

Strategic Transport Leadership Board

9 June 2023

Agenda Item Number 7: Active Travel Strategy

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Strategic Transport Leadership Board:

- a) Notes that EEH has been working with local authority partners and the Department for Transport to develop the Active Travel Strategy Phase 2, following Board agreement to the first phase of work February 2022**
- b) Agrees the Active Travel Strategy Phase 2 report outcomes, including:**
 - i. the fifteen cross boundary active travel links**
 - ii. the place-based travel ambitions, recognising the important role new (and electric) forms of mobility must play**
- c) Reiterates the expectation that, to achieve the ambitions set out in Gear Change and the Cycling and Walking Strategy 2, local authorities require reliable, transparent, and long-term funding to support active travel.**

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement of the EEH 'Active Travel Strategy Phase 2: The Opportunity' report.

2. Key points to note

- 2.1. Phase 2 of the Active Travel Strategy has been developed, working with a steering group of officers across the region.
- 2.2. It is a data led document, setting out place-based ambitions and high potential cross boundary active travel links which will support mode shift and network coherence.
- 2.3. It follows the development of the ambition for active travel for the region, agreed by the Board in February 2022.
- 2.4. The outputs are intended to support locally developed LCWIPs, greenway plans and other active travel link development.
- 2.5. The next steps in the project are to consider the high potential links in more detail, working with local authorities to consider: opportunities, challenges and deliverability of the links, based on local and historic knowledge.

3. Context

- 3.1. The EEH transport strategy sets out our commitment to creating an integrated transport system, linking sustainable first mile last mile solutions to strategic public transport. Making active travel a viable, appealing and accessible option as part of a sustainable end to end journeys is key to helping deliver the ambitions of the transport strategy.

- 3.2. As the sub-national transport body (STB), EEH's role is to look at active travel provision strategically across the region, working with local partners to identify potential for strategic cross border active travel interventions.
- 3.3. In February 2022, England's Economic Heartland's Board agreed Phase 1 of an Active Travel Strategy. This set the ambition for active travel for the Heartland: *'To create an exemplar active travel network and culture that encourages modal shift for both shorter journeys and for the first and last mile of longer journeys'*.
- 3.4. Phase 2 of the strategy identifies potential cross boundary active travel links with a supporting narrative and evidence base. It identifies where investment is required, primarily considering cross border opportunities or schemes which provide large benefits to the region, such as opportunities for active travel to link to the strategic public transport network or have a high potential for modal shift.
- 3.5. The intention of the regional Active Travel Strategy is to support work already in place or underway by our local authority partners and build on it to bring together a joined up active travel network and utilise examples of good practice within the region to build a strong culture of embedding active travel provision to the transport system at all levels.

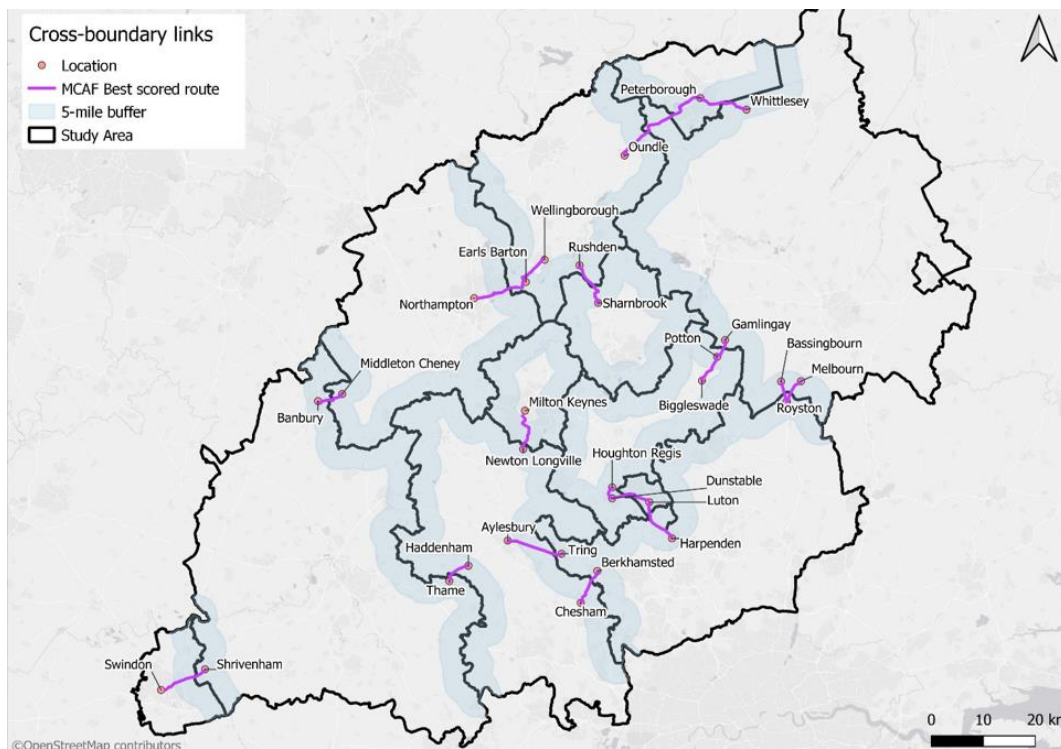
4. Active Travel Strategy Phase 2 - approach

- 4.1. The second phase of the Active Travel Strategy has been an evidence and data led project, leading to a technical report. It has been delivered over several stages:
 - 1.1.1. Stage 1: Baselineing and target setting (data led)
 - 1.1.2. Stage 2: Understanding the active travel network and future ambitions (data collation and mapping of active travel infrastructure across the region)
 - 1.1.3. Stage 3: Challenges to achieving the ambitions (workshop led session discussing common challenges which EEH can use to feed into discussions with Active Travel England)
 - 1.1.4. Stage 4: Multi modal integration (potential for cross boundary multi modal integration – for example, where a rail station is one side of a Local Authority border but serves communities on another side of the border)
 - 1.1.5. Stage 5: Delivery plan (how we can use the strategy to move forwards)
- 4.2. Officers from across the region have contributed to the development of the strategy over a series of workshops, focussing on setting the objectives for the project, methodology development, long listing of potential links and reviewing the draft Active Travel Strategy document.

5. Active Travel Phase 2 - outcomes

- 5.1. The technical report for the study (annex 1) is presented for approval by the Board.
- 5.2. Fifteen high potential cross boundary active travel links were identified as part of the study.
- 5.3. To identify the links, input from the steering group along with independent data analysis, enabled the creation of a long list of 76 links. The links were reviewed against several criteria, for example, trip length, population, network coherence, public transport hubs, planned housing and employment sites (from published local plans), educational establishments, indices of deprivation and propensity to cycle.
- 5.4. Cross STB border links, for example, from EEH to Transport for the South East were excluded due to data availability but the ambitions were collated and are included in the report as cross STB ambitions.
- 5.5. Based on the data, the assessment process identified the 15 cross boundary links that had the highest potential in terms of impact and therefore should be prioritised for further investigation and development by EEH. These are set out in the map overleaf.





6. Place based active travel ambitions

- 6.1. Using National Travel Survey data for the EEH region, obtained at a granular level from the Department for Transport, place based ambitions for active travel have been developed as part of the project. The ambitions are not obligatory but can be used to form a long term vision for active travel, in line with DFT’s guidance.
- 6.2. The analysis of the data allowed us to understand how far people were travelling in each place type and their travel mode (for example, car, walk, cycle, bus) and therefore the potential mode share by walking, cycling and e-bike/scooter.
- 6.3. The following suggested targets have been developed. The ambitions consider the potential for increase uptake in e-bikes in the future.

Year	Area	Max. Walk Distance	Max. Cycle Distance	Pure AT Mode Share	AT Mode Share incl. first mile / last mile
2030	Urban	1.5 miles	3 miles	40%	50%
2040	Market Town	1.5 miles	5 miles	35%	40%
2050	Rural	1.5 miles	8 miles	30%	35%

- 6.4. The targets above are phased depending on the place-type, for example the urban target for 2030 is in line with national targets, whereas the rural 2050 target reflects its relative starting point. The max walking and cycling figures are what is considered the appropriate distances for travel for most people. The ‘active travel mode share including first, last mile’ includes active travel in combination with public transport.
- 6.5. We recognise that local authorities are best placed to understand the place type mix of their local areas and therefore we welcome applying local knowledge in the use of these findings.

- 6.6. It is also recognised that long term funding for active travel from central government will be key to supporting local authorities to make step changes in active travel. EEH continues to highlight the need for long term funding solutions for transport investment in the region.
- 6.7. In addition, the strategy outlines some of the common challenges identified by officers and supported by data. EEH continues to engage with Active Travel England in an advocacy role, highlighting the common opportunities and challenges identified across the region.

7. Stakeholder engagement

- 7.1. During the development of the second phase of the active travel strategy, active travel and strategy officers from across the region have attended a series of workshops to feed into the development of the report.
- 7.2. There has been strong engagement with the Department for Transport, in setting both the scope and getting buy in for the methodology, data use and outputs.
- 7.3. Business Unit Updates provided to Board outlined the approach and progress with the project.

8. Next steps

- 8.1. Phase 2 of the Active Travel Strategy has provided a starting point for focus on cross boundary links highlighted in the report. Working with local authorities, EEH will undertake a high-level exercise to understand more about the links, including the history, deliverability challenges and opportunities.
- 8.2. The outputs of the report will also help provide narrative to help show support for the links, which can be utilised by local authorities.
- 8.3. EEH has been engaging with Active Travel England and will be liaising regarding common challenges raised by officers as part of the work and in wider discussions.
- 8.4. In addition, EEH is providing support to local authorities, with the development of an active travel forum and engagement sessions.

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