LCWIP Provisional Report Part 1:

Utility Travel in Ringwood Town (Schools) May 2021

Ringwood Town Council

1. Introduction

1.1 What is an LCWIP?

LCWIP (Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans)[1] is a UK Government strategic initiative first published by the Department of Transport in 2017 aimed at making "cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys or as part of a longer journey", whether for utility or leisure. By 2020, the objectives were to increase cycling and walking activity as well as cyclist safety, as measured against certain matrices. A summary of the strategy is shown in Annex 1.

This year (2021), New Forest National Park Authority, Hampshire County Council, New Forest District Council, Forestry England, Natural England, the Verderers of the New Forest and others launched a 'Joint Initiative' to develop an LCWIP across the New Forest region, including the whole of Ringwood. The intent is to manage the distribution and type of recreation facilities to protect the Forest, improve people's enjoyment and use resources effectively, including the option to make selective improvements to the network of permitted off road routes for cycling and in particular to address key gaps in the cycle network. Their short guide document is in Annex 2. This Ringwood document is designed to feed into the wider regional initiative.

Department for Transport

Gear Change

A bold vision for cycling and walking

In July 2020, the Government also published 'Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking'[2] with claimed benefits to health, wellbeing, congestion, local businesses, environmental and air quality, climate change and the economy. This paper reinforced the strategic aim of encouraging more cycling and walking by infrastructure design.

Although there is no finance currently earmarked specifically for LCWIP action plans, the intention is that a plan is in place and ready to be implemented if and when cash becomes available from whatever source. As such, this can be viewed as a 'live document', under review in the context of local and regional developments when appropriate.

1. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908535/cycling-walking-infrastructure-technical-guidance-document.pdf
2. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf

1.2 History of cycling and walking initiatives in Ringwood area

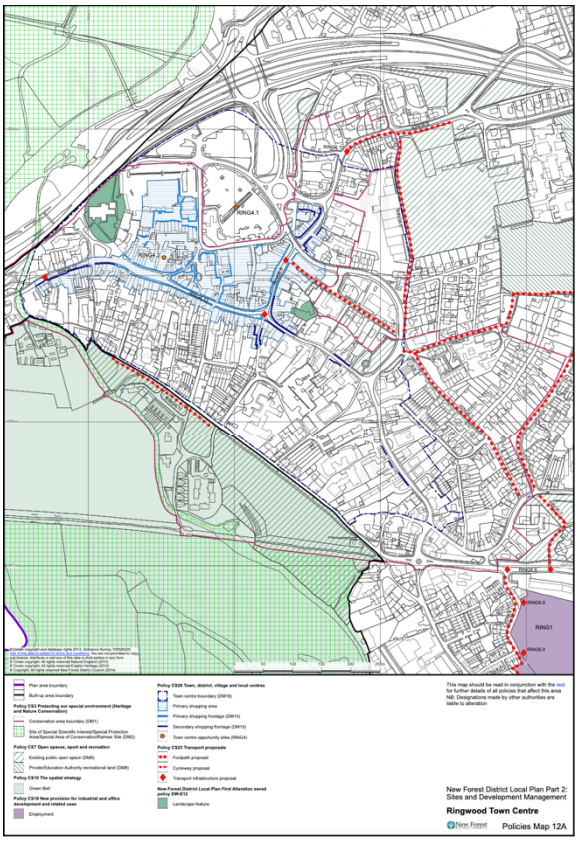
The Ringwood LCWIP is informed by previous documents related to walking and cycling infrastructure, although historically, as a market town for centuries, centre streets would have been designed for pedestrians, horses and horse drawn vehicles.

The 2011 Ringwood Town Access Plan[3] (TAP) is a Supplementary Planning Document[4], which means that, although it doesn't form part of the development plan, it is a material consideration in decision-making. The TAP "not only sets out a vision for how access to facilities and services within the town can be improved over the next 20 years, but also provides an Action Plan for investment, identifying measures already planned and also identifies longer term schemes for improvements which are necessary to accommodate future development." It formed part of the Local Development Framework for New Forest District (outside the National Park). The TAP was adopted by the appropriate New Forest District Council (NFDC) and Hampshire County Council (HCC) meetings in 2011.

TAP addresses an area covering the built-up parts of Ringwood. It details key facilities in Ringwood, access routes and unmet need regarding transport. Policy A on page 6 has an objective to: "Provide better pedestrian and cycle routes, crossing facilities and lighting to increase levels of accessibility by sustainable and healthier transport modes", so there is some overlap within TAP and LCWIP.

The reasoning behind production of TAP has remained unchanged today and will not be restated in the body of this document. The references in TAP will also not be detailed here. Many statements in TAP and other documents have also stayed unchanged. For example, Ringwood is still a key western gateway into the New Forest for people and wildlife. However, many things have changed that were not part of the TAP Action Plan, mostly under the direction of higher-level planning authorities, and these have a profound influence on the Ringwood of today. The statement that "up to 420 additional homes will be built" over the 20-year duration of the TAP has proved to be a grossly inaccurate, despite the plan being adopted at district and county level. The current NFDC Local Plan Part 1[5] and related documents suggest Strategic Sites 13 and 14 alone will have hundreds of homes each. The closure of the A31 West Street access due to a Highways England A31 widening scheme was likewise not foreseen.

3. https://newforest.gov.uk/media/762/Ringwood-Town-Access-Plan/pdf/Ringwood_Town_Access_Plan.pdf?m=637298155485700000
4. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making
5. https://newforest.gov.uk/media/705/Local-Plan-Document-2016-2036/pdf/Local_Plan_2016-2036_Part_One_FINAL.pdf?m=637329191351130000



The NFDC Local Plan Part 1 contains a map of Ringwood town centre and this is shown in Annex 4 with a thumbnail version here. Section 5 of the Local Plan Part 2 (2014)[6] details some site proposals and there is a map showing, for example, pedestrian route improvement between 58 and 84 Southampton Road and a cycleway improvement proposal (RING6.2 (PC3)) that includes a section alongside Ringwood School fields between Ringwood Infants School carpark and Kingsfield. There is no evidence of any practical work carried out on these proposals, but these proposed schemes will be revisited in this document.

Looking forward, Ringwood is developing a Neighbourhood Plan (NP) which could be adopted in 2022. The NP will doubtless include land use policies, of which active travel would be a part, and it may point to this LCWIP document in that regard.

When looking at cycle and walking routes, joined up thinking in the literal sense is essential. There is little point is improving a section of a route if there is no realistic chance that the whole route will be completed. Likewise, it is essential that the places that are connected are routes that people wish to travel. As the 'Gear change' document states, "infrastructure must join together, or join other facilities together by taking a holistic, connected network approach".

1.3 Why is more everyday cycling and walking important?

At a global level, reduction in the use of fossil fuels reduces the rate of impact from global warming. More locally, petrol- and diesel-powered vehicles give rise to harmful particulates and gases, leading to air quality issues. At a personal level, moderate exercise is viewed as a healthy activity, pushing back against a lifestyle leading to obesity and related health issues. Less driving equates to healthier streets and that is simply a good thing. A more considered analysis can be found in Section 1.4 of the East Hampshire LCWIP Technical Report V1.2[7].

6. https://www.newforest.gov.uk/media/716/Section-5-Site-specific-proposals-Ringwood-Fordingbridge-the-Avon-Valley-and-Downlands/pdf/Section_5_Avon_Valley.pdf?m=637298095999270000
7. https://www.easthants.gov.uk/cycling-walking-strategy
Photo from the Bastille area of Paris – Malou Loutre (@LoutreMalou) credited, May 2021.

1.4 What is contained in this provisional report

This is a provisional report covering utility travel in Ringwood town related to schools. Until the authors have access to assessment tools or expert assistance, they are only able to describe, and present evidence related to walking and cycling routes. It is hoped that with training and assistance, a full report can be generated based on this provisional report in due course.

In the meantime, this report describes pedestrian and cycle routes to the five Ringwood schools from residential areas using LCWIP methodology in the form of annexes, including from the Strategic Site 14 north of Hightown Road.

1.5 Report structure

The structure of this report is as follows:

Section 2 will describe the current position (May 2021), reviewing existing plans and actions, outlining the methodology employed and the routes examined.

Section 3 gives an overview of the results and points to the annexes associated with particular routes.

Section 4 outlines the conclusions so far.

Annexes are as follows:

Annex 1	What is an LCWIP?
Annex 2	LCWIP 'Short Guide'
Annex 3	TAP update document
Annex 4	NFDC Local Plan Part 2, Map 12A
Annex 5	Beaumont Park Estate Survey

Annexes 6 to 16 examine particular routes to the various schools.

Annex 17 contains the what3words data for obstructions on paths.

2. The current position (May 2021)

2.1 The current status of the planned improvements

Section 5 in the TAP included an Action Plan and an updated version (March 2021) is shown in Annex 3, with completed actions highlighted. Many items are of relevance to this LCWIP document and will be considered further below.

2.2 What else has changed since the 2011 TAP?

There has been a big technology leap in transport since 2011, with perhaps the first Tesla hitting the streets in 2008 as the vanguard of modern vehicle electrification. The first e-bike was invented over 120 years ago, but the widespread use of e-bikes has been relatively recent. 2018 figures[7] show that over 63,000 e-bikes were sold in the UK with strong growth in conventional bikes and scooters too. This trend has been bolstered further by Covid restrictions in the last year[8]. This growth is likely to continue strongly with the likely introduction of Government subsidies this year. A recent Hampshire County Council survey[9] suggested that "respondents were increasingly walking and cycling for health and pleasure –recognising its importance for physical and mental wellbeing at the current time" and that "respondents generally expected that their increased levels of cycling and walking would be maintained once things settle into a 'new normal'."

A second change has been the recent closure for A31 access at the end of West Street, due to A31 Ringwood Road Widening scheme overseen by Highways England[10], leading to a lowering in traffic level in the High Street and Market Place. Presumably, traffic previously using the West Street access are using alternative routes such as Mansfield Road.

A third change has been the building of the Linden Homes Beaumont Park estate of around 200 houses on land off Crow Lane.

7. https://www.bike-eu.com/market/nieuws/2019/01/uk-e-bike-imports-hold-steady-in-2018-and-show-swing-to-eu-10135238
8. https://www.which.co.uk/news/2021/03/3-reasons-why-you-should-consider-an-electric-bike/
9. https://documents.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/ProjectTwo-Transport-Keyfindings.pdf
10. https://highwaysengland.co.uk/our-work/south-east/a31-ringwood-road-widening/

eBike photo - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Thompson_Euro_Classic_2_Electric_Bicycle_-_Flickr_-_mick_-_Lumix.jpg
Housing photo from Beaumont Park estate

2.3 What's likely to change?

The anticipated building of perhaps a thousand properties at Strategic Sites SS13 and SS14 will likely place more strain on a currently busy road network through and around Ringwood. Highways England have stated during the public consultation process that they cannot model accurately the effects of the currently ongoing A31 Improvement Scheme, so the impact of the proposed developments is presumably likewise speculative and certainly beyond the skills of the authors of this document to predict with accuracy. However, assuming no interventions take place to improve transport networks, it might be assumed that:

- In the built-up areas, higher traffic volume will lead to more congestion on through routes like Mansfield Road, Castleman Way and Eastfield Lane. The proposed new development at SS14 includes a putative roundabout to replace the existing mini roundabout. Congestion at this junction will likely encourage more 'rat running' through areas like Poulner.
- On the outskirts, such as around Crow and Kingston, roads are not wide and are likely to become significantly busier due to additional vehicle load from the new developments and drivers avoiding the town centre. Pedestrians rarely walk these roads now and the increased volume will likely make them more daunting for cyclists and equestrians as well.

In built-up areas, encouraging commuting by non-vehicle means may help ease the seemingly inevitable traffic issues. Making certain improvements to cycle and pedestrian routes, such as easier crossing points over through roads, would seem likely to further slow progress for drivers passing through and may encourage even more 'rat running'. Good and holistic design will be required to minimise negative impacts whilst encouraging more walking and cycling.

Photo of Market Place from an old postcard – courtesy The Ringwood Meeting House.

2.4 Cycling and walking routes – methodology – hubs and porosity

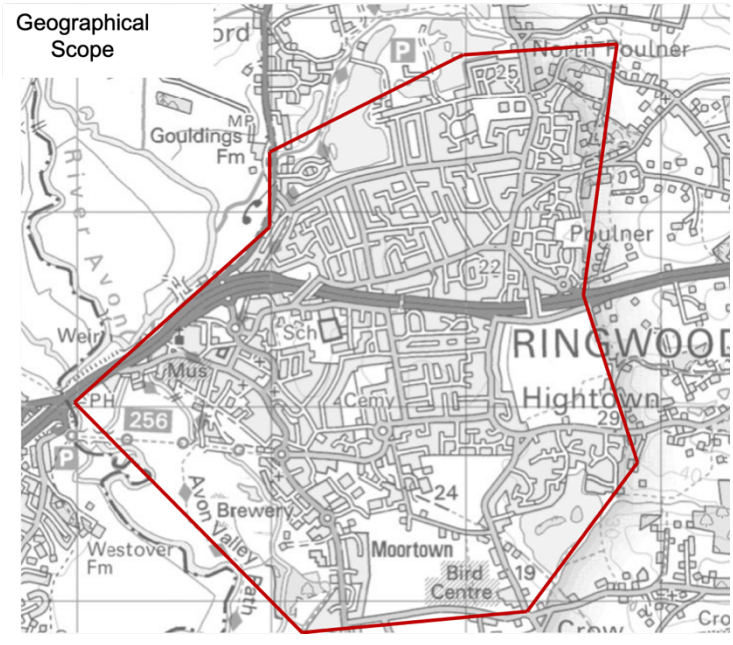
'Figure 1' below is actually a copy of Figure 1 in the LCWIP Technical Guidance document[1].

Figure 1: LCWIP Process

Stage	Name	Description
1	**Determining Scope**	Establish the geographical extent of the LCWIP, and arrangements for governing and preparing the plan.
2	**Gathering Information**	Identify existing patterns of walking and cycling and potential new journeys. Review existing conditions and identify barriers to cycling and walking. Review related transport and land use policies and programmes.
3	**Network Planning for Cycling**	Identify origin and destination points and cycle flows. Convert flows into a network of routes and determine the type of improvements required.
4	**Network Planning for Walking**	Identify key trip generators, core walking zones and routes, audit existing provision and determine the type of improvements required.
5	**Prioritising Improvements**	Prioritise improvements to develop a phased programme for future investment.
6	**Integration and Application**	Integrate outputs into local planning and transport policies, strategies, and delivery plans.

For Stage 1, the full scope is across the New Forest for the overall initiative, but locally, the scope for this document was determined by the team of authors as the built-up area of Ringwood. Barriers exist geographically (such as the Avon river), in terms of jurisdiction (such as St Ives being in Dorset) and in terms of residential density (such as the area within the National Park), as shown in the map.

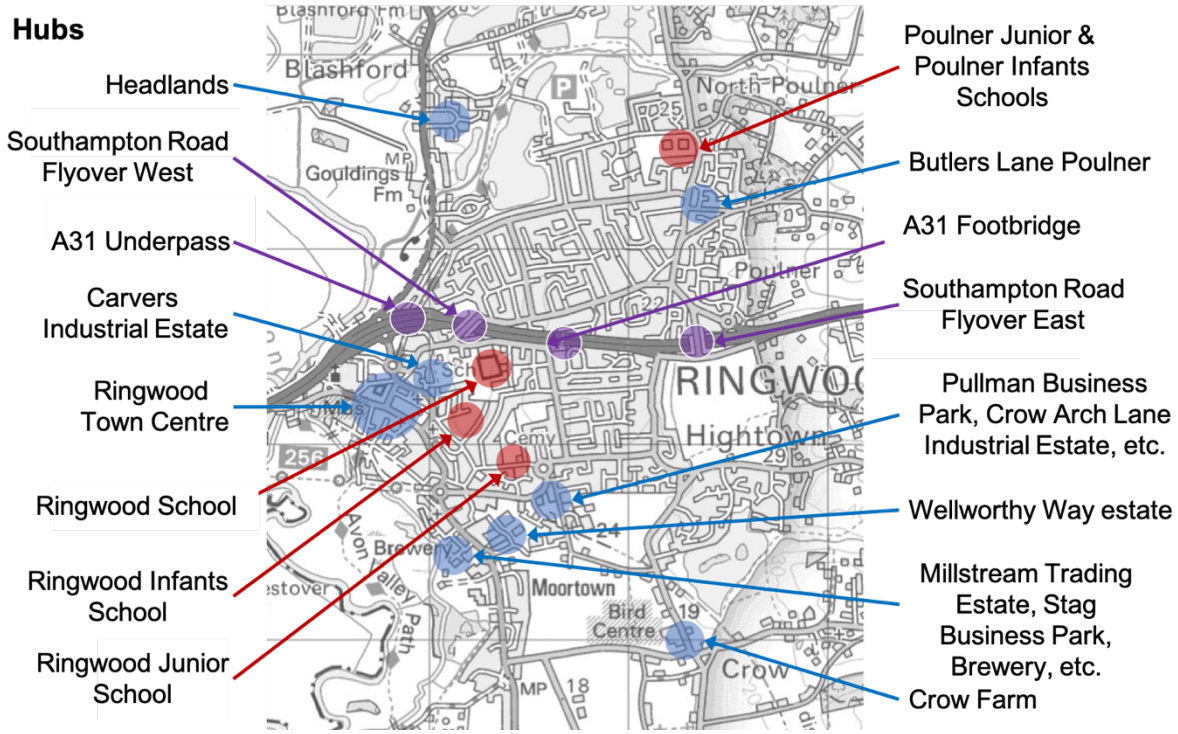
The Stage 2 identification of barriers was facilitated by two members of the team of authors attending a virtual Sustrans led training event as part of the Joint Initiative[11]. The identified barriers included the Avon river to the west and the A31 trunk road splitting Poulner from the rest of the Ringwood area. The breaches in these barriers can act as effectively destination points (for utility trips from residential areas) or origin points (for trips to hubs, such as the town centre or commercial development sites, so are themselves a sort of hub.



11. Virtual training event held on 19th March 2021

Relevant land use and transport policies have been noted in Section 1 of this document.

Stages 3 and 4 include identification of walking/cycling hubs. In addition to the A31 breach points, which for this document are the east and west Southampton Road flyovers, the Winston Way footbridge and the underpass between Gravel lane and Linden Gardens, hubs included schools, commercial and retail centres as shown in the map below.



Commercial and retail hubs (in blue) were identified based on local knowledge of where people were likely to work within the town. School hubs are shown in red and the A31 breach points are shown in purple. Cycle (and pedestrian) routes should aim to connect these into a network. The Pullman/Crow and the Wellworthy estate hubs are a combination of retail and commercial. In the near future, there may be more commercial areas related to new housing (Strategic Sites 13 and 14), which concern the land north of Moortown Lane and the land between Hightown Road and the Southampton Road flyover east. Note that Headlands is not in Ringwood Parish, but the nearest residential areas are in Ringwood.

It is important to note that as well as adequate access routes, the provision of safe and adequate cycle parking facilities at hubs is necessary. Bikes and e-bikes are expensive - theft needs to be deterred. Also, for a hub such as the town centre, facilities like cafés and bike/e-bike repair/hire shops are also important.

The LCWIP methodology also suggests identifying ‘key trip attractors’, so places people would want to visit that are not picked up in the identification of hubs described above. In urban Ringwood, places like the Bickerley and Carvers Recreation Ground would be candidates, but as these places are close to hubs, it was considered unnecessary to identify them separately. Outside the urban area, there are so many wonderful places to visit, that it was not viewed as feasible to identify them for this document.

The routes identified and shown in the annexes link hubs together. As an example, consider a walking route from south Poulner to Ringwood School involving the A31 Footbridge. One of the annexes contains details of a route from the footbridge to the school, but the routes used by pedestrians to get from Poulner to the bridge is not detailed. In the LCWIP methodology, 'porosity' is assumed for residential areas, as long as there are adequate crossing points on, in this case, Southampton Road. For cyclists, residential streets in areas like this can be classed as 'Bikeability intermediate level'[12] routes in Sustrans parlance, so not suitable for folk new to cycling.

The map below shows and labels key residential areas.

Individual cycle and pedestrian routes are detailed in the annexes. Apart from a map with photos of key features of the route, the scope from previous documents (such as the New Forest District Council Local Plan Part 1) is stated, any change in scope highlighted and key features discussed, such as barriers. Tools such as the Route Selection Tool and the Junction Assessment Tool[13] are referred to but not used, as, at the time of writing this document, training of the authors in their use had not taken place.

12. https://bikeability.org.uk/bikeability-training/
13. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951074/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf

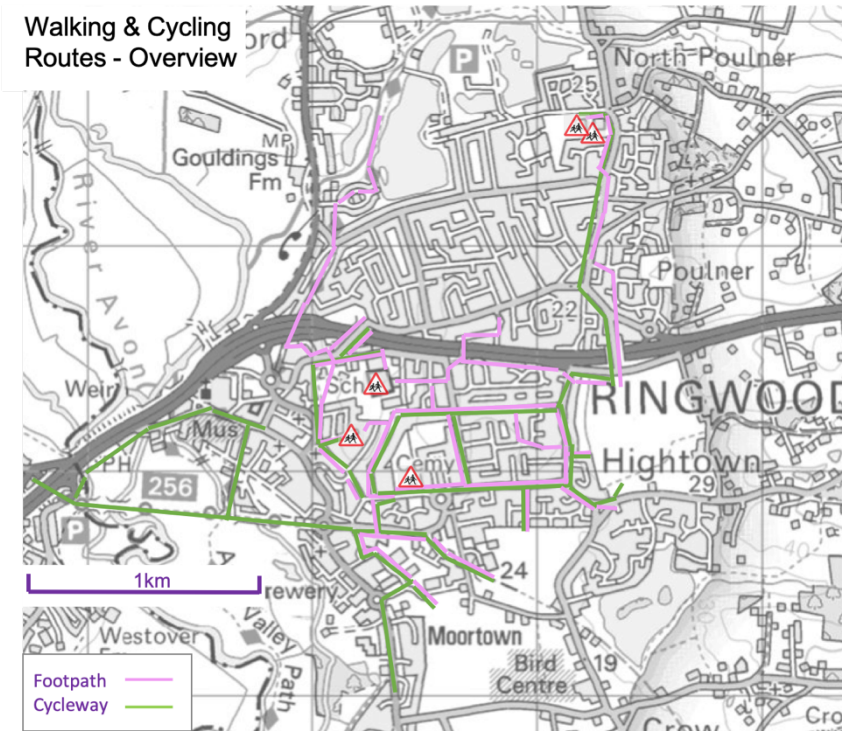
2.5 Cycling and walking routes – methodology – schools and surveys

This LCWIP document considers travel to and from schools as an indicator for travel from all residential areas to hubs. The Ringwood schools are close to and between most of the residential areas and the Town Centre - good connectivity for school travel is a prerequisite for good connectivity for utility travel to other hubs.

Engagement is also a core part of LCWIP methodology. The Town Council has not the resources to carry out a Ringwood wide survey of walking and cycling habits. However, the recently built Beaumont Park Estate of 160+ homes offered an opportunity to find out more about the travel habits of people now living there and therefore could be of relevance to the planned new estates. Annex 5 shows details and relevant findings from that survey.

Although the statutory guidance[14] suggests a child between 8 and 11 years old can walk 2 miles (or about 3 kilometres) to school, the survey results suggest that about 1 kilometre is the limit for the Ringwood area – of those households surveyed, no child walked (or cycled) the ~2 kilometres to Poulner Infants or Poulner Junior schools from the Beaumont Park estate, whereas 75% of children at Ringwood Infants and 100% of children at Ringwood Juniors regularly walk or cycle the ~1 kilometre to school. This 'one-kilometre rule' is used to identify reasonable walking routes to schools.

The map below shows many of the walking and cycling routes considered in detail in the annexes. Most of these are potential routes from residential areas to schools.



14. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/295189/Home_to_School_Transport_Consultation_Document.pdf

Apart from describing individual routes in annexes, only very general criteria have been used to rate the routes. Although the evaluators were the authors of this report, the assistance of parishioners, local walking and cycling groups is recognised and deeply appreciated by the authors. It is recognised that there is more precise methodology that the authors have not been trained to use, which may follow Core Design Principles[15].

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This chapter looks at some of the basic ideas that underpin the design process for cycle route networks. Dimensions to meet the needs of all people able to use a cycle are set out in Chapter 5 and subsequent chapters covering design elements. This chapter includes:

- The basis of designing for cyclists' needs;
- Minimising the effort required to cycle;
- Providing protection from motor traffic in different circumstances; and
- Quality assessment techniques

4.2 Core design principles

4.2.1 There are five principles which represent the core requirements for people wishing to travel by cycle or on foot. Accessibility for all is a requirement that should always be considered in relation to each of the principles. Designers should always aim to provide infrastructure that meets these principles and therefore caters for the broadest range of people. While cyclists and pedestrians share the same underlying design principles, the geometric design requirements for pedestrians and cyclists are not the same, owing to the differential in speed and mass. Geometric requirements are explored in Chapter 5.

4.2.2 When people are travelling by cycle, they need networks and routes that are:

- Coherent;
- Direct;
- Safe;
- Comfortable; and
- Attractive

4.2.3 These design principles are further described below.

Coherent

4.2.4 Cycle networks should be planned and designed to allow people to reach their day to day destinations easily, along routes that connect, are simple to navigate and are of a consistently high quality. Abrupt reductions in the quality of provision for cyclists – such as a busy high-speed roundabout without facilities – will mean that an otherwise serviceable route becomes unusable by most potential users. Sections that do not meet accessibility standards, such as steps on a cycle route, will render a whole journey inaccessible for some people.

4.2.5 Main roads are often the only direct, coherent route available to move between places, but these are usually the roads where people most fear the danger from motor vehicles. Consequently, the provision of adequately safe, attractive and comfortable facilities along these roads is crucial to creating a coherent cycling network.

4.2.6 A cycle route may vary in nature along its length, for example a signed route along a quiet street may continue as a motor traffic free route through a green space, but the connection between successive sections should be obvious. Similarly, a route through a complex junction should be clear to all road users. Direction signs, road markings and coloured surfacing in combination with physical design features can all help to provide coherence.

Direct

4.2.7 Directness is measured in both distance and time, and so routes should provide the shortest and fastest way of travelling from place to place. This includes providing facilities at junctions that minimise delay and the need to stop. Minimising the effort required to cycle, by enabling cyclists to maintain momentum, is an important aspect of directness. An indirect designated route involving extra distance or more stopping and starting will result in some cyclists choosing the most direct, faster option, even if it is less safe.

4.2.8 To make cycling an attractive alternative to driving short distances, cycle routes should be at least as direct – and preferably more direct – than those available for private motor vehicles. Permitting cyclists to make movements prohibited to motor traffic, allowing contraflow cycling, and creating links between cul-de-sacs to enable cyclists to take the shortest route, should be the default approach in traffic management schemes and new road networks. Area-wide schemes and new developments can enable filtered permeability, allowing cyclists and pedestrians to take more direct routes than motorised traffic.

Safe

4.2.9 Not only must cycle infrastructure be safe, it should also be perceived to be safe so that more people feel able to cycle.

4.2.10 Safety and environmental improvements for all road users can be achieved by reducing motor traffic volumes and speeds, for example by introducing filtered permeability or traffic calming. Reducing motor traffic may also release space to enable the construction of separate facilities for cyclists on links and at junctions.

4.2.11 On busy strategic roads where a significant reduction in traffic speeds and volumes is not appropriate, safety will need to be achieved by providing dedicated and protected space for cycling, which may involve reallocating existing space within the highway (or providing a parallel route). Reallocation will typically involve moving kerb lines and street furniture, and providing well-designed crossings and facilities at junctions where most casualties occur. The potential for conflict between pedestrians and cyclists should be minimised by keeping them separate except in low speed, low traffic environments (see Figure 4.2). Where pedestrians and cyclists share surfaces, sufficient width should be provided to enable users to feel safe by allowing them to see other users and to avoid each other when passing.

4.2.12 Cycle routes remote from roads may have other risks relating to crime and personal security. The risk of crime can be reduced through the removal of hiding places along a route, by providing frequent access points, by providing lighting, and by passive surveillance from overlooking buildings and other users.

4.2.13 Maintenance to address surface defects, overgrown vegetation, fallen leaves, snow and ice will all help to reduce the likelihood of falls and crashes for all people and preserve available width and sight lines for cyclists. Cycle parking should be sited where people using the facilities can feel safe from traffic and crime, and away from pedestrian paths.

Comfortable

4.2.14 Comfortable conditions for cycling require routes with good quality, well-maintained smooth surfaces, adequate width for the volume of users, minimal stopping and starting, avoiding steep gradients, excessive or uneven crossfall and adverse camber. The need to interact with high speed or high-volume motor traffic also decreases user comfort by increasing the level of stress and the mental effort required to cycle.

4.2.15 Adequate width is important for comfort. Cycling is a sociable activity and many people will want to cycle side by side, and to overtake another cyclist safely. It is important that cyclists can choose their own speed so that they can make comfortable progress commensurate with the amount of effort they wish to put in.

4.2.16 Designers should consider comfort for all users including children, families, older and disabled people using three or four-wheeled cycles. Families are more likely to use off-carriageway facilities. Young children may need additional space to wobble or for an accompanying parent to ride alongside.

Attractive

4.2.17 Cycling and walking provide a more sensory experience than driving. People are more directly exposed to the environment they are moving through and value attractive routes through parks, waterfront locations, and well-designed streets and squares. Cycling is a pleasurable activity, in part because it involves such close contact with the surroundings, but this also intensifies concerns about personal security and traffic danger. The attractiveness of the route will therefore affect whether users choose cycling as a means of transport.

4.2.18 The environment should be attractive, stimulating and free from litter or broken glass. The ability for people to window shop, walk or cycle two abreast, converse or stop to rest or look at a view, makes for a more pleasant experience.

4.2.19 Cycle infrastructure should help to deliver public spaces that are well designed and finished in attractive materials and be places that people want to spend time using. The surfaces, landscaping and street furniture should be well maintained and in keeping with the surrounding area. Planting in parks and rural areas should consider the aesthetic and sensory qualities that create attractive vistas and fragrances as well as practical considerations about maintenance.

For the avoidance of doubt, the authors of this document are not specialists in traffic management. Likewise, the mechanisms by which improvements to traffic infrastructure are achieved, be they to roads, pavements or cycle paths, is not our area of expertise. The purpose of this document is to point to areas where improvement is believed to be required. If suggestions are made about how such improvements could be implemented, they are just that – suggestions.

Postcard photograph of Wimborne Road, Ringwood, a tree lined road with physically separated pavement from the collection of Doug Jones - courtesy The Ringwood Meeting House.

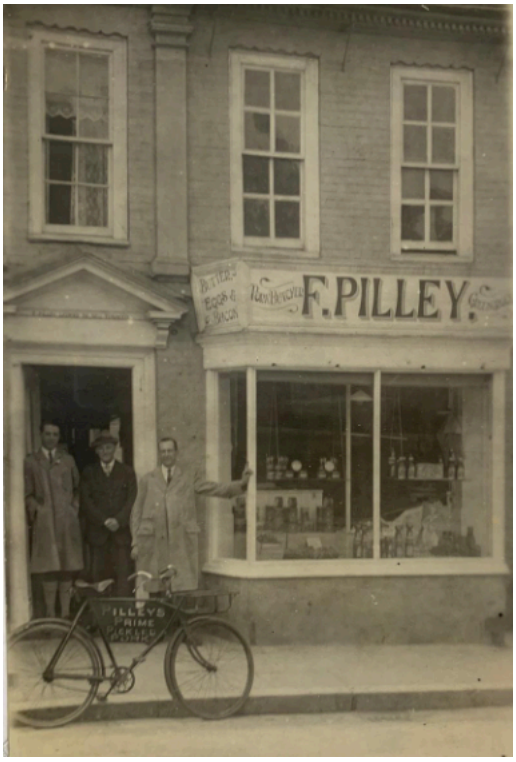
15. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/951074/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf

3. Cycling and walking routes – routes to schools - results

Before considering individual routes, there are a few general points to be made.

Firstly, consideration should be made by Hampshire County Council to impose a 20 mph speed limit across the residential areas with appropriate 'residential zone' signage on side roads, in an area bounded by North Poulner Road in the north, Moortown Lane in the south, the Avon river to the west and the New Forest National Park to the east, possibly as part of a trial in Hampshire. A 20mph speed limit is recommended in built up areas by the World Health Organisation as part of their safe systems approach to lower road traffic injuries[16] and is likely to be recommended as the national speed limit in Wales in 2023[17].

Secondly, the condition of pavements is a significant problem for people using wheelchairs, prams, rollators, etc. Particular places affecting certain routes will be addressed in the specific annexes, but a general issue is the overgrowth of vegetation from properties adjoining pavements making safe travel extremely difficult (Annex 17). Responsibility for pavements in Ringwood generally lies with Hampshire County Council.



Thirdly, on-street parking in certain places is a serious issue, especially when vehicles are partially parked on pavements, as this again restricts free movement of wheelchairs, prams, rollators, etc.

Finally, where there are identified cycleways adjacent to roads, consideration should be given to restricting parking. For example, Castleman Way where it adjoins the cycleway.

16. https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/43915/9782940395040_eng.pdf;jsessionid=336B10D43559D7653629F2A24C6EB3E7?sequence=1
17. https://gov.wales/written-statement-pilot-schemes-bring-20mph-step-closer

Photo of a delivery bike outside the F. Pilley shop – courtesy The Ringwood Meeting House.

3.1 Poulner Infants and Poulner Juniors

Annex 6 considers residential areas within one kilometre of the Poulner schools, which are all the areas to the north of the A31. In common with many other residential areas in Ringwood, some roads have footpaths on one side only. In general, the areas have reasonable porosity, although certain footpaths have issues highlighted in the annex. As an extension to the school's hub, the commercial centre at Butlers Lane and the 'corner shop' on Southampton Road are similarly easily accessible.

The plan for the Poulner schools to accommodate children from SS14 and maybe SS13, if and when housing development takes place, needs consideration. These sites are further than a kilometre from the schools and so, if the prospective residents of these sites behave in the same way as the residents of Beaumont Park, few will cycle or walk unless the routes are very appealing. For SS14, that could be achieved by the measures outlined in the annex.

3.2 Ringwood Infants, Ringwood Juniors and Ringwood Academy from Poulner

Annex 7 presents an overview of the routes to the three schools south of the A31 from areas north of the A31 and again the 'one kilometre rule' has been applied.

Annex 8 concerns walking from the Gravel Lane to Linden Gardens underpass to Ringwood Academy, Annex 9 concerns walking to both Ringwood Infant School and Ringwood Junior School.

Annexes 10 similarly considers routes to the three schools south of the A31 from the Southampton Road west flyover.

Annex 11 assesses options to the schools that are south of the A31 from the A31 footbridge.

Annexes 12 and 13 examine options for walking and cycling to the schools from Southampton Road East Flyover.

Annex 14 looks at pedestrian and cycling travel options from the Beaumont Park Estate and Lakeside.

Annex 15 considers at some assumed demand for walking or cycling routes from the proposed Strategic Site 14 to schools.

Annex 16 refers to routes to the schools from the Moortown area.

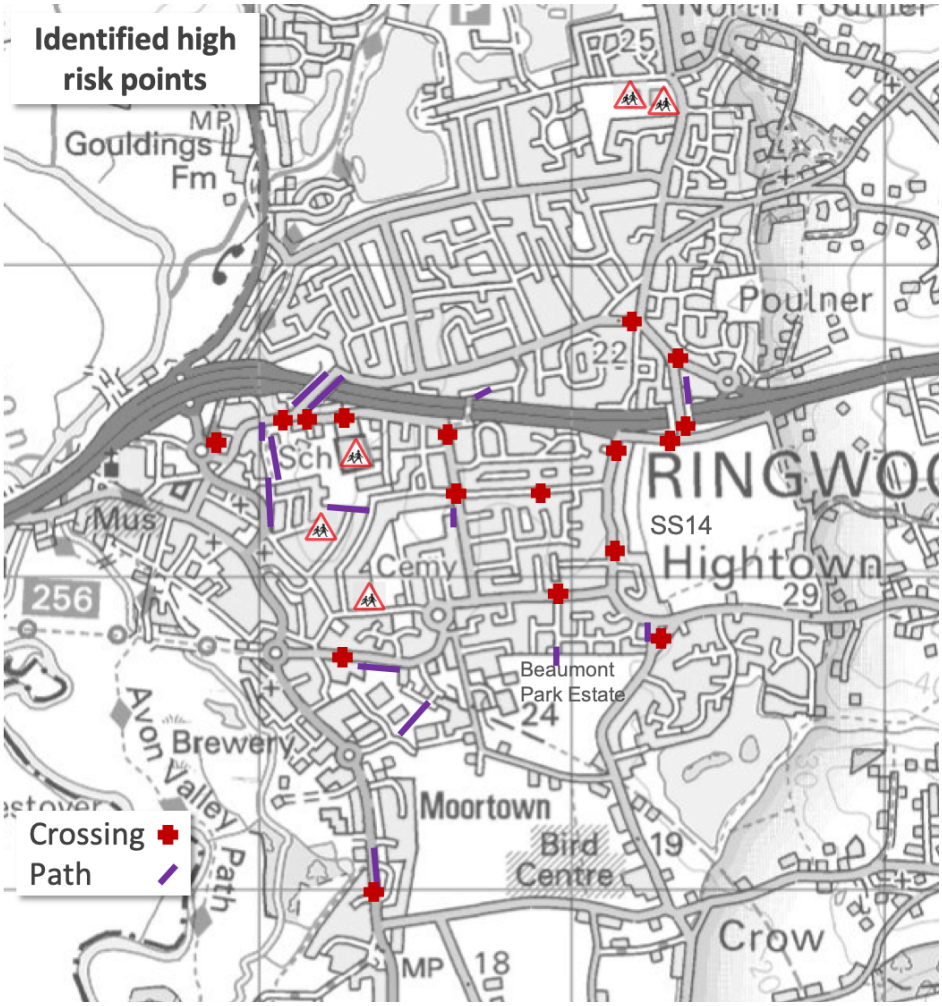
4. Conclusions so far

This document seeks to identify areas where safety for school age children could be improved and has identified potential high-risk points, such as road crossings, where changes could be beneficial to all.

In the view of the authors:

- The major barriers within the Ringwood area are through roads: the A31 (which currently has no dedicated and protected cycle crossing routes in accord with Core Design Principles[15]), Castleman Way (which would benefit from enhanced crossing points, particularly the one that connects to Victoria Gardens), Parsonage Barn Lane, Hightown Road and Eastfield Lane;
- A limitation across most residential areas are narrow roads, often with only a single pavement or even no pavement, where the national speed limits apply. Introduction of reduced speed limits and 'residential zone' signage should be considered[16, 17];
- Steps should be considered to address obstacles on pavements for wheelchair users, people pushing prams, etc., such as vehicles parked on pavements, overgrown hedges, inappropriate surface material and lack of drop-down kerbs.

The map points to the places to be considered.



Any improvement work comes at a cost that is borne, ultimately, by the taxpayer, so projects need to consider how much benefit would accrue. A Toucan crossing might cost tens of thousands of pounds to install, whereas someone working peak times with a lollypop might be more cost effective and equally effective. It is not for the authors to say what the improvements should be. However, this report does highlight where we think there are issues and give some priority to how urgent it is that these are addressed.

It is worth pointing out that the road network including pavements is a public space paid for and maintained by public money[18]. Roads are not 'owned' by car drivers but are there to be shared with all other road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and equestrian users. However, in a collision situation, those not surrounded by steel are more likely to suffer physical consequences and so making sure that the road network, including paths and cycleways, is safe for all to use is a priority.

18. https://www.loc.gov/law/help/infrastructure-funding/englandandwales.php