

## **Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy**

### **1 Introduction**

This is the first Market Town Transport Strategy for Whittlesey and has been drawn up jointly by Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council. The strategy forms part of the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3), and supports the County Council's priorities of:

- developing our local economy for the benefit of all;
- supporting and protecting people when they need it most; and
- helping people to live independent and healthy lives in their communities.

It also supports Fenland District Council's priorities for the growth and future shape of Fenland, raising aspirations and learning opportunities for young people, supporting vulnerable people and promoting healthy lifestyles.

### **2 Scope of the strategy**

We have endeavoured to identify as many of the transport and access issues as possible that are important to the people of Whittlesey, through engaging with people who live, work and use the services that are provided in the town. This strategy is therefore led by those issues which have been identified locally and as such reflects the priorities that are important to the town.

The strategy not only attempts to address some of the existing shortcomings of the transport within the town, but also to plan ahead for known developments that will take place. However the planning environment is a dynamic one and as such there may be things in the pipeline that we are not yet aware of. Fenland District Council are in the process of developing their core strategy, known as the Fenland Communities Development Plan, which sets out where development in the town is likely to be acceptable; this transport strategy will need to remain flexible enough to accommodate any changes that arise as a result of this.

While the strategy seeks to put forward solutions to the issues raised, it cannot solve all the problems that have been identified in the town. Funding is, and will remain an issue for the foreseeable future and the two authorities will not be able to fund all the proposals put forward on their own. What this strategy will do however is set out a policy basis for the proposals which will give the authorities a solid basis from which to negotiate contributions from developers and also to secure funds from other partners. Indeed, some of the solutions will be fully dependent on other partners to implement.

This Market Town Transport Strategy for Whittlesey is designed to align with the timescales for LTP3, which will be in place until 2026. However, sections of the strategy, particularly the action plan will be reviewed regularly, as appropriate. Any major changes will be approved by elected members and updated versions will then be available on the Cambridgeshire County Council website.

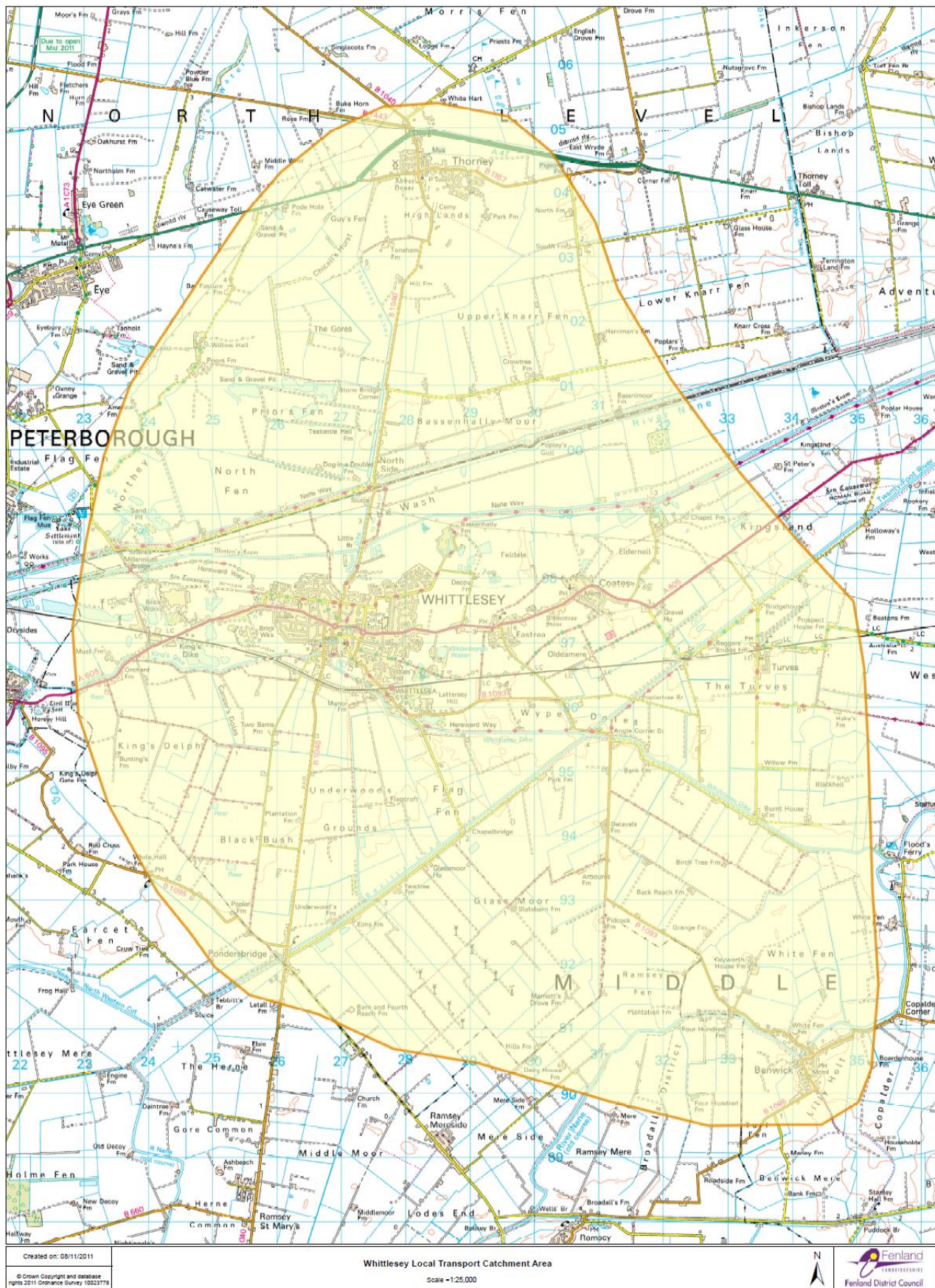


Figure 1: Strategy Area

### **3 Strategy development**

This strategy was developed by officers from Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council in consultation with members of the public. It was developed under the guidance of a Member Steering Group, comprising of elected Members from Cambridgeshire County Council as well as Councillors from Fenland District Council and Whittlesey Town Council. The strategy was discussed by the Fenland Traffic Management Area Joint Committee in October 2012 and approved by the County Council's Cabinet in November 2012. It now forms part of the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3).

### **4 Background and existing service and transport provision**

The market town of Whittlesey lies on the A605, approximately 9 miles east of Peterborough and 13 miles west of March. Cambridgeshire County Council research<sup>1</sup> indicates that in 2010:

- The population of Whittlesey itself was just over 16,000; and
- Taking into account the villages of Coates, Eastrea and Benwick, plus that of Pondersbridge, Turves and Thorney, the population that looked towards Whittlesey for some of its services was around 17,000.

The percentage of households with no access to a car or van is 16.42%<sup>2</sup>, which is slightly lower than in Fenland as a whole (19.49%), although it is worth noting that car ownership levels vary considerably across the seven Whittlesey wards, with just 9.27% of households in Benwick Coates and Eastrea ward having no access to a car or van, whilst in Kingsmoor ward 23.99% of households have no access to a car or van.

Whittlesey is one of the smaller towns in Fenland and while it is reasonably served by its own services, it does rely heavily on Peterborough for a number of functions.

#### ***Shopping and leisure facilities***

The centre of Whittlesey is based around the Market Square around which are the main shopping streets. Most of the shops are small local shops and there is currently no large superstore within the town. Therefore many people travel to Peterborough and March for their food shopping. However there is planning permission for a supermarket on Station Road and permission was granted in August 2012 for another supermarket off Eastrea Road. In terms of leisure facilities, there is a leisure centre and swimming pool in the south of Whittlesey on Station Road, however the site is not currently served by a bus service. There are two Nature Reserves, Lattersey Local Nature Reserve which is located on the eastern edge of Whittlesey and King's Dyke Nature Reserve to the west of Whittlesey. There are a number of allotments located on a site off Station Road. The nearest cinema and entertainment facilities are in Peterborough.

#### ***Medical facilities***

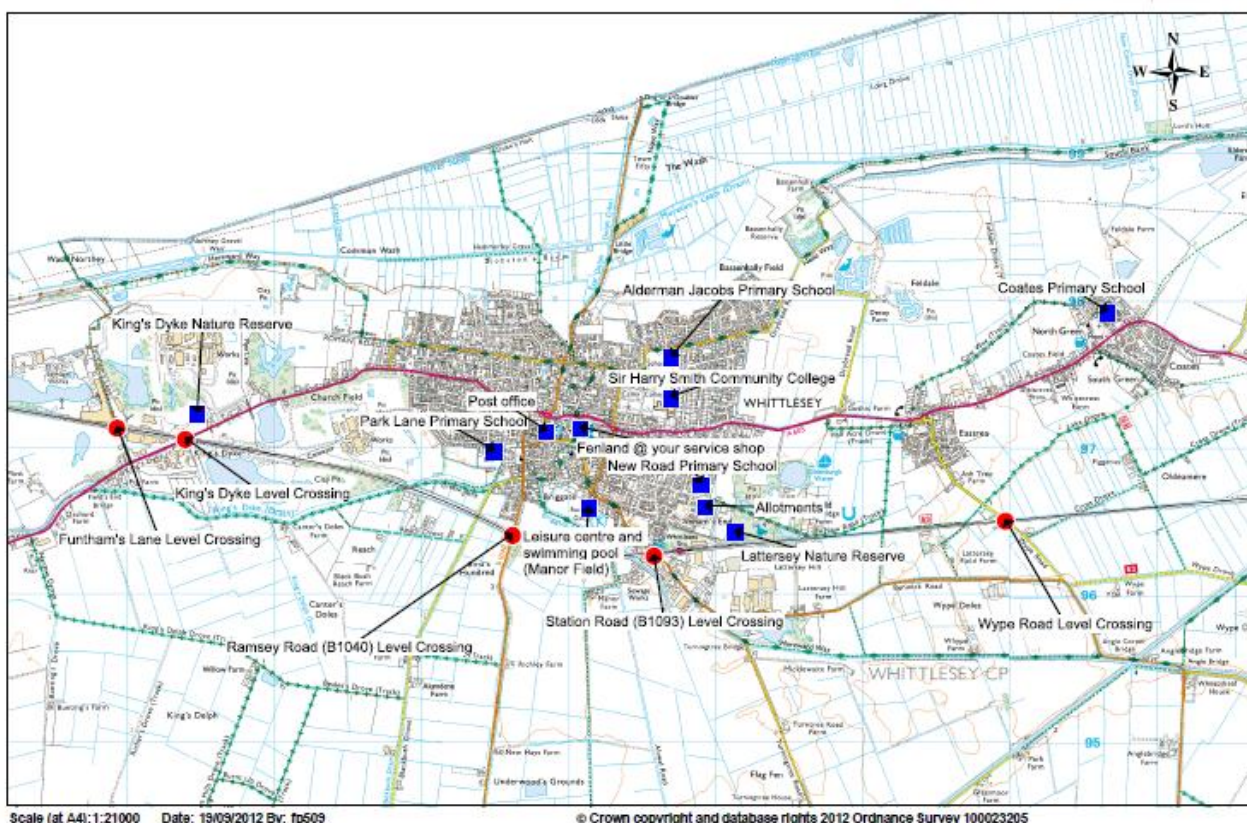
Whilst the town is served by a number of medical practices, there is no hospital. There are two opticians and three dentists located in Whittlesey, although none of these are NHS dentists.

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<sup>1</sup> These 2010 population estimates are from Cambridgeshire County Council's Research Group – see <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/business/research/populationresearch/population/population/Researchgroup/populationestimates.htm>. Nb 2011 Census data not available at time strategy produced.

<sup>2</sup> 2001 census data – 16.42% is an average of the figures across the 7 Whittlesey wards

**Whittlesey area schools and leisure facilities**



**Figure 2: Whittlesey area schools and leisure facilities<sup>3</sup>**

**Employment areas**

There are two main industrial areas in the town; on the A605 west of the town and off Station Road to the south of the town. On the A605 area, the principal businesses are Hanson Brickworks and the McCains Food site. South of the town there is a greater mix of business including a builders’ merchant, coach company, food manufacturers and a garage. However, both locations generate a significant number of Heavy Commercial Vehicle (HCV) movements.

**Education facilities**

Local children are served by three primary schools within Whittlesey itself; Alderman Jacobs, Park Lane and New Road, plus Coates Primary school. Older children are served by Sir Harry Smith Community College in Whittlesey itself. Significant investment is being made at Sir Harry Smith Community College as part of the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme. All the schools have been involved in the Safer Routes to School programme in recent years, although New Road Primary hasn’t yet had any measures implemented.

**Passenger transport provision**

**Buses:**

As of September 2012, two bus companies provide services to Whittlesey, Coates and Eastrea.

- The predominant routes are towards Peterborough, March and Ramsey. On weekdays, there are around 36<sup>4</sup> bus trips each way between Whittlesey and

<sup>3</sup> See appendix for A4 version of this map.

Peterborough, with the first bus from Whittlesey to Peterborough departing at 06.02 and the last bus returning from Peterborough to Whittlesey at 18.35.

- Coates, Eastrea and Pondersbridge aren't so well served, with c.11 bus trips per day from Coates to Peterborough on weekdays (and 15 trips per day from Peterborough to Coates).
- On weekdays between Whittlesey and March there are around 7 trips each way per day and between Whittlesey and Ramsey there are around 8 trips each way per day.
- There are currently no services between Whittlesey and Turves.
- Figures from Cambridgeshire County Council's 2009 Traffic Monitoring Report suggest that in Whittlesey town centre around 8% of journeys are made by bus. This is higher than in other Cambridgeshire market towns, for example in Wisbech and Chatteris 2% of journeys are made by bus, whilst in Ramsey and March 4% of journeys are made by bus.

#### *Trains:*

Whittlesey has its own station (Whittlesea) which lies on the Ely to Peterborough line. Whilst rail traffic along this stretch of the network is reasonably heavy, the number of services that actually stop at Whittlesea Station isn't particularly frequent, averaging every two hours. Currently Whittlesea Station is served by Greater Anglia (Ipswich to Peterborough service) and CrossCountry (Birmingham New Street to Cambridge/Stansted service). A number of the Birmingham to Cambridge/Stansted services pass through Whittlesea Station without stopping.

The table below shows that station usage increased markedly since 2004/05.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Entries and exits<sup>5</sup></b>
2004/5	16,467
2005/6	16,770
2006/7	22,148
2007/8	26,064
2008/9	24,896
2009/10	23,506

#### *Dial A Ride:*

For those people who can't use conventional public transport, Whittlesey is served by Fenland Association for Community Transport (FACT), a well-established community transport provider. Although membership is required, it is open to anyone who meets their criteria<sup>6</sup>. The organisation provides a pre-bookable scheduled dial-a-ride service to Peterborough, King's Lynn, Wisbech and March on a weekly basis. Usage of this service has seen steady and increasing growth in its use since its introduction in 2009. During 2010/11 there were well over 1000 journeys made using dial-a-ride in the Whittlesey area.

#### *Community Car Scheme:*

Offers transport for residents of Whittlesey, Coates and Eastrea (plus Turves and Pondersbridge) for social and medical purposes, such as shopping, or visiting the doctor, dentist or hospital. During 2010/11 over 700 journeys were made using the scheme with

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<sup>4</sup> This combines all trips provided by Stagecoach services #31 and #33, and Judd's Travel service #701

<sup>5</sup> Data from Office of Rail Regulation see <http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/server/show/nav.1529>

<sup>6</sup> The criteria include: living in a rural location with limited or no access to public transport, relying on friends and family to get to places, or having difficulty using local transport due to age or disability.

50% of these journeys made for social purposes and 50% for medical purposes. Over 100 of these journeys were to Peterborough hospital.

*Taxis:*

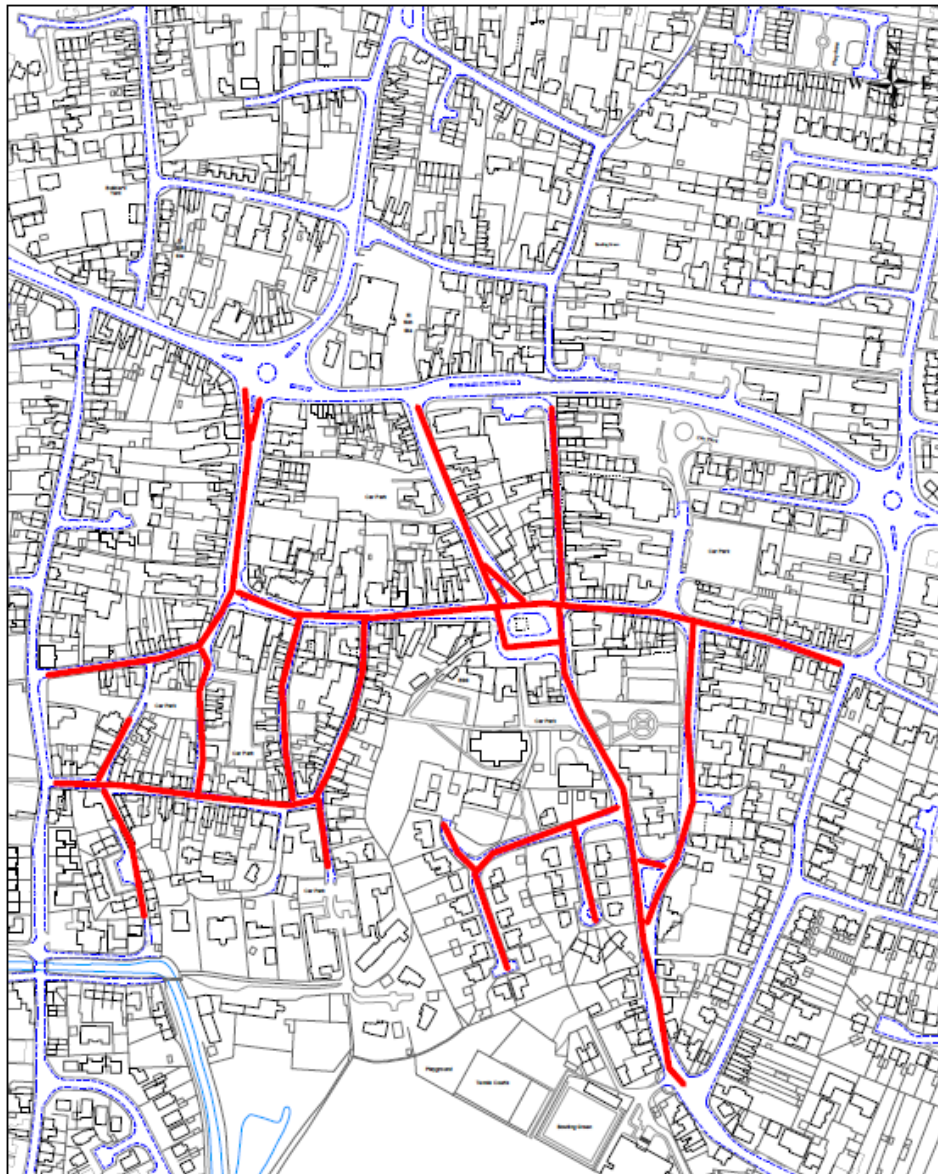
There are currently two taxi ranks located on Whittlesey's Market Square.

***Road network and parking***

In terms of getting around in Whittlesey, the town is served by the A605 travelling east to west and the B1040 travelling north to south. The B1093 also provides another route out of the town towards Benwick. The A605 runs parallel to the A47 Trunk Road between Peterborough and Rings End, but is not normally heavily used as an alternative route for through trips, although when there are incidents it is used as an alternative route.

The A605 bisects the town through the centre. It forms part of Cambridgeshire's Strategic Advisory Freight route and as such, HCV traffic is quite heavy through the town. Figures from the County Council's 2009 Traffic Monitoring Report suggest that on average 5% of vehicles entering and leaving Whittlesey are HCVs, and in some locations HCVs make up an even greater proportion of traffic (eg 10% of traffic on Station Road near the station). In comparison, other market towns in Cambridgeshire experience lower proportions of HCV traffic (2% of traffic in Wisbech, 2% of traffic in Ely and around 1% of traffic in March). The local advisory route for HCVs accessing the industrial area to the south of the town lies along the B1093/Inhams Road which passes through a residential area. There is a 7.5 tonne HCV ban within the town (see figure 3) which broadly covers the central area to the south of the A605 between High Causeway and Broad Street and London Street and the A605. Exclusions do however exist for loading and unloading, garaging, servicing and public utilities.

**Whittlesey 7.5 tonne Heavy Commercial Vehicle Ban**



**Figure 3: Whittlesey areas covered by Heavy Commercial Vehicle Ban<sup>7</sup>**

There are a number of level crossings within the Whittlesey ward area, including; one at King's Dyke on the A605, one on Funthams Lane accessing the brickworks to the west of the town, one on the B1040 on Ramsey Road, one on the B1093 on Station Road, one at Eastrea at Wype Road and two in the village of Turves. Network Rail would ideally like to close these crossings, but the need to maintain access and a lack of funding for alternative crossings (such as a bridge at Kings Dyke) constrain their ability to do so at the current time.

There are five car parks (providing 293 parking spaces) within the town and as with the rest of Fenland, no charge is made for their use. Figures from Cambridgeshire County

<sup>7</sup> See appendix for A4 version of this map.

Council's 2009 Traffic Monitoring Report suggest that approximately 68% of journeys within the town centre area made by car.

### ***Walking and cycling facilities***

The topography of Whittlesey means that it is well suited to encouraging more cycling and walking in the town. In terms of cycling facilities, National Cycle Network Route 63 which connects Peterborough to March (and links via Stonald Road to the Peterborough Green Wheel route) passes through the town. The most recent data available<sup>8</sup> for Stonald Road suggests that it is used by around 30 cyclists per day. Figures from Cambridgeshire County Council's 2009 Traffic Monitoring Report suggest that approximately 130 pedal cycles and 160 pedestrians enter and leave Whittlesey between 7am and 7pm each day, whilst in the town centre they suggest that around 1% of journeys are made by pedal cycle and 9% on foot.

### ***Broadband provision and internet access, including wi-fi***

Broadband/internet access can enable residents to access services without having to travel. On average across Cambridgeshire around 74%<sup>9</sup> of premises have access to broadband, however this is an average figure for the county and it is likely that some areas will have much lower levels of access to the internet.

## **5 Vision for Whittlesey**

Within the emerging Fenland District Council Communities Development Plan (Core Strategy), Whittlesey is identified as a focus for housing, employment and retail growth. Between 2011 and 2031, housing growth comprising a minimum of 1,100 new homes is expected in Whittlesey. Employment growth within Fenland District will primarily be focused upon the market towns including Whittlesey.

Future growth is expected to focus on strengthening the town centre in order to stem income leakage to neighbouring centres. It is recognised however that investment in social infrastructure capacity will be required to support future growth in Whittlesey.

There is scope for 'place-making' measures, such as environmental improvements, to enhance the physical appearance of the town centre, which is dominated by the A605 running through the town. This will also be assisted by new development contributing to retaining the character of this historic market town.

To assist the integration of new development in Whittlesey, Fenland District Council will prepare a town strategy covering a wide range of matters not just town planning matters. This presents an opportunity for transport issues to be raised and for the Whittlesey Market Town Transport Strategy to contribute to the wider planning of the town.

### **Planned development for Whittlesey**

Future developments are being considered in the following areas:

1. A new urban extension on land north and south of Eastrea Road

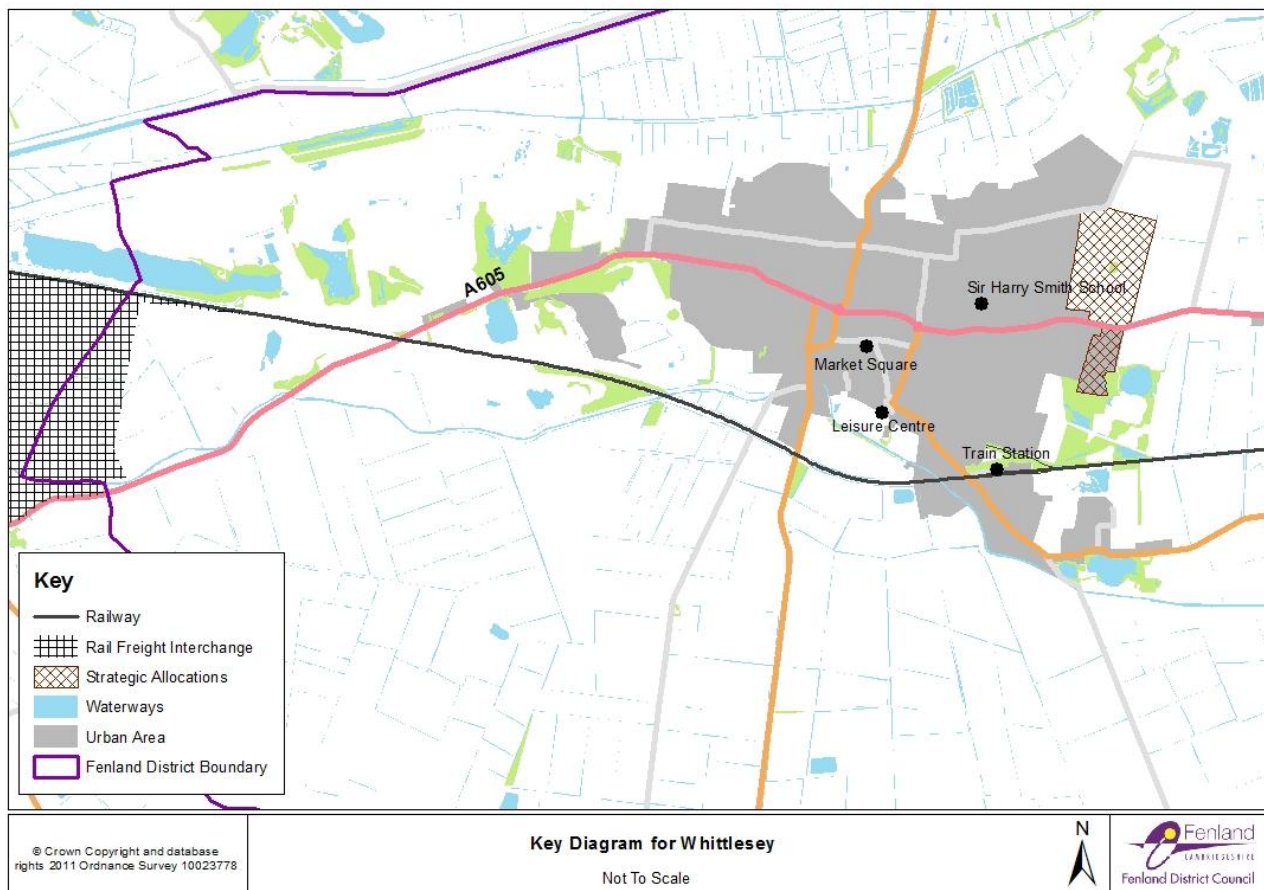
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<sup>8</sup> 2006 data from an automatic counter showed that an average of 29 cyclists per day (ie 24 hour period) used this route in January 2006.

<sup>9</sup> OfCOM figures see <http://maps.ofcom.org.uk/broadband/table.html> Figures are not broken down to district/ward level so it is difficult to assess the extent of broadband provision in Fenland/Whittlesey.



2. New businesses are likely to be supported adjacent to existing businesses in the Station Road/Benwick Road Industrial Area and to the west of the town along the A605 and to the north of Kings Dyke Level as far as Field’s End Bridge.
3. Just outside Whittlesey is a proposal for a regional freight interchange of 135 hectares. The greater proportion (102 hectares) lies within the Peterborough area, with 33 hectares in Whittlesey.



**Figure 4: Whittlesey – potential areas for new development prior to 2024<sup>10</sup>**

### Impacts of new developments

There is potential for these development sites (see figure 4 above) to directly access the A605. Care will need to be taken to ensure that developments (either alone or in combination) do not adversely impact the A605, and any planning applications will be expected to include a Transport Assessment setting out evidence of the predicted transport impacts of the scheme, plus mitigating measures for any adverse effects including a Travel Plan encouraging use of modes other than the car.

## 6 Transport and access issues identified in Whittlesey

As already outlined, this strategy is based around issues that have been identified in and around the town. These issues have been identified through a number of different methods, such as through councillors from the County, District and Town Councils, and through meetings with individuals and organisations. In addition, two rounds of public consultation were carried out in Whittlesey, the first asked for views on what the main

<sup>10</sup> See appendix for A4 version of this map.

transport issues were, and the second asked for views on a draft version of this strategy. The main issues transport and access issues which emerged have been summarised and grouped together under the headings below. These headings are also reflected in the action plan further on in the strategy.

### ***Access to services within Whittlesey***

#### Access to shops and local services

Whittlesey is reasonably well served in terms of facilities within the town; for example it has GPs surgeries, a library (which houses Whittlesey Learning Centre and a Citizens Advice Bureau<sup>11</sup>), a 'Whittlesey @ Your Service'<sup>12</sup> shop (which offers a range of council services), small local shops and a leisure centre. At present there is no large supermarket in the town however, there are a significant number of residents who travel elsewhere for their food shopping thus taking trade out of the town to places such as Peterborough and March. The current discussions that are underway to provide such a facility within the town may present the town with an economic opportunity to stem the leakage of trade to other towns as well as reducing the need to travel.

#### Access to hospital

Access to hospital has been raised as problematic for people who rely on public transport. Since the new Peterborough City Hospital was opened in 2010 access by bus has become more difficult. Of the respondents to the consultation<sup>13</sup> on transport and access in Whittlesey, 43% found it either difficult, very difficult or impossible to access Peterborough Hospital. Many residents also travel to Hinchingbrooke, Doddington and Stamford hospitals which are also difficult journeys to make if you do not have access to a car.

#### Walking and cycling

Although the topography of Whittlesey is well suited to walking and cycling, cycling rates in particular are not high. Supporting people to make short journeys on foot or by pedal cycle may encourage them to use local shops, rather than travelling further afield to larger supermarkets, which will in turn benefit the economy of Whittlesey. The A605 is a particular barrier to cycling due to the volume and nature of traffic using it, therefore existing routes within the town are signposted along quieter routes which often don't offer cyclists the most direct route to their desired destination. Another shortcoming in terms of cycling and cycling facilities around the town is the lack of cycle parking. This is especially noticeable in the centre of the town around the market square and could be perceived as a barrier to using the bike for short journeys because there is nowhere secure to leave a bike. The dominance of the A605 through the centre of the town also acts as a barrier towards the amount of walking within Whittlesey and the surrounding villages, despite there being three pedestrian crossings along the built-up stretch of the road. As there are a number of schools close to the A605, these issues are particularly relevant to children (and their parents) who wish to access those schools, and who find the A605 traffic issues and the narrow pavements along it to be a barrier to walking/cycling to school. Consultation events showed that there is also demand for additional walking and cycling leisure routes in the strategy area.

#### Public transport – bus services

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<sup>11</sup> The Citizens Advice Bureau service is currently available for two short sessions per week.

<sup>12</sup> The Whittlesey @ Your Service shop is currently open Tuesday/Thursday/Friday all day and on Saturday mornings.

<sup>13</sup> Consultation carried out by Cambridgeshire County Council in Spring 2011

Whilst there is a reasonable level of bus services connecting Whittlesey to Peterborough and other market towns, the main bus services only run along the A605. Service 701 and service 33 that are not so frequent run along Victory Avenue as a hail and ride service. Evidence also shows that Whittlesey has significant numbers of concessionary pass holders, (who are typically older people) that live further than a 400m walk from a bus stop. This has been raised as an issue by those who are still in reasonably good health, yet find the walk from their homes into the town centre just too far. The length of walk to the bus stop combined with the limited services that travel into housing estates mean that many people find they are spending a lot of money to get a taxi into town to visit local shops or services, when they could be using bus services for free.

### ***Access to services outside Whittlesey***

As already described earlier in the document, while Whittlesey is reasonably served by various services, it does also rely heavily on Peterborough, namely for hospital care, supermarkets, entertainment and employment.

### **Public transport – bus services**

Despite the relatively frequent bus service from Whittlesey into Peterborough, from comments received it seems that the perception within the town is that the service is non-existent. There is therefore a need to raise awareness of the frequency of services, especially towards Peterborough. There is however an issue with using the bus to access evening entertainment and also the services of Peterborough Regional College, as the last bus back from Peterborough is at 18:35. The first bus from Whittlesey to Peterborough is at 06.02, however this may not be early enough for some shift workers. A further issue is that some bus services terminate at Whittlesey, without continuing on to serve Eastrea and Coates. An improved bus service could accommodate shift workers going to the main areas of employment (Peterborough) or those wishing to access evening classes or leisure activities. In recent years however, evening bus services to and from Whittlesey have been withdrawn due to a lack of use, and it will be important to understand more about why usage levels were low. Bus services are expensive to operate and with no public funds available to support such services it is essential that any new services are based on good levels of demand, otherwise they will be withdrawn. In 2010, a new hospital opened in Peterborough in the northwest of the city. The difficulty in getting to the new hospital by public transport from Whittlesey has been a recurring theme from local people, as the journey now involves a change of bus. In the public consultation carried out in late 2011/early 2012 by Cambridgeshire County Council, the proposal to work with operators to review existing service routes and times was the second most popular proposal, with 87% of respondents strongly or partially supporting this proposal. A further issue is that the geographical boundary of certain 'all-day' tickets means these are much more expensive for bus users to/from Eastrea and Coates than for those travelling to/from Whittlesey itself.

### **Public transport – rail services**

Whilst Whittlesey is fortunate in having a railway station, the frequency with which trains stop at the station makes it difficult to plan efficient journeys, especially those that require connections. The frequency of services is a significant barrier to the use of Whittlesea Rail Station. The station itself is poorly served in terms of facilities as it is not manned and waiting facilities are minimal. Connectivity with the rest of the town is also poor, with no bus serving the station and no cycle parking. Despite this, the station does appear to be reasonably well used, especially by those travelling to Peterborough or onwards to destinations such as London which suggests that if the service and facilities were improved, more people might be persuaded to use the train for some journeys, thus

removing some traffic from the A605. The train journey between Whittlesey and Peterborough City Centre is 10 minutes and it is 15 minutes to March. An improved railway station and rail service could provide an attractive alternative to car travel especially for employment and leisure journeys. Recent work on the Fenland Rail Development Strategy led by Fenland District Council has shown that there is public support for a Community Rail Partnership project at Whittlesea Rail Station, as well as for improvements to the station and services. In the public consultation carried out in late 2011/early 2012 by Cambridgeshire County Council, the proposal to improve links to the train station and improve facilities and services at the station was the most popular proposal, with 91% of respondents strongly or partially supporting this proposal.

***Economic, environmental and quality of life issues:***

Access to employment both within and outside Whittlesey

Access to employment (both within and outside Whittlesey) is an issue for Whittlesey residents, 27% of respondents to the consultation on transport and access in Whittlesey said they found it difficult or very difficult to access their workplace, and 50% would find it difficult/very difficult to travel to a better job at another location.

Traffic, congestion and Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs)

The A605 and its domination of the centre of the town has resulted in a number of comments about the volume and nature of traffic passing through the town. There is a perception locally that traffic is increasing, although this isn't borne out from annual monitoring surveys carried out by the County Council and the Department for Transport (DfT). Between 2005 and 2009, the number of motor vehicles entering and leaving Whittlesey over a 12-hour period by all the main routes has dropped from 33,126 to 31,435, this is in line with local and national trends. As the A605 is part of the Strategic Advisory Freight Route, HCVs are encouraged to use this route as opposed to less suitable minor routes. This does however mean that large vehicles are passing through a built up area, causing conflict with other road users.

King's Dyke and other level crossings

A continuing source of frustration for users of the A605, but also to a lesser extent the B1040 on Ramsey Road and the B1093 on Station Road, is the frequency with which the barriers at the level crossings are lowered. Although the frequency with which trains actually stop at Whittlesea Station is quite low, the volume of rail traffic (especially freight) along this line is high, and there are plans by the rail industry to significantly increase traffic along this route over the next couple of decades. This would clearly exacerbate the existing situation at the level crossings. Concerns have been raised over queues not completely clearing before the barrier is lowered again.

HCV traffic and conflicts between road users

A further issue is that of HCVs accessing the industrial area off Station Road. From the A605, large vehicles are signposted locally to the industrial area via the B1093 along Inhams Road, which passes through a residential area. Large vehicles have difficulty turning from Eastgate into Inhams Road and need to pass into the path of oncoming traffic to negotiate the corner, which causes conflict with other road users. This route to the industrial area is viewed locally as one of the biggest barriers to attracting further business to the town.

Impact on levels of HCV traffic from new developments

There are concerns that various new and proposed developments could have negative impacts on traffic, congestion and the volume of HCVs in Whittlesey developers will need to provide a Transport Assessment setting out evidence of the predicted transport impacts of the scheme and appropriate mitigating measures. The county council's annual Traffic Monitoring Reports will provide a means of monitoring traffic levels in and around Whittlesey.

### Town centre environment

Whittlesey is dominated by the A605 running through the town, environmental improvements and ensuring new developments contribute to retaining the character of the town could help address this<sup>14</sup>. An attractive town centre environment is essential to the local economy and is important to local residents – with 82% of consultation respondents partially or strongly supporting proposals to improve the town centre environment. Respondents were also asked for their views on the Whittlesey Market Square. Overall 44% wanted no change, whilst c.37% wanted more space for local businesses and/or events, and 18% wanted buses removed from the square. Those who were regular bus users were more likely to respond that no changes should be made to the square.

#### **A Bypass for Whittlesey?**

It is acknowledged that ultimately, one of the key pieces of infrastructure that many local people would like to see for the town is a bypass that also provides access to the industrial area to the south of the town. Whilst addressing the issue of HCVs passing through the town and also potentially reducing waiting times at the King's Dyke level crossing, this would be a hugely expensive piece of infrastructure to provide. Initial investigations into possible schemes suggest that even with utilising and upgrading existing roads to the south of the town and linking them together, a scheme would cost upwards of £30 million. Fenland ground conditions and the number of structures that would be needed to cross the railway and various dykes all contribute to the high cost of delivering such a scheme. For these reasons too, even a shorter scheme (for example linking the A605 east of Whittlesey with the industrial estate south of the station) would be likely to incur high costs. It may be possible to create a link road following the line of Back Drove (with a new level crossing on this alignment replacing the existing level crossing at Wype Road), however again this is likely to incur high costs and more work would need to be done to determine whether this would be a feasible option.

Whilst the aspiration for a bypass (or partial bypass or link road) is understood, there is no prospect of funding for such a scheme in the short to medium term. The economics of such a scheme also suggest that unless there were significant changes to the criteria that central government use to assess major schemes, even in the longer term it would be very difficult to convince the Government of the business case for such a scheme and hence to fund it. Additionally, even if contributions were sought from new developments in the town, the scale of the cost of such a scheme would mean that there would still be a significant shortfall in funding.

Therefore, while the aspiration is acknowledged, progression of such a scheme lies outside the scope of this strategy. Cambridgeshire County Council and Fenland District Council will however continue to consider how a scheme could be delivered if new opportunities arise in the future.

While the costs of a bypass would mean that such provision would be extremely difficult, there is perhaps more opportunity to achieve the replacement of the King's Dyke level crossing with a bridge. While such a scheme would still be very expensive (potentially up to £10M) the closure of the crossing would bring about safety and operational / cost benefits for the railway. Such a scheme would not remove any traffic from the town centre, but as it would be significantly cheaper than a bypass, it would have a greater potential to be delivered. Early discussions between the Councils and Network Rail on the potential for delivering a scheme for King's Dyke have commenced.

<sup>14</sup> The Cambridgeshire Design Guide for Streets and the Public Realm gives further guidance on creating attractive town centre environments. See <http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/trafficmanagement/networkmanagement/Cambridgeshire+Design+Guide.htm>

### Road safety and health

A review of accident data shows that there are a number of slight injury accidents across the town, although when compared against other urban areas within Fenland the accident rates are reasonably low. There have also been 13 serious accidents in the last five years within the built-up area of the town and whilst any accident is of concern, this figure isn't considered to be significant compared to other Fenland urban areas. There are two accident cluster sites<sup>15</sup> within the Whittlesey Town Council Area, one on Eastgate and one north of Whittlesey town on the B1040, in the vicinity of North Bank. Measures to address these sites have been included as part of this strategy.

Levels of physically active adults and children across Fenland as a whole are significantly below the national average, which could lead to other health issues. Therefore, measures have been incorporated into this strategy which can help people lead more active lifestyles.

## 7 Action Plan

The following section outlines the action plan for responding to the issues that have been identified within and around the town. It follows the same structure as the previous section in terms of the grouping solutions and schemes by issue. Some of the schemes will require additional feasibility and/or scheme design work. It should be noted that the scheme costs provided are indicative costs only and are based on 2012 prices. As previously outlined, while the strategy endeavours to address as many issues as possible, it is not possible for it to provide a solution to every problem.

In the action plan below, an indication is given of whether schemes should ideally come forward in the short, medium or long term.

Short term = 2012-2017  
 Medium term = 2018-2023  
 Long term = 2024 and beyond

FDC = Fenland District Council  
 CCC = Cambridgeshire County Council

### ***Improving access to services within the town***

Issue to be addressed	Action	Lead by <sup>16</sup>	Indicative cost <sup>17</sup>	Short/medium /long term
Improving access to local shops and services	Ensuring that any new developments are permeable and have appropriate provision for access to/from the key locations in the strategy area via sustainable modes of transport.	FDC, CCC, developers	Dependent on development	Short/medium /long
	Provision of a hopper bus linking key areas of the strategy area.	FDC, CCC developers	£200,000 which includes	Short/medium

<sup>15</sup> A definition of what constitutes an accident 'cluster' site can be found at

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/safety/accidents/mapped+accident+data.htm>

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that although actions may be lead by a particular organisation or organisations, external funding (for example from national government, developers, other funding sources) may be necessary in order for action to be progressed.

<sup>17</sup> Costs are indicative and based on 2012 prices. Additional feasibility and design work will be needed for some schemes.

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Issue to be addressed	Action	Lead by <sup>16</sup>	Indicative cost <sup>17</sup>	Short/medium /long term
			initial set up and five years pump priming	
Improving access to hospital	Better publicise opportunities for accessing Peterborough City Hospital especially via the community car scheme and bus services.	FDC, CCC, NHS, Community car scheme	£500	Short
Improving walking and cycling facilities	Investigate options that help address severance issues caused by the A605, particularly options suggested via consultation (see grey boxes below) and those which improve access to schools and any new development.	CCC, developers	See schemes outlined below, additional schemes may come forward at additional cost	Short/medium /long
	Junction improvements for pedestrians and cyclists at junction of Hallcroft Road and West End, including urban realm improvements.		£100,000	Short/medium
	Pedestrian/cycle improvements to A605 Roundabout at Broad Street/Orchard St/Whitmore Street.		£75,000	Short/medium
	Pedestrian/cycle improvements to Cemetery Road/A605 Roundabout.		£75,000	Short/medium
	Develop and produce walking/cycle map for Whittlesey.	CCC	£5,000	Short
	Improve facilities for pedestrians (including those who use scooters, pushchairs, wheelchairs etc). Specific schemes have been outlined below (see grey boxes below), but additional schemes may come forward and may include dropped kerbs, crossing facilities, signage, benches etc.	CCC	See schemes outlined below, additional schemes may come forward at additional cost	Short/medium
	A605 crossing between Belmans Road and Victory Avenue.		£100,000	Short/medium
	Improve walking leisure routes including improvements and enhancements to the Hereward Way and Nene Way long distance paths and routes around the Brick Pits and Kings Dyke areas and to Coates. Types of measures include signposting, way-marking, gates, sections of surfacing, as well as events (eg health walks) and information relating to walking.	CCC, local stakeholders	£10,000	Short/medium
	Work with police to tackle issue of cars parking on pavements.	CCC, Police	-	Short
	Investigate options for providing other cycle infrastructure, for example new cycle routes Whittlesey and between Whittlesey, Coates and Eastrea. Specific schemes have been outlined below (see grey boxes below), but additional schemes may come forward and are likely to focus on the			Short/medium /long

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Issue to be addressed	Action	Lead by <sup>16</sup>	Indicative cost <sup>17</sup>	Short/medium/long term
	following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving routes to employment sites</li> <li>• Making improvements to east-west travel in Whittlesey which allow cyclists (and pedestrians) to avoid the A605</li> <li>• Improving routes to schools</li> <li>• Improving cycle leisure routes</li> </ul>			
	Improve the cycle route between the town centre and the station, using Marne Road, Hawthorne Drive, Millfield and Eastfield Drive.	CCC	£15,000	Short
	Improve cycle access to Park Lane school by improving cycle access over the junction of Hallcroft Road and West End.	CCC	See above	Short/medium
	Improve cycle access to the McCains site (by connecting it to the NCN63)	CCC	£100,000	Medium/long
	Carry out feasibility work to look at widening the footway next to the A605 for shared use and/or creating other cycle provision.	CCC	£5,000	Short/medium
	Add cycle contraflow facilities on Horsegate Lane	CCC	£20,000	Short/medium
	Crossing improvements at junction of Orchard Street/Gracious Street	CCC	£25,000	Short/medium
	Provide cycle parking in key locations in Whittlesey, including at new developments (other potential locations include the town centre, the One Stop Shop)	CCC, developers	£10,000	Short/medium
	Improve cycle signage in Whittlesey	CCC, partners (eg Sustrans)	£10,000	Short
	Complete surfacing works on NCN63 (between Stonald Road and Millenium Bridge) to provide consistent, high standard surfacing.	CCC	£120,000	Short
Addressing public transport issues – bus services	Investigate with local bus companies the possibility of rerouting some services to serve roads off the A605.	FDC, CCC, bus operators	-	Short/medium
	Provision of a hopper bus linking key areas of the strategy area.	FDC, CCC developers	See above	Short
	Improve information, signs and timetables relating to public and community transport.	FDC, CCC, partners	£10,000	Short/medium
	Develop a press and publicity strategy for current public and community transport services, including raising awareness of the 'hail and ride' services operating in Whittlesey.	FDC, CCC, bus operators, partners	£5,000	Short/medium
	Investigate bus stop provision and/or improvements in the following locations highlighted through public consultation and outlined below (see grey boxes below). Additional schemes may also come forward.	CCC, bus operators	£2,000-20,000 per bus stop (depending on facilities required)	Short
	Provision of bus stop/improvements at Eastrea Road at east end of Whittlesey		£20,000	
	Provision of bus stop/improvements at		£20,000	



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Issue to be addressed	Action	Lead by <sup>16</sup>	Indicative cost <sup>17</sup>	Short/medium/long term
	Stonald Road if a service is provided			
	Provision of raised kerb in Whittlesey's Market Square and/or reversal of one way system to allow existing raised kerb to be used.		£20,000	

**Access to services outside Whittlesey**

Issue to be addressed	Action	By whom	Indicative cost	Short/medium/long term
Public transport – buses	Improving information about bus services and community transport and working with operators to review existing service routes and times.	CCC, FDC, community transport operators, bus operators	£5,000 for leaflets, marketing (including social media) and promotional material.	Short/medium
	Investigate options for improved public and community transport, with a focus on links to Peterborough (particularly in the evenings), links to Eastrea and Coates, and links to and through new developments.	CCC, FDC, community transport operators, bus operators, developers	Depends on options identified and on location/type of developments.	Short/medium/long
Public transport - rail	Launch and develop the Fenland Community Rail Partnership.	CCC, FDC, Network Rail, Train Operating Companies	£3,000	Short
	Develop a programme of events for Whittlesea Station and set up formal station adoption group.	CCC, FDC, Train Operating Companies	£10,000	Short
	Improve facilities at Whittlesea Station (eg shelters, lighting, cycle parking, security, platform access).	CCC, FDC, Train Operating Companies	£20,000	Short
	Ongoing programme of promotions and publicity relating to rail travel.	CCC, FDC, Train Operating Companies	£1,500	Medium
	Ongoing discussions with Department for Transport (DfT) and Train operating companies regarding improving service frequencies.	FDC, CCC, DfT, Train Operating Companies.	-	Short
	Improve access, links and signage to Whittlesea Station.	CCC, FDC, Network Rail, Train Operating Companies	£3,000 signing and information	Medium
	Provide bridge over the platforms at Whittlesea Station	Network Rail, Train Operating Companies	£350,000	Medium/Long
	Lengthen platforms at Whittlesea Station so longer trains can be accommodated.	Network Rail, Train	£500,000	Long

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Issue to be addressed	Action	By whom	Indicative cost	Short/medium/long term
		Operating Companies		
	Explore proposals for a parkway station for Peterborough at Whittlesey Station (to include an extension to the car park).	CCC, FDC, Train Operating Companies	£350,000 £50,000 for the current car park. £300,000 for the extended car park.	Long

**Economic, environmental and quality of life issues:**

Issue to be addressed	Action	By whom	Indicative cost	Short/medium/long term
Access to employment	Work with local employers to help people access work and using walking, cycling and public transport and encourage them to work with the Travel for Work Partnership to implement Workplace Travel Plans.	CCC, Travel for Work Partnership, Local employers	-	Short/medium
	Ensure any new employment sites in and around Whittlesey have appropriate provision for sustainable transport.	CCC, FDC	Depends on development.	Short/medium/long
	Support improvements to Broadband and wi-fi internet provision, as this can enable remote access to services.	CCC, FDC, developers	Part of CCC wider investment in Broadband.	Short/medium/long
King's Dyke and other level crossings	Engage with Network Rail to investigate a possible funding package to improve the crossing at King's Dyke (and potentially other level crossings). Investigate replacement of Station Road level crossing manned barriers with automatic barriers.	CCC, FDC, Network Rail	£50,000 for feasibility study & at least £10 million for the bridge.	Short/medium/long
HCV traffic and conflicts between road users	Improve signs directing HCV's to industrial areas and work with police to look at enforcement of the current HCV ban.	CCC, Police	£20,000 for signage	Short/medium
Levels of HCV traffic from new developments	Ensure new developments mitigate transport impacts on the network appropriately.	CCC, FDC	Depends on development.	Short/medium/long
Town centre environment	Ensure new developments in the area contribute to retaining Whittlesey's character and sense of place.	CCC, FDC, developers	-	Short/medium/long
	Investigate improvements which could be made to the Market Square in Whittlesey whilst retaining bus service provision in this area.	CCC, FDC	Depends on options identified.	Short
Road safety and health	Continue with the principles of the safer routes to schools projects. Some schemes identified by school working parties working with the CCC Road Safety Team have been identified, these are outlined below (see grey boxes). Additional schemes may come forward.	CCC	Depends on schemes identified.	Short/medium/long
	Provision of cycle parking, parent waiting facilities, signage and railings at New Road Primary School.	CCC	£7,602 For cycle storage, parent	Short

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Issue to be addressed	Action	By whom	Indicative cost	Short/medium/long term
			waiting shelter, pedestrian guard railing, signage	
	Investigate options to lower speed limit on the A605 and in other areas where this is supported by local residents and schools.	CCC, Town Council, local residents and schools	-	Short/medium
	Improve signage alerting drivers to vulnerable road users at key sites. Some sites mentioned in consultation are outlined below. Others may come forward.	CCC	Depends on schemes identified.	Short/medium/long
	Stonald Road – signs requested to alert drivers to elderly people	CCC	£3,000	Short
	Signs requested to alert drivers to students travelling to Sir Harry Smith Community College	CCC	£2,000	Short
	Investigate safety and access improvements which can be made to the Eastgate area.	CCC	£5,000 feasibility study	Short
	Investigate options for providing Residential Travel Planning in new developments, in line with emerging draft Residential Travel Plan guidance being prepared by CCC in partnership with the District Council.	CCC, FDC	Depends on development.	Short/medium/long
	Improve accessibility using 'active' travel (eg walking and cycling) – see section on 'improving walking and cycling facilities'	See above section	See above section	See above section

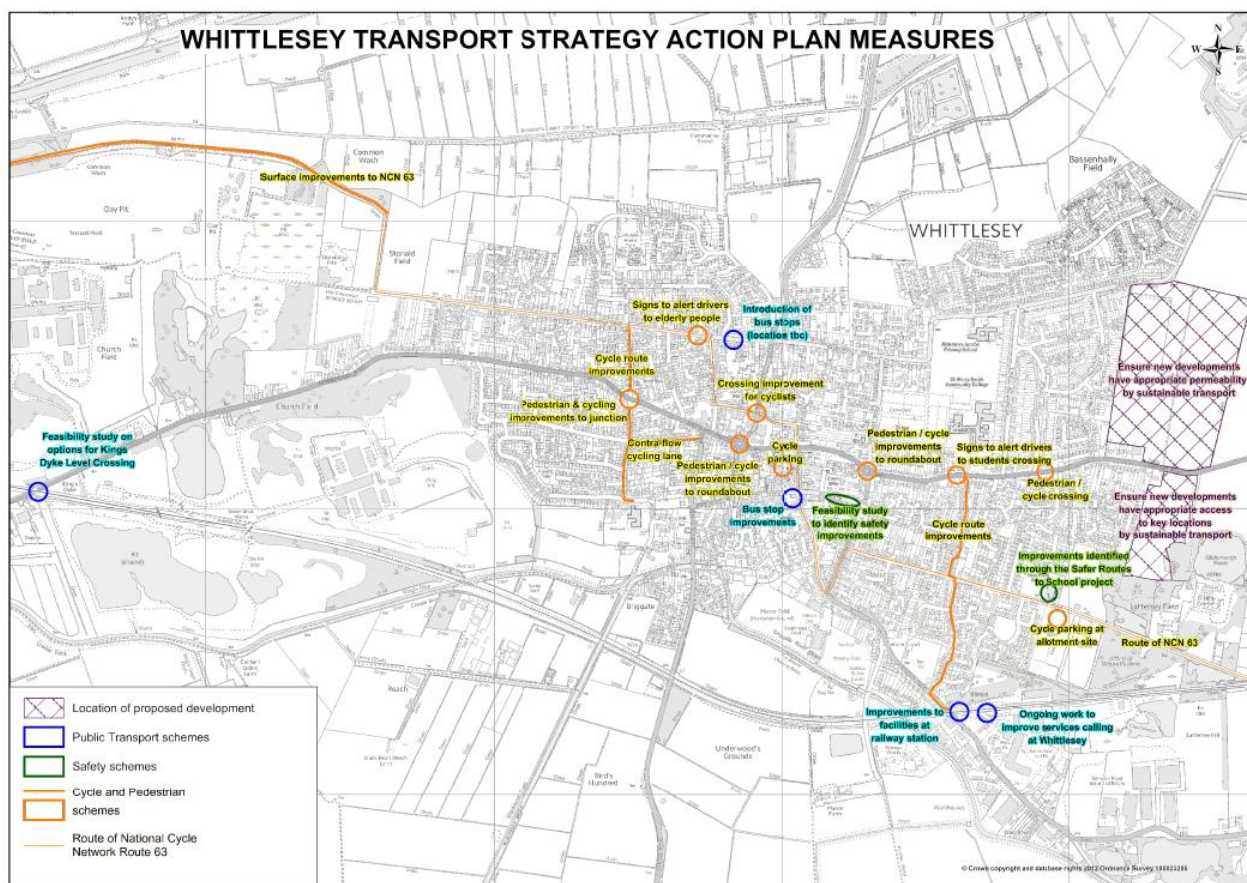


Figure 5: Map showing the location of some of the action plan measures<sup>18</sup>

**Other actions:**

In addition to the actions outlined in the action plan above, the following will also be continued as part of the wider programme of work on Cambridgeshire’s Third Local Transport Plan:

Issue to be addressed	Action	By whom	Indicative cost	Short/medium/long term
Traffic, congestion and HCV's	Continue to monitor traffic levels in and around Whittlesey.	CCC	Part of CCC wider monitoring programme.	Short/medium
Barriers to walking	Improve pavement conditions and undertake routine pavement maintenance within the constraint of available budgets.	CCC	Part of CCC maintenance programme	Short/medium/long
Road safety	Continue with routine maintenance of roads within the constraints of the budgets.	CCC	Part of CCC maintenance programme	Short/medium/long

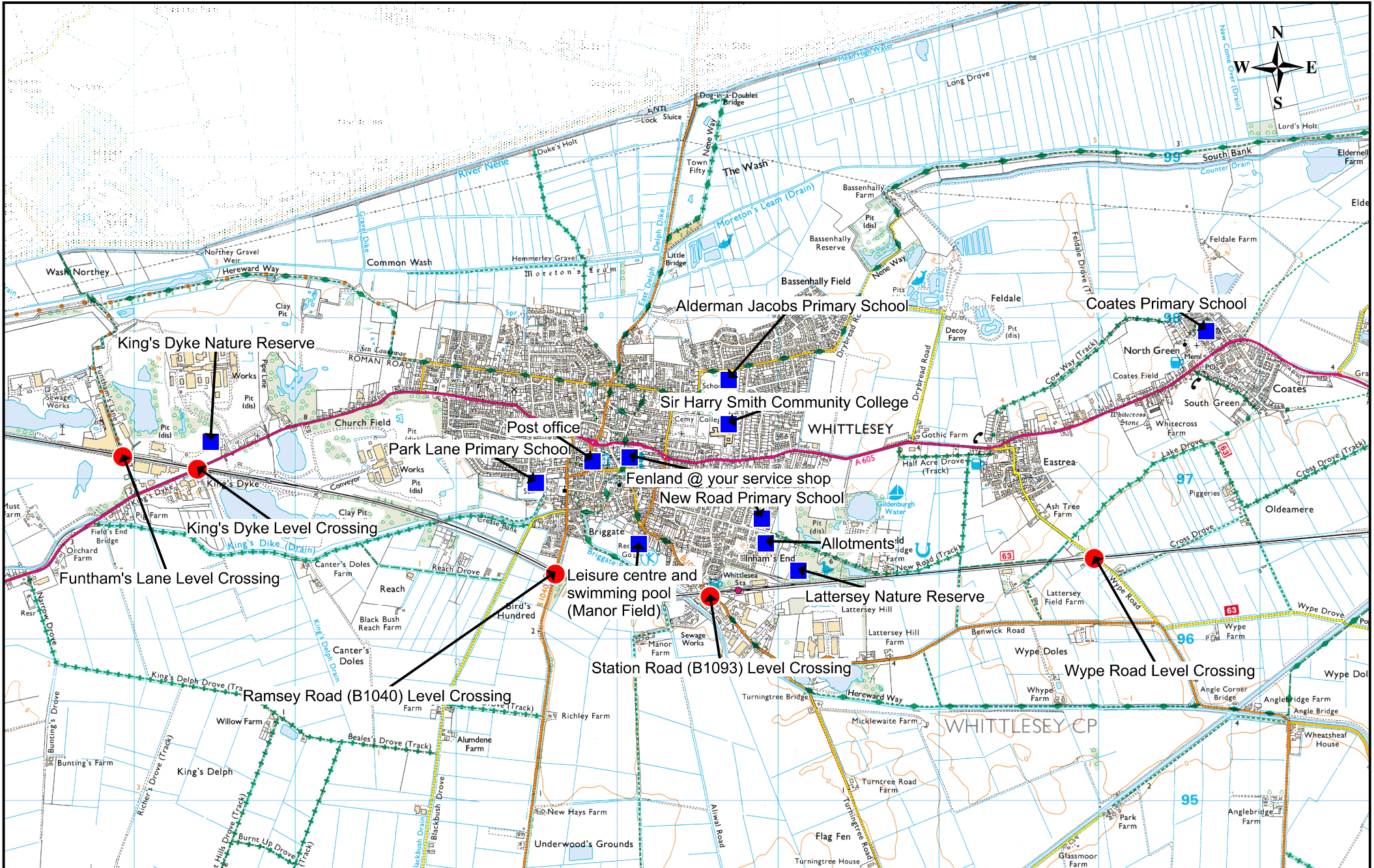
**8 Delivery, monitoring and review of the strategy**

Following the adoption of this strategy, progress on delivering the schemes set out in the action plan section will be monitored annually and reported on via Cambridgeshire County Council’s website, see: [www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/strategies](http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/strategies) . As part of this annual monitoring process, the contents of the action plan will also be reviewed and updated if necessary.

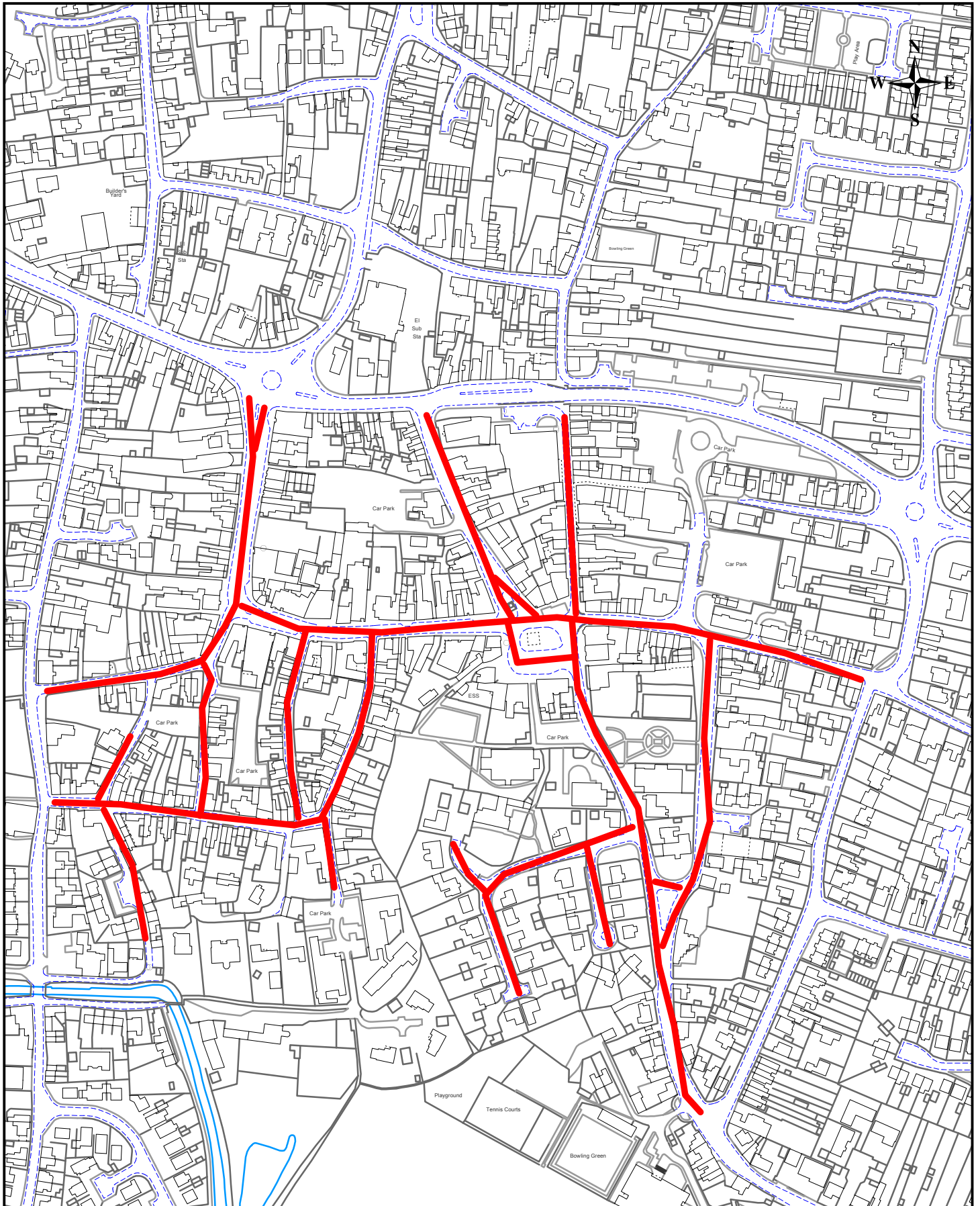
<sup>18</sup> See appendix for A4 version of this map.

Appendix

# Whittlesey area schools and leisure facilities



# Whittlesey 7.5 tonne Heavy Commercial Vehicle Ban

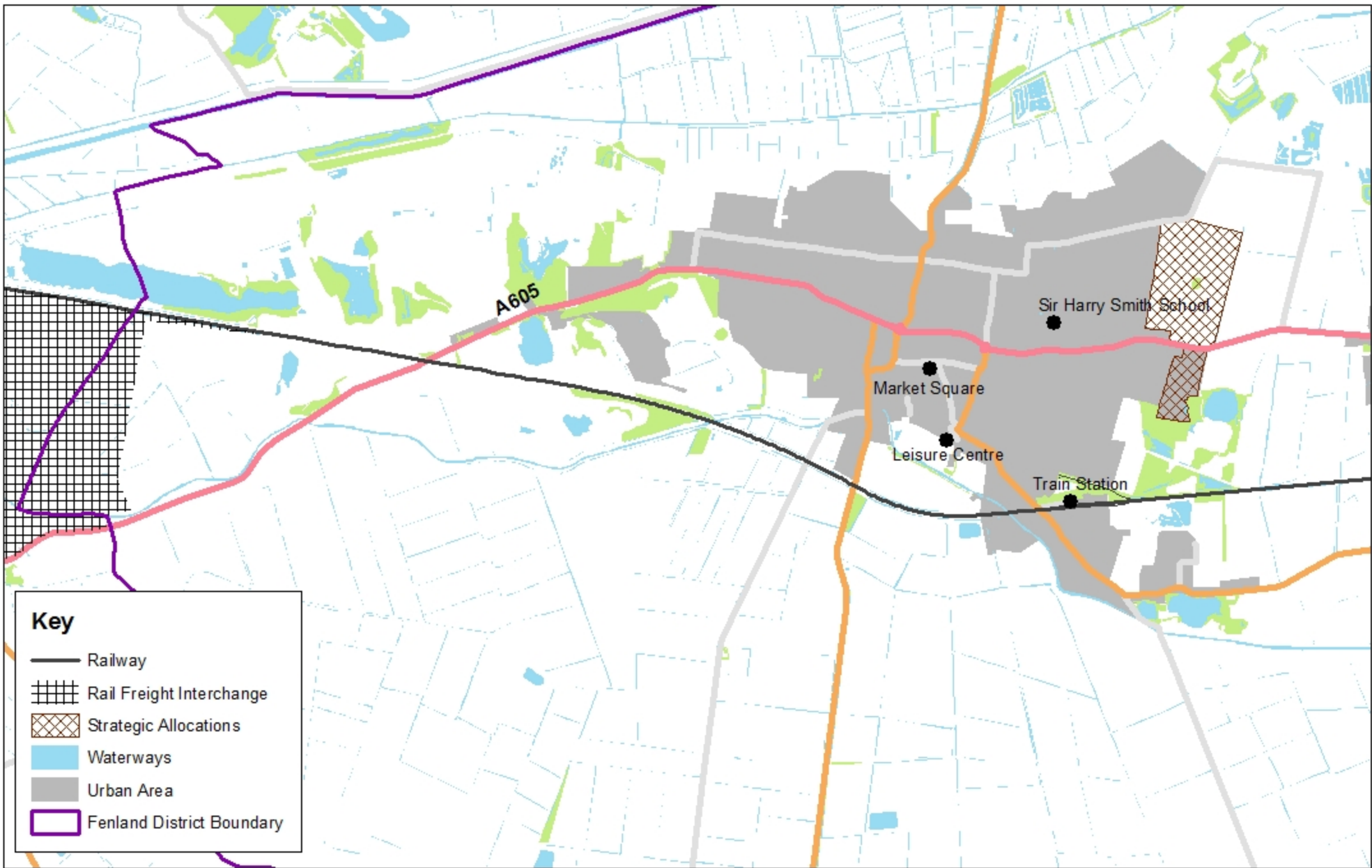


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By: fn267

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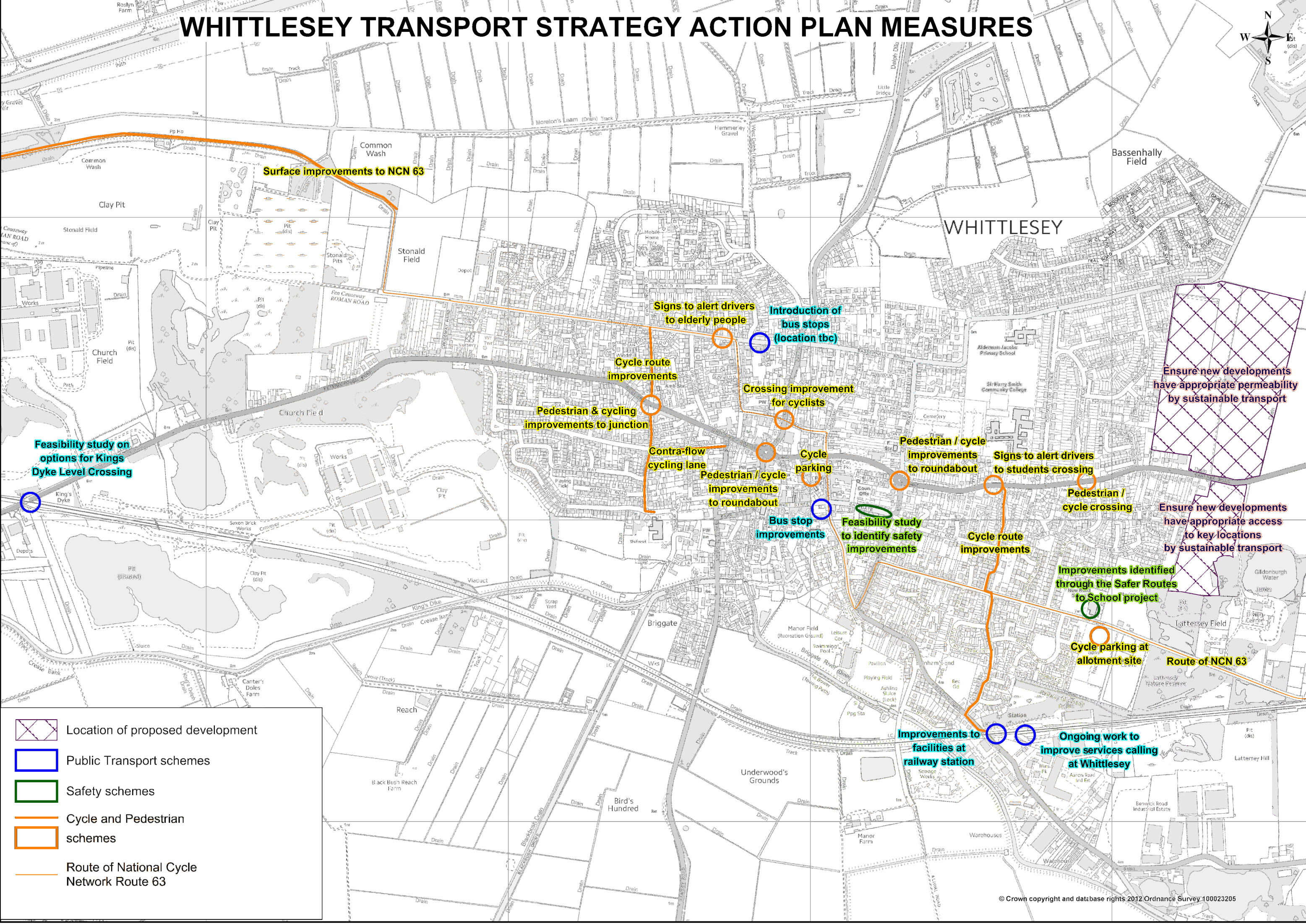
**Key Diagram for Whittlesey**

Not To Scale





# WHITTLESEY TRANSPORT STRATEGY ACTION PLAN MEASURES



Surface improvements to NCN 63

Signs to alert drivers to elderly people

Introduction of bus stops (location tbc)

Cycle route improvements

Crossing improvement for cyclists

Pedestrian & cycling improvements to junction

Contra-flow cycling lane

Pedestrian / cycle improvements to roundabout

Cycle parking

Pedestrian / cycle improvements to roundabout

Signs to alert drivers to students crossing

Pedestrian / cycle crossing

Feasibility study on options for Kings Dyke Level Crossing

Bus stop improvements

Feasibility study to identify safety improvements

Cycle route improvements






Improvements identified through the Safer Routes to School project

Cycle parking at allotment site

Route of NCN 63

Ensure new developments have appropriate permeability by sustainable transport

Ensure new developments have appropriate access to key locations by sustainable transport

-  Location of proposed development
-  Public Transport schemes
-  Safety schemes
-  Cycle and Pedestrian schemes
-  Route of National Cycle Network Route 63

Improvements to facilities at railway station

Ongoing work to improve services calling at Whittlesey