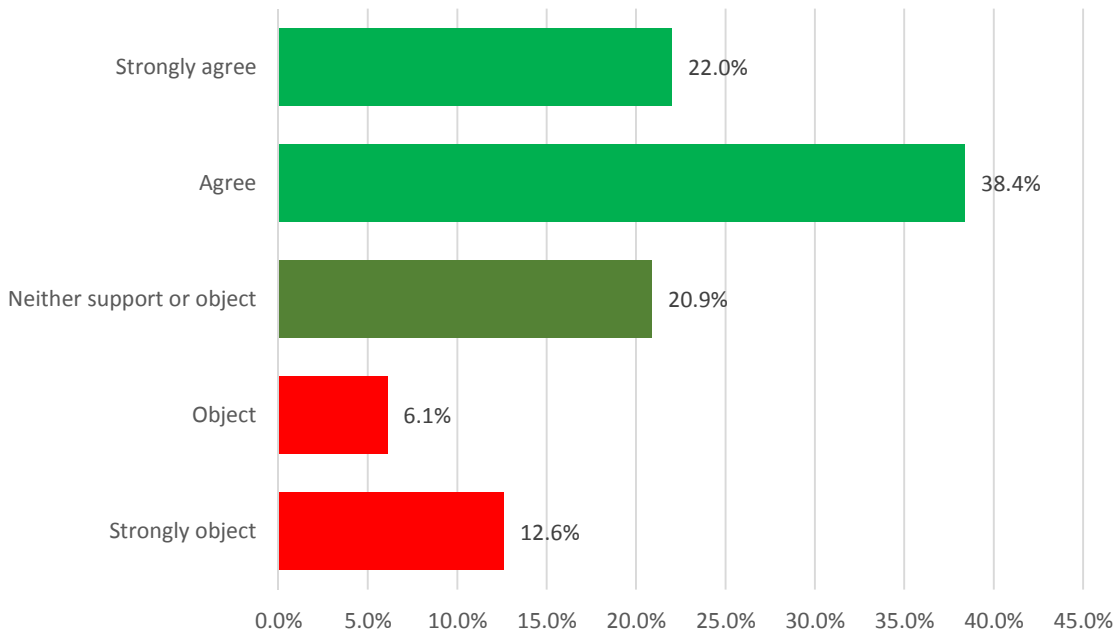


Fig Theme 2.1 – 609 respondents

60.4% of the respondents agree or strongly agree with the proposed measures for improving transport provision within Stratford-upon-Avon.

A little over 1/5 (20.9%) neither support or object to the proposal

Only 18.7% object or strongly object

Comment	Count	%
Restore/improve rail connections	66	28.8%
Require integrated/affordable transport systems	36	15.7%
Proposal too broad to comment specifically enough	26	11.4%
Improve motorway junctions first/not SMART motorway	18	7.9%
Need to stop further urbanisation	15	6.6%
How are you going to achieve this?	15	6.6%
Agree with proposal	14	6.1%

Fig Theme 2.2 – 229 respondents

28.8% of respondents' comments relate to the restoration or improvement of rail connections to and from Stratford-upon-Avon. A significant number are in relation to the re-introduction of the Honeybourne station.

15.7% of respondents are concerned with the need for a fully integrated public transport system where all elements can interact.

*"If Stratford is to remain and expand as an international visitor centre better rail access to London is essential as is the connection to Birmingham airport More frequent services from Stratford to London are essential. A direct bus service between Warwick parkway and Stratford should be introduced to remove road commuter traffic travelling to London and improve connections. it is ridiculous that so few train services either direct, or with changes at Leamington and Warwick serve such a major visitor centre. The focus of rail improvements should be on the Chiltern line which provides a quicker and more direct route. If the Honeybourne rail link is to be promoted this should be primarily as a tourist route."*

The broad nature of the proposal is identified in 11.4% of comments where respondents feel they cannot put specific concerns.

### Theme 3: Public transport

Q1 Please indicate your level of support for the proposed measures for improving public transport provision in Stratford-upon-Avon

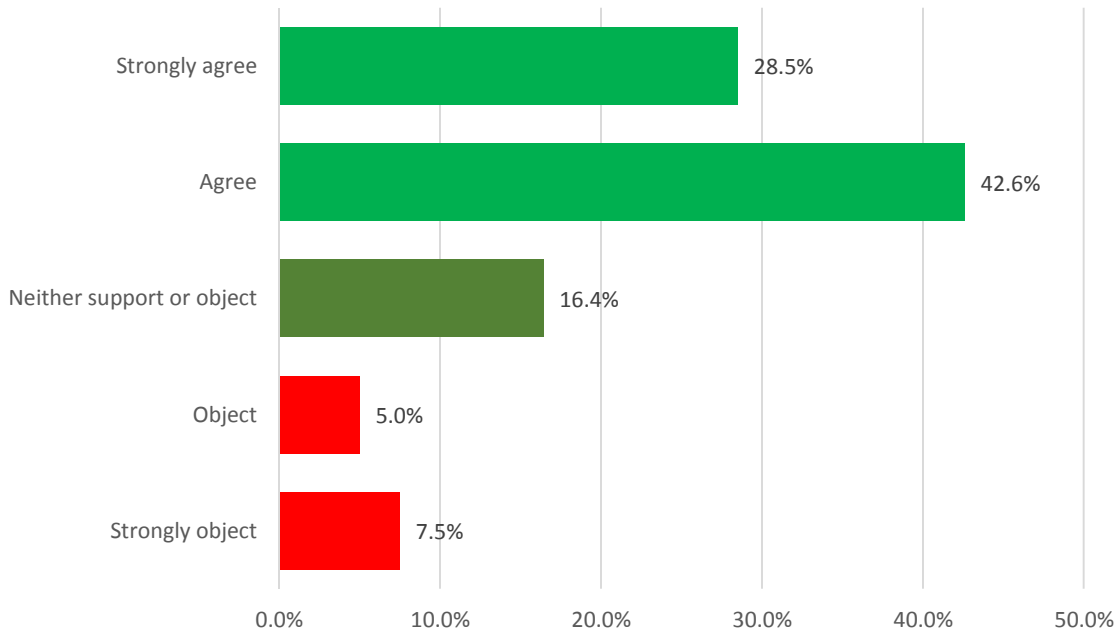


Fig Theme 3.1 – 599 respondents

71.1% of the respondents to the survey agree or strongly agree with this measure, with only 12.5% of respondents objecting at any level.

Q2 Do you have any comments on the proposed objectives?

Comment	Count	%
Part of effective/affordable/integrated public transport	80	78.4%
Need reinstate/improve rail links	40	39.2%
Need free/minimal cost park and ride	23	22.5%
People will still want/need to drive	23	22.5%
Agree/Supportive of this proposal	20	19.6%
A Bus station is vital	18	17.6%
Object to the proposal	18	17.6%
This is poorly worded/too broad/ impossible to disagree	17	16.7%
We need more information	17	16.7%

Fig Theme 3.2 – 102 respondents

This proposal has the least number of comments associated to it, this is due in part to the significant support it has.

78.4% of respondents took the opportunity to identify that this measure should be part of a move to create an effective, affordable and integrated public transport system. 39.2% believe that this could be supported via the reinstatement/improvement of the rail links.

22.5% have also highlighted the need for affordable park and ride facilities which people are encouraged to use. With an equal number identifying that people, especially from rural areas, will still need to use the car for accessibility.

There are 16.7% of respondents who feel that the proposal was poorly worded or too broad making it impossible to disagree with.



## Theme 4: Encouraging walking and cycling

Q1 Please indicate your level of support for the proposed measures for encouraging walking and cycling in Stratford-upon-Avon

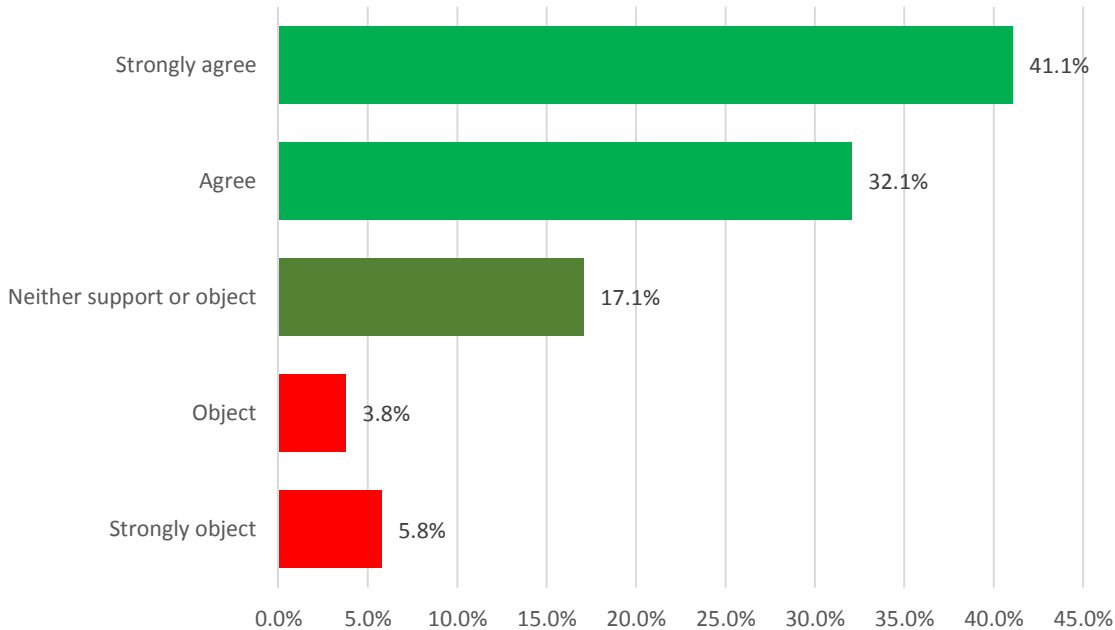


Fig Theme 4.1 – 601 respondents

73.2% of the respondents to the survey agree or strongly agree with this proposal; fewer than 1 in 10 respondents (9.6%) objected to any degree.

Q2 Do you have any comments on the proposed objectives?

Comment	Count	%
Cycle/pedestrian safety/security	89	36.5%
More/improved cycle routes	52	21.3%
Supportive	45	18.4%
Disagree	16	6.6%

Fig Theme 4.2 – 244 respondents

Whilst respondents are supportive of the measure there is a concern for cycle and pedestrian safety 36.5% of respondent comments. A need to increase and improve the cycle route network was also commented on by 21.3% of respondents.

Only 6.6% of comments disapproved of the proposal

*“...I wouldn't cycle as it's not safe...”*

*“Again the needs of the elderly must be taken into account e.g. They cannot walk distances and can often not hear cyclists coming.”*

*“As a cyclist the most dangerous aspect is the potholes in the road.”*

*“Cycling should be encouraged in Stratford- many visitors and locals would be more inclined to use a bicycle if the network was safe and extensive across town.”*

## Theme 5: Coaches and long distance buses

Q1 Please indicate your level of support for the proposed measures for managing coaches and long distance buses in Stratford-upon-Avon

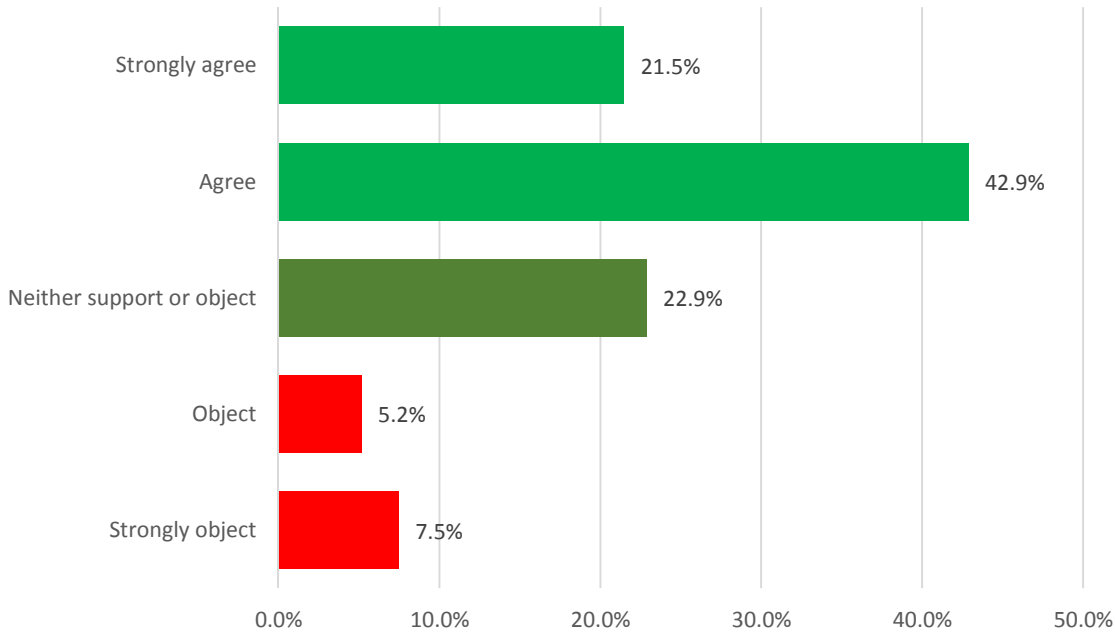


Fig Theme 5.1 – 599 respondents

64.4% of the respondents answering the survey support the proposed measures for managing coaches and long distance buses in Stratford-upon-Avon. Whilst 22.9% neither objected nor supported the proposal. Only 12.7% of respondents showed an objection to the proposal as they were presented.

Q2 Do you have any comments on the proposed objectives?

Comment	Count	%
Tourists should use park and ride	40	24.7%
Good/Agree	17	10.5%
need the tourists	17	10.5%
Need more information	16	9.9%
Disagree	15	9.3%

Fig Theme 5.2 – 162 respondents

Of those people leaving comments nearly ¼ (24.7%) believe that tourists should have to use the Park and Ride provision in order to stop coaches filling the centre of town. 10.5% of respondents identify the need that the town has for the tourist industry and how affecting that would be detrimental.

*“All tourist coach travel should not be allowed into the town centre, drop them off at the park and ride and make them use the service”*

*“The persons on the coaches are the very people who are spending days/money in the local economy”*

*“Lack of detail in the proposals. Current facilities in Windsor Street are inadequate”*

## Theme 6: Managing the impact of HGVs

Q1 Please indicate your level of support for the proposed measures for managing HGVs in Stratford-upon-Avon

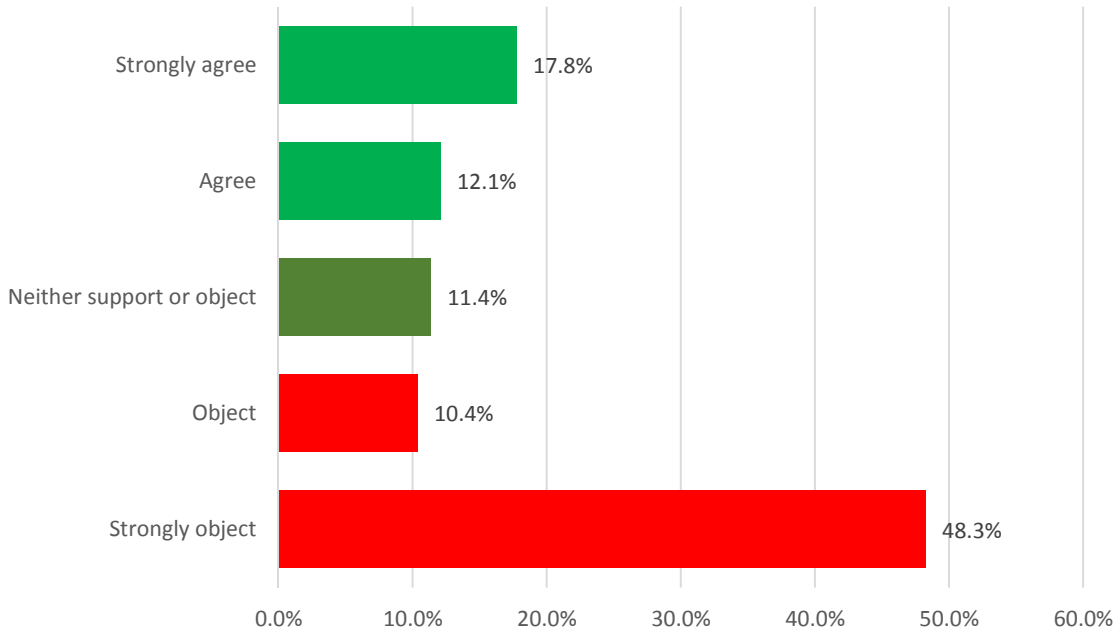


Fig Theme 6.1 – 596 respondents

58.7% of respondents object to this proposal, significantly just under half (48.3%) of those taking time to participate strongly object to it.

Only 29.9% of the respondents are supportive of this proposal.

Q2 Do you have any comments on the proposed objectives?

Comment	Count	%
Eastern Relief Road is wrong	133	35.8%
Will not meet objectives/need rethinking	80	21.6%
The case has not been made	49	13.2%
We need a proper traffic survey	39	10.5%
There should be an enforced weight limit on bridge/village roads/town centre	25	6.7%

Fig Theme 6.2 – 371 respondents

35.8% of the respondents' comments are aimed at the Eastern Relief Road and its unsuitability. 21.6% stated that the proposal will not meet its objectives and will need rethinking.

13.2% stated that the case was not made for the proposal, with 10.5% identifying that a full traffic study was needed.

*"...don't really support the Eastern relief road because I think it is simply diverting the problem to narrow country roads..."*

*"An Eastern Relief Road will make traffic load worse on the Clopton Bridge."*

*"Again this proposal is then completely contradicted by building relief roads"*

*"Detailed survey required to determine actual HGV source and destinations before plan can be formulated."*

## Comments and suggestions

The final section of the survey allowed respondents to make additional comments and suggestions. For analysis purposes, all of the responses that did not come via the questionnaire, 233 responses received via email, letter and pro-forma were added to the comments and suggestions made in this section of the survey. This gives a total of 910 responses. As you would expect the comments are very wide ranging and arrived from a variety of source and interested parties. The longest submission 40+ pages providing detailed information regarding the flora and fauna of the area. Other submissions included Town Councils, Highways England and town residents.

In producing the report Osiris MR would advise that the themes identified may only highlight general concepts and recommends reading the full submissions to gain the granularity of detail.

Comment	Count	% Comments made
We need to preserve natural areas*	221	41.9%
We need a good quality/integrated public transport system	204	38.6%
We need improved/expanded rail connections*	202	38.3%
WCC need to involve other agencies/parties in planning*	195	36.9%
A GRIP 4 study required*	192	36.4%
WCC need to liaise with other local authorities*	175	33.1%
This is ill-conceived/badly worded/thought out/flawed	119	22.5%
Need to do a full impact study/assessment	55	10.4%

\*These themes were the basis of the pro-forma responses. The pro-forma responses account for 20.3% of all "General Comments" received during the consultation.

Fig Comments – 528 respondents

Looking at the major themes 41.9% of respondents have identified the need to preserve the natural area with all of its flora and fauna intact.

*"Green spaces are not just there to be built upon!"*

*"I believe a raised relief road will ruin the area forever, please reconsider"*

*"I am concerned by the impact of new proposed roads on green space"*

Respondents would like to see an expanded and integrated transport system 38.6%, and expanded rail connections 38.3%

*"Options such as free parking at Maybird centre, Waitrose etc. to encourage locals to park for more than 4hrs i.e. a days work, free school travel on rail and bus and improved traffic management systems rather than just more traffic lights may help. Other cities use cycle schemes, trams and HGV areas to achieve this"*

*"...visitors should be able to use the rail system to travel to Stratford..."*

A number of groups with interests ranging from the Local Councils to the RSC have expressed a wish to help and assist with the planning process to ensure that the best is achieved moving forward.

When relating to the expansion/enhancement of the rail network a number of respondents are concerned at the exclusion of the Honeybourne line (36.4%) and would like a GRIP 4 survey to look at the viability of a line.

Some of the comments made directly question the premise for some of the proposals with respondents feeling that this is being led by developers and that the perceived combining of issues has resulted in a leading survey/consultation (22.5%)

*“I think that this is a poorly constructed survey because the link between the different themes is not made, but any comment on one has an inference of support for others.”*

*“I think the questionnaire is strategically leading and that this approach will quickly lose you the trust of the people of Stratford.”*

*“The consultation is very weak on detail, particularly in respect of the suggested ERR. The proposal and consequences have not been worked through, and on contrary to existing planning guidance on new house building.”*



## Conclusion

The consultation process covered a complex area where multiple proposals had to be considered at a high level. The level of response, 910 participants and group responses, demonstrates a willingness of Stratford-upon-Avon residents to participate actively in the consultation process.

Overall the objective of the consultation was supported by more respondents than objected to it; although the support was only provided by 47.2% of the respondents. 16.4% neither supported nor objected.

Overall of the 6 propositions themes presented 4 were supported by the majority of respondents whilst 2 were disagreed with.

Respondents effectively support the proposals for encouraging and enhancing mass public movements by road and rail including coaches, buses and trains. Respondents also supported the enhancement for the ability to walk and/or cycle around the Town. Respondents see the Town as a tourist destination and wish to facilitate this.

However, the Honeybourne railway reinstatement received numerous comments asking why this had been excluded from the proposals, as did the withdrawal of one of the Park and Ride schemes along with the cost of the scheme which made it prohibitive especially to families.

Traffic (car) and HGV management were the two sections where people disagreed with the proposals. Respondents do agree that there is a problem with traffic in the Town but feel that this is caused more by local traffic than through traffic. Birmingham road traffic flow and the Maybird trading area specifically received criticism for creating problems. Respondents do see the need for and would support a full transport study to support future planning in this area.

Concern was also raised about funding the large infrastructure costs. Respondents would like to keep some of the natural beauty of the area and restrict creeping urbanisation with new homes being seen to pay for bypass routes.

The complexity of the numerous elements of the consultation has made analysis of the themes difficult. Each element has supporters and detractors. Comments from respondents specifically highlight this.

With the generalised themes clarified by the respondents future consultations will benefit from a more focussed approach as each of the themes is refined and clarified for public review and consultation.

**Response from Communities Against Sprawl and Exploitation (7 Feb 2018)**

**Subject: ERR [Eastern Relief Road] Removal**

I write on behalf of CAUSE to express total opposition and outrage at the way in which this ERR scheme has been forced upon the electorate despite no justification, no impact analysis and in the face of overwhelming opposition in the consultation process.

As you know I represent over 200 households in this area.

At a meeting 11 months ago at the Football Club organised by the Tiddington Village Residents Association, the Leader of Warwickshire County Council, stated unequivocally that an Eastern Relief Road was not part of any plan being considered by the County Council. Despite this assurance, the scheme has been retained.

Please advise me why this is so. Please please reconsider.

Thankyou

Janie Swaby  
Chair of CAUSE

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# ALVESTON VILLAGERS' ASSOCIATION

(Founded 2003)

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16th February 2018

Councillor Izzi Seccombe  
Leader  
Warwickshire County Council  
Shire Hall  
Warwick  
Warwickshire CV34 4RL

Dear Councillor Seccombe

## **Transport Strategy for Stratford**

As the body elected to represent the interests of those living in and around Alveston, we are writing to express our dismay at the Transport Strategy for Stratford. Whilst there are many aspects of the report which we find disappointing, this letter focuses on one issue only, the proposed Eastern Relief Road (ERR) for which there appears to be no clearly defined purpose nor justification.

Many within the village have a professional background and are used to developing strategies of one form or another. They are familiar with the analysis and detailed testing of options required to ensure that an optimal outcome is delivered. Unfortunately, we cannot discern any evidence of such rigour and analysis in the work undertaken for this strategy; it remains devoid of any useful information which explains why the strategy has been selected and what it will achieve. There are many shortcomings in the report published by the two Councils but in order not to confuse the many overlapping threads, we have tried to structure our arguments under three headings: Technical; Professional; and Political. Each is discussed below.

### **Technical**

Our understanding is that a transport strategy is no different to any other type of strategy in that it needs to set out clearly and in some detail:

- The outcome it is designed to deliver;
- The reason why a course of action is deemed optimal; and
- How, in practical terms, such a course can actually be delivered.

Unfortunately, the strategy fails to address any of these points satisfactorily, and in the case of the ERR, actually presents more compelling arguments against its inclusion. Taking each point in turn:

#### *Outcome designed to be delivered by the ERR*

The only argument alluded to in your strategy for possibly including an ERR is that it 'may' allow some measures to be introduced which reduce the volume of HGV's on Clopton Bridge. This is a very narrow and limiting objective – surely such a huge scheme with so many adverse impacts and massive price tag must be designed to do more than that?! The justification seems even more obtuse given the acknowledgement within the document that the scheme is not required to accommodate development within the Core Strategy.

#### *Reasons why the ERR is deemed optimal*

The reason given in the document to include the ERR is therefore on the basis of a very modest ambition, but the document then gives absolutely no information on its impacts! At the very least one would expect to see a table of impacts describing in some detail:

- The outcomes it would achieve (e.g. substantial traffic reduction in the town centre and on the bridges etc.);
- The adverse impacts it would impose (eg loss of countryside, noise, visual intrusion, additional induced traffic etc);
- Any associated risks (eg encouragement of unwanted, unplanned, development); and
- Any opportunities (eg supporting planned development).

The document has absolutely none of this information - how can that be the basis to make such a profound decision which will affect, for all time, the very nature of this unique and historic town? To omit such vital information is unfair both to the two Councils and the electorate who rely on those responsible to provide objective and well-researched data as the basis for making critical decisions.

#### *How the ERR can be practically delivered*

Our final technical test of a strategy relates to delivery. In the draft strategy the document confidently stated that developers would pay for this new road. Whilst developers would undoubtedly be willing to pay for something, there would be a price tag. Nobody is in any doubt that this would be development within the line of the proposed new route. We understand from both Councils' point of view why this would be a convenient solution - it would capture the necessary funding and probably avoid complications relating to the compulsory purchase of land as well. Given that such a scenario is planned, however, would it not have been more transparent to state that massive new housing and industrial development in south east Stratford was part of the delivery solution? Discussion within the consultation response document makes it very clear that the modelling analysis used to justify this scheme was undertaken on exactly that basis, with associated major housing and industrial development. How could such important and relevant facts be omitted from the strategy document? Is that a fair way to treat the electorate who expect their Members and Officers at all times to act in their best interests?

If such development were to take place it would generate approximately 20,000 additional trips per day on the existing road network around Stratford - where is the analysis to show these impacts?

Whilst the revised 'Final' strategy states that following consultation other sources of finance would now be considered, unfortunately, no details of such alternatives are actually provided. Our suspicion remains, therefore, that developer contributions linked to massive development remains the most likely, perhaps only, delivery strategy. **We trust that no discussions have yet taken place between any member of your team and developers on this basis and would request your confirmation of this.**

Finally, the strategy now declines to say exactly what the line of any proposed route would be. This means that the Councils, should they ratify ERR as part of their strategy, will be adopting a scheme for which there is no line, no clear objectives, no demonstration of impacts and risks and no demonstration of benefit - does this make any sense?

#### **Professional**

As demonstrated above, the technical case for an ERR is non-existent, certainly from the information provided in the strategy report. From a professional perspective as well, we believe that there have been, and continue to be, major failings which discriminate against the interests of the local communities. These relate primarily to:

- The lack of relevant information;
- The attempts to 'hide' the ERR (both in the strategy and the consultation process); and
- The continuing involvement by the Councils' team of an advisor who has a clear conflict of interest.

#### *The lack of relevant information*

This has already been discussed so will not be repeated here except to emphasise that from a professional point of view, the strategy document should have been designed to make all information relevant to the decision-making process as accessible and explicit as possible to those reading the document.

Ploys such as directing readers to supporting information in other documents were particularly unhelpful, especially when those documents contained between 500 and 1000 pages of text! One might almost think that there was a deliberate attempt to deter readers from becoming too interested or discovering relevant information.

#### *Attempts to "hide" the ERR*

Throughout this whole process, there has been a wholly unprofessional approach designed to make the ERR as difficult to challenge as possible. Apart from no information being provided on either its purpose or its impacts, every opportunity has been taken to make the scheme as 'invisible' as possible. Two examples illustrate this;

- First, the consultation did not allow people to disentangle the merits or otherwise of an ERR from other aspects of the strategy. Instead, people were asked if removing HGV's from Clopton Bridge was a good idea and the ERR was only mentioned in passing as a pre-condition to achieving this! This is a highly unprofessional and misleading way in which to capture people's views by denying them the opportunity to comment directly on one of the strategy's most controversial elements and, instead, aligning it with something where widespread support could almost be guaranteed; and
- Second, the inclusion of an ERR is not formally stated in the Final Strategy - instead it is stated in the consultation response report which most people won't bother reading. This alone makes the whole process extremely questionable and unprofessional when the electorate isn't even told within the Strategy document itself what is included within the strategy!! Why has the scheme not been formally included within the relevant document - is this another attempt to make it 'invisible' until it is too late?

### Political

Politicians have a difficult role making decisions in which, inevitably, there will often be clear winners and losers. Their job is made easier, however, by having relevant information and high quality advice on which to make these critical decisions. Similarly, the electorate finds it easier to understand the decisions made if they are also provided with good information and can trust the integrity of the processes which resulted in those decisions. As discussed above, however, the current study has fallen a long way short of the professionalism which is to be expected, and hence there is now widespread mistrust over the integrity of the processes.

A few weeks after the launch of the consultation, it appeared that many of the concerns of those living south of the river had been listened to and acknowledged. At a meeting in Stratford Football Club, Knights Lane (27th February 2017), Cllr Seccombe told those assembled that the ERR had never been a part of the County's thinking and that there was absolutely no likelihood of it being so in the near to middle future. Many left that meeting thankful for the Council Leader's intervention. Undoubtedly, the scale and strength of adverse consultation response was also influenced by these welcome comments. For those who attended the meeting it therefore came as a shock some 10 months later to find that the ERR scheme was still included in the strategy. In fact, the only change made was that the two Councils now declined to give any indication of the corridor within which the scheme would actually be contained. Whether this was a case of "right hand/left hand", since some personnel had changed in the interim, or simply a change of heart we do not know. **However, we would certainly welcome an explanation of how it could happen that we were told by the Council Leader responsible for roads that the scheme would definitely not go ahead, only to find that it is still firmly proposed within the Strategy and about to be ratified by the two Councils.**

On a final point which has political implications, it should be remembered that the massive new development which would inevitably result from the ERR is exactly the same development overwhelmingly rejected by voters in 2014 as part of the Strategic Housing Allocations referendum. It would be an affront to democracy and the electorate if this new road opened the area for exactly that same development which was previously rejected in a popular vote.

### Conclusions

In the foregoing text we have set out the range of Technical, Professional and Political issues which we believe invalidates inclusion of the ERR within the Stratford Transport Strategy. This is a scheme which has no defined outcome which it is trying to achieve; has no defined line, standards or junction arrangements; has no description of impacts which will afflict local communities; and has no discussion of the risks which it will create, risks which in traffic terms could overwhelm Stratford and make the remaining parts of the strategy irrelevant. The scheme is not even required to accommodate the current Core Strategy and, if constructed, massive and unnecessary development would inevitably follow. Such development would completely undermine the referendum of development preferences as expressed by the electorate in 2014. Despite all this, the ERR apparently remains integral to the Council's Transport Strategy.

We request that the Council takes one of two actions:

- Remove the ERR from the Strategy with immediate effect; or
- Delay ratification of the document until the issues discussed above have been satisfactorily resolved.

In the meantime, we will continue to oppose an ERR by all means possible until a rigorous technical assessment has been concluded which defines clear outcomes and objectives, considers alternative options and includes a detailed impact and risk analysis.

Yours sincerely



**Chris Fox**  
**CHAIR**

## **Response from Stratford-upon-Avon Town Transport Group (4 March 2018)**

I am writing on behalf of the Stratford upon Avon Town Transport Group to convey our views on the current version of the Stratford Transport Strategy, which we understand will be discussed at your forthcoming Cabinet and Council meetings. We hope that you will be prepared to modify the document to take account of our comments.

The first matter is its description as a “strategy”, which we believe oversells the content; in some parts it is very general and doesn’t add to what has already been set out elsewhere. It is in our view more of a loose “framework” which simply lists the possible component parts of a strategy without assessing their impacts or their inter-relationship.

The issue could be resolved if the Councils were to make a commitment to an Implementation Plan or Plans, identifying in more detail specific costed proposals for various modes, with funding sources, their impacts, and a timescale for delivery. In some cases, these Plans should spell out alternatives for public consultation (e.g. Park and Ride sites, options for new river crossing capacity for pedestrians and cyclists).

With that qualification, we are broadly supportive of many elements of the “strategy”, but we have a major difficulty with the proposed South Western Relief Road (SWRR) and the possible Eastern Relief Road (ERR). In the case of the SWRR we have no argument with the District Council’s inclusion of a possible corridor in the Core Strategy, which was considered by an independent Inspector to be “sound”. However, the Highway Authority (WCC) has a duty to consider the costs and benefits of alternatives before the Core Strategy proposal is taken forward. It is clear from the limited traffic data available that the proposed road is primarily intended for the relief of the town centre. Although we acknowledge that it serves the proposed Long Marston Airfield (LMA) development as well, the available traffic figures suggest that most of the new traffic (which we believe would amount to about 20,000 vehicles per day) will load onto the existing network. It therefore cannot be left to the developer to identify a route for such a significant element of the network; unlike the Highway Authority it has no power to determine any line other than by agreement with the relevant landowners. We also understand that the developer of LMA is currently proposing to fund the entire cost of the road, and whilst WCC may be tempted to accept this offer, it amounts to the sale of a planning permission for

the proposed LMA development. We believe this to be unlawful and is therefore challengeable in law. It is a well-established rule that any contribution by a developer towards infrastructure should be proportionate to the benefits gained, and this should not be undermined because of the Councils' financial difficulties.

In the case of a possible ERR we are very concerned that no information is provided on where it will go, what outcomes it will deliver or what impacts it will have. Since the Councils also concede that it is not required to deliver the Core Strategy it should not be included in the transport strategy at this stage, even to protect the possibility that there might be a need at a later date. The appropriate time to consider options for the ERR would be when the Core Strategy is reviewed, especially if the Councils wish to fund it by promoting substantial new development, as appears to be the case. To float an ERR now will simply risk unnecessary speculative development pressure in this area, which was firmly rejected through a public referendum in 2014 on Strategic Housing Allocations.

Any comments or queries to:

Chairman: John Deegan [jledeegan@btinternet.com](mailto:jledeegan@btinternet.com) 07788-973355

and

Secretary: Elizabeth Dixon [med2swan@gmail.com](mailto:med2swan@gmail.com) 07850-715782

Yours sincerely,

*M. Elizabeth Dixon*

Secretary to the TTG

Note: Stratford upon Avon Town Transport Group meets monthly to discuss all elements of transport that appear relevant to the town. We represent views from a broad range of stakeholders within the town and as far as possible try to build consensus rather than add to the disagreement over transport matters which traditionally has plagued progress here.

## **Response from Tiddington Village Residents' Association (8 March 2018)**

### **Stratford-on-Avon Transport Strategy**

Dear Councillors,

Tiddington Village Residents' Association are the elected representatives of Tiddington village. We have considered the proposed Transport Strategy for Stratford and support many of the aspirations set out in the document. However we are writing with regard the specific proposal for an Eastern Relief Road.

We are aware that Alveston Villagers' Association have already written to you, at length, to point out the particular concerns posed by this proposal. We echo their concerns and wished to lodge our own, formal objection prior to Cabinet's consideration of this document on 12 March.

While the document states many laudable outcomes, it is difficult to see how an ERR will deliver the necessary solutions. This is, in part, because no detail about the proposed relief road is provided. No information is provided about how the potential negative or positive impacts of this proposal have been considered, assessed or measured. No modelling is provided to demonstrate how the ERR will deliver its supposed benefits. There is no consideration as to how the additional housing needed to fund the ERR will subsequently detract from, and/or negate, its supposed effectiveness.

Given that there a number of interim measures being proposed to relieve traffic within Stratford (e.g. improvements to the Clopton Bridge roundabout) it seems absurd to consider such a major development without a full scoping exercise and before a thorough evaluation of the other measures' effectiveness.

We request that:

1. reference to any ERR is removed at this early stage;
2. further evaluation is done of the effectiveness of any interim measures;
3. all options for larger scale solutions, if required, are fully scoped, modelled, mapped, impact assessed and costed; and
4. options are publicly consulted on.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Grubb  
Chair of TVRA