

Template for production of information and evidence for the Plan Document	Theme:	Access
	Subject:	Footpaths

Neighbourhood Plan Vision:

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives:

<p>For the next 20 years Higham Ferrers will be:</p> <p>A sustainable, vibrant, thriving community: <i>Strongly based on its history with an emphasis on its individuality, which encourages growth that supports its market town heritage.</i></p> <p>A community which encourages attractive, high quality development: <i>Including new housing, commercial property and community facilities within a compact market town environment.</i></p> <p>A community that is inclusive: <i>With safe access to its town centre and excellent links to adjacent housing estates, the surrounding countryside and the regional transportation network.</i></p> <p>An attractive town centre: <i>With increased vitality and activity that attracts variety of new businesses to create a thriving High Street and encourage tourism.</i></p>	<p>SERVICES: To enhance residents' quality of life by improving leisure, educational, health and environmental services</p> <p>DEVELOPMENT: To promote some housing and commercial development to meet the needs of residents and to attract visitors, thereby providing a degree of growth and employment opportunity whilst retaining the historic character of the town</p> <p>DESIGN: To conserve and enhance the town's heritage and environmental features and promote visually attractive and sustainable design in all new developments</p> <p>ACCESS: To improve transport links within the town's boundary and to the surrounding countryside; provide better parking and safer access to the town centre for residents and visitors.</p>
NOTE	
The most relevant parts of the vision and objectives for the subject are shown in red above	
The Plan aims to deliver the vision and objectives in partnership with residents, other stakeholders and all necessary statutory authorities	
The Plan must be compatible with EU obligations, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), human rights, etc	
Sustainable solutions are required for all the subjects in order to satisfy the Vision and Objectives	

Source documents:

Subject Name	Date	Originator/Author
East Northamptonshire Local Plan (saved policies only)	1996	East Northamptonshire Council (ENC)
Three Towns Plan	Sept 2006	ENC
Three Towns Preferred Options: Summary of Consultation	April 2007	ENC
North Northamptonshire Spatial Strategy	June 2008	North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit (NNJPU)
Planning Obligations Framework and Guidance	March 2011	Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)
National Planning Policy Framework	March 2012	Dept for Communities & Local Government
North Northamptonshire Interim Housing Statement	2013	NNJPU
Rushden and Higham Ferrers Masterplan	2004	Atkins Consultants
Northamptonshire Transportation Plan - Fit for Purpose	March 2012	NCC
Higham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan (HFNP) Issues Survey	June 2012	Higham Ferrers Town Council
HFNP Issues Survey - Results	Oct 2012	Higham Ferrers Town Council
Higham Ferrers Transport Study	Nov 2012	WYG Transport (Consultants)
HFNP - Community Plan	Aug 2013	HFNP Steering Group
HFNP - Public Consultation on Development Options	Sept 2013	HFNP Steering Group
HFNP - Public Consultation on Development Options - Results	Dec 2013	HFNP Steering Group

1. Brief background/history on the subject:

Describe briefly background and history of when things happened

Write the information/evidence here:

As a relatively compact town, measuring just under 2.0km from north to south (from the A45 Chowns Mill junction to the parish boundary with Rushden), Higham Ferrers can be considered to be reasonably walkable; although the number of pedestrian trips will also be heavily influenced by the standard and condition of pedestrian infrastructure as well as the number and location of accessible facilities and key destinations within the town.

Available pedestrian facilities have been considered under two main headings, urban routes (defined as pedestrian routes which are paved, street lit and generally run alongside the carriageway) and green links, which may include sections of various construction, including hard surfaced, gravelled or un-surfaced, which often run independent of any carriageway and largely provide access to green or open space areas in and around the town.

Urban provision

Most of the main roads within Higham Ferrers have continuous pedestrian provision to one or both sides of the carriageway. Whilst some sections are constrained by issues related to both available corridor width and level differences, such as the sections to the southern end of the High Street, generally the level of provision is good and provides a safe, segregated pedestrian environment.

Identified constraints such as the level differences between the carriageway and footway and the localised narrowing by the bus bay in the vicinity of the Co-op mean that the full potential for pedestrian movement in central areas of the town, where increased width pedestrian routes and circulating areas could be of value, cannot currently be realised.

Pedestrian movements are managed in a number of ways along the central corridor through the town, with a series of crossing points, both signalised and uncontrolled.

Signal controlled pedestrian facilities are provided close to the junction with Cemetery Lane to the north of the town, whilst two sets of signalled facilities are located in close proximity to each other on the High Street. These facilities consist of one crossing close to the junction with Queensway and the other located close to the junction with Wharf Road.

Green Links

There are a number of routes to the north-west of the town which allow for access through the Riverside Park and to the waterfront along the Nene Valley, these are largely un-surfaced routes. However a number of routes particularly those connecting to the new residential estates to the north of the town are incomplete or overgrown, meaning that the green network cannot be used as widely or easily as might be desirable.

The importance of maintaining or enhancing the level of access available to the green spaces surrounding Higham Ferrers was strongly reflected in the responses received to the Community Plan survey.

2. Source evidence on the subject:

- National Planning Policy Framework view or Policy on the subject
- Local Plan Policy - Core Strategy view or comments on the subject
- Any available statistics that should be considered
- Any other authoritative source, view or comments on the subject i.e. best practice or leading practitioners view
- Sustainable solutions are required across all subjects and themes

Write the information/evidence here:

Para 14 At the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking.

Para 17 The plan should support the transition to a low carbon future, contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution, make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

Para 29 Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives. The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel.

Para 35 Plans should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to:

- : accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies;
- : give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities;
- : create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians, avoiding street clutter and where appropriate establishing home zones;

North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy

Para. 3.16d Neighbourhood Connectivity – improving movement between and around local neighbourhoods or villages, particularly on foot.

Para. 3.18b Planning for accessibility, ensuring that new developments are well connected to existing towns and services and contain an appropriate mix of land-uses to minimise travel by car;

3.18c Improving travel options by public transport, cycling and walking; requiring development to be designed around easy access to these modes including the provision on new services and facilities and prioritised routes within existing urban areas;

[The connections between the rural hinterlands of North Northamptonshire and their main accessible service centre and within urban areas form their local neighbourhoods to town and district centres, will be strengthened through an emphasis on: d\) establishing improved walking and cycling networks for key local connection, with secure cycling facilities at key destinations points and interchanges.](#)

3. View of relevant authorities:

- Recommendations from any commissioned studies or reports
- Comments or responses received from relevant authorities in relation to recommended development option or if the authorities have a preference for an alternative option.

Write the information /evidence here:

Northamptonshire Transportation Plan Walking Strategy:

Walking should be the mode of choice for journeys under 1 mile, as it is the most sustainable means of transport and the one that has the least impact on the environment.

A: Walking is available to almost everyone for free, as everyday walking need not require any special equipment.

B: Walking is safe. Unless you walk in very difficult conditions, you don't need any special training. Walkers also pose less of a danger to other people than users of mechanical modes of transport.

C: People in cars regularly suffer three times as much pollution than pedestrians because they are sitting in the line of the exhaust fumes from the car in front.

Walking is very important as a mode of transport, especially over short distances and for accessing public transport.

- a) 25% of all journeys in Great Britain are made entirely on foot.
- b) 78% of journeys under 1 mile (1.6km) are made entirely on foot.
- c) In addition to journeys entirely on foot, the average British adult makes 78 journeys per year combining walking with public transport, 42% of these are mainly by bus (DfT 2003).
- d) The most popular reason for walking is to go shopping (23%), followed by personal business or accompanying another person (21%) and leisure or social purposes (20%) (DfT 2003).

However, walking is in decline overall.

- 1) In the ten years to 2003, the number of walking trips fell by 20% (National Statistics 2004)
- 2) Total distance walked per person per year fell from 390km/244 miles to 302km/189 miles between 1986 and 2001.

Walking to school

- a) 79% of primary school students live within walking distance (less than 2 miles/3.2km) of school, but only 54% of children walk to school (DfT 2003).
- b) Walking to school has health, educational and social development benefits for children; it improves their sense of independence and confidence and could help tackle the growing problem of childhood obesity as well as combating the congestion of the school run.
- c) At its peak around 08:50 on schooldays, the school run accounts for 17% of traffic in urban areas.

–The Walking Strategy will contribute towards delivery of the Objectives for the Northamptonshire Transportation Plan (2012) whilst helping to achieve the following objectives for walking within Northamptonshire;

Objective 1

Provide pedestrians with safe and direct routes to local services, facilities and workplaces.

Objective 2

Improve the quality and attractiveness of the pedestrian environment by removing barriers and obstacles to minimise route severance and enable uninhibited movement of pedestrians.

Objective 3

Reduce pedestrian road casualties and make walkers feel safer and more secure.

Objective 4

Improve accessibility to the transport system in order to promote a fairer, more inclusive society while ensuring new developments, and ensure all transport and highways schemes adequately cater for pedestrians and mobility impaired people.

Objective 5

Provide suitable promotional and marketing of the benefits for health, the economy, the environment and communities of walking, while improving opportunities for recreational walking across the county.

4. Community views about the subject:

- Original questionnaire view
- Community Plan action
- Feedback from latest questionnaire
- Any other comments, feedback or concerns received

Write the information/evidence here:

Community Plan action (Town Centre Access)

j) Complete pedestrian/cyclist links to enable safe segregated access to town centre facilities and schools from housing areas.

Community Plan action (Kimbolton Road/Windmill Banks)

c) Link the Greenway to the northern and eastern access routes to the countryside.

Community Plan action (Connections with Kings Meadow)

b) Upgrade the pedestrian/cyclist link to Riverside Park and Stanwick Lakes.

c) Improve access across the A45.

d) Provide a controlled pedestrian crossing at North End/Station Road.

Community Plan action (Future Proofing for Town Development)

b) Ensure new developments include effective public transport and pedestrian/cyclist links.

5. **Draft Policies:** These should flow from the vision and relevant objectives to ensure that development will respond satisfactorily to them. They need to relate to both National and Local Planning Policy and take account of the latest views of relevant authorities and the views of the Community.

N.B. The Policies from other Neighbourhood Plans that have similar issues could be helpful.

James Wilson will write the policies but it would be good to indicate the policy area that you think should come out of the information/evidence that you have found.

Indicate the policy area here:

This policy will concentrate on allowing ALL easy access to all areas, to promote walking as the preferred option. The Green Route should be extended along into Wood Street and on to Kimbolton Road. The Duchy development will need a walking and cycling link to the Green Route and not be left isolated with the only route out onto the A6. Where it is feasible footpaths should be widened to a minimum of 1.5m within the High Street / College Street / Market Square area.