

HGGT

HARLOW & GILSTON
GARDEN TOWN

Harlow and Gilston Garden Town

Transport Strategy

Consultation Report

February 2021



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Executive Summary

The HGGT Transport Strategy was initially approved for consultation in January 2019. Due to a number of reasons there have been several delays to the process. The Strategy has undergone two rounds of consultation where feedback was taken through a number of various engagement activities. Quantitative as well as qualitative data was collected, analysed and used to inform changes to the document in several areas. This data and key changes are summarised below.

Quantitative survey data

Objectives - Both rounds	Support	Don't know	Oppose
Objective 1 – 50% and 60% mode shift targets	58%	8%	34%
Objective 2 – User hierarchy	49%	10%	41%
Objective 3 – Supporting a culture of sustainable travel	79%	7%	15%
Actions - Both rounds	Support	Don't know	Oppose
Action 1 - Reducing the need to travel	66%	3%	31%
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Action 6 - Public transport	89%	1%	10%
Action 7 - Road based travel	73%	7%	20%
Action 8 - Anticipating change	76%	13%	11%

Qualitative survey data

Comment	Changes
Too long	Public facing summary section, consolidation, re-formatting
Too much jargon	Jargon reduced, glossary included, hover boxes included
More detail on:	
Accessibility, disability and inclusion	Included as a principle, incorporated throughout
Funding	Section on funding now included
Phasing	Section on phasing now included
Links with rural communities and villages	Greater detail on DRT, onward connections, links to recreational routes and electric bikes.
Justification of objectives and how they will be met	Expanded justification of Objective and how to achieve this
Impact of measures on networks and existing communities	Greater clarity of impact on network and benefits to existing communities
How people will change behaviours	Detail on behaviour change and measures that benefit communities and individuals
Current bus service/infrastructure improvements	Further detail on improvements to current bus provision
Rail service/infrastructure improvements	Further detail on improvements to current rail provision
Disincentives for driving/parking	Clarity on demand management measures and Parking Strategy

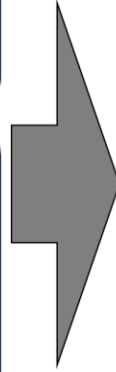
PREVIOUS VERSION

Objectives

1. 50% and 60% mode shift targets
2. Transport Hierarchy
3. Encouraging a culture of active and sustainable travel

Actions

1. Reducing the need to travel
2. Making better use of existing infrastructure
3. Supporting and encouraging a culture of active and sustainable travel
4. Sustainable Transport Corridors
5. Supporting walking and cycling
6. Public transport
7. Infrastructure for road based travel
8. Anticipating change



UPDATED VERSION

Objective

1. 50% and 60% mode shift targets

Principles

1. Transport Hierarchy
2. Encouraging a culture of active and sustainable travel
3. Accessibility and Inclusion

Actions

1. Enabling Choice (A1, A2, A8)
2. Streets for People (A3, A5)
3. Quality Public Transport (A6)
4. A Network that Works (A4, A7)
5. Maximising Opportunities (A8)

The changes made to the high level Objectives and Actions in the Transport Strategy.

Introduction

The HGGT Transport Strategy was prepared to help deliver the HGGT Vision and the challenges of future travel demand linked to planned growth through sustainable and active travel. The Strategy acknowledges that continued reliance on high levels of single occupancy car use is unsustainable and outlines an alternative way forward for a healthier, more pleasant and more efficient transport network.

Timeline and approach

The Strategy document, initially published in January 2019, was approved by the partner councils at Harlow, Epping Forest and East Herts who make up the three authorities delivering the Garden Town development alongside Essex County Council and Hertfordshire County Council.

Pre-election restrictions around the 2019 Local and General Elections saw the Garden Town Transport Strategy public consultation go live in January 2020 with a six-week engagement period that allowed feedback throughout.

Results from this consultation period revealed a lack of engagement with specific groups (young people, businesses, charities and other local organisations) and also more broadly with a lower number of responses than expected. Due to this a further round of consultation took place in late 2020 to address these shortfalls.

Comments received during both rounds of consultation were reviewed in early 2021 and the Strategy adapted accordingly. The Strategy will be taken to the Garden Town Board in summer 2021 due to the May local elections Purdah.

Through ongoing work and the planning applications that have been received, we are now moving ahead to establish the full detail of transport proposals. This is supported by the announcement of £172 million housing investment grant for Harlow and Gilston Garden Town which will be used to forward fund transport infrastructure.

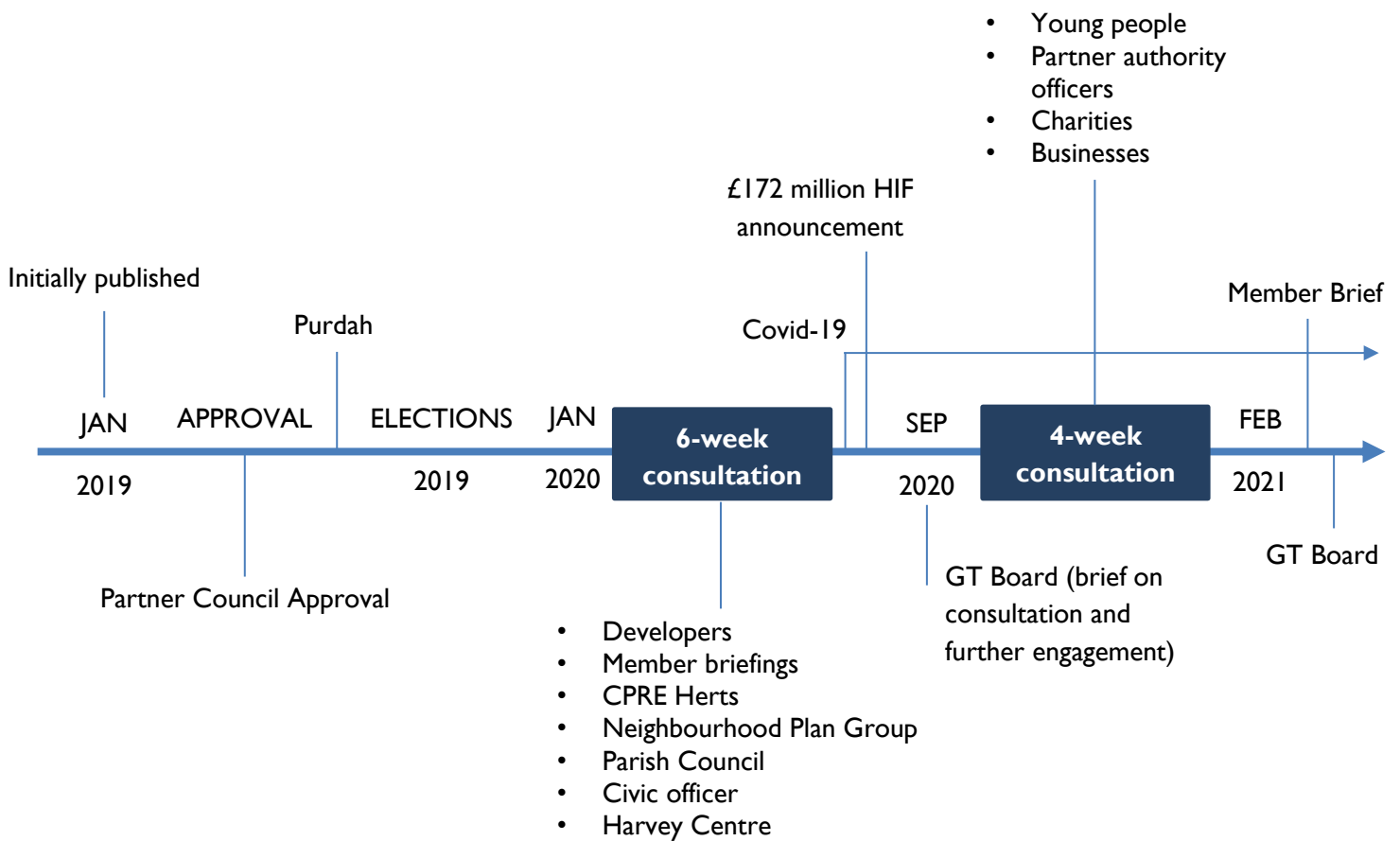


Figure 1. Consultation timeline

Methods of engagement

Public displays

During the first round of consultation HGGT held a number of public displays and stands to answer questions, build momentum and engage with local residents – this was impossible during the second round due to Covid-19 restrictions. We engaged the public through a combination of presentations, pop-up displays, printed promotional material and HGGT/partner Officers speaking with residents (see Figure 2 below). Events included:

- HGGT were present at each of the District Councils;
- Displays at the Harvey Centre and Civic Offices;
- Unmanned displays across the districts;
- Village Hall events.
- Stalls at Harlow College

During these events almost 500 leaflets were handed out, with over 250 leaflets handed out in the Harvey Centre alone.



Figure 2. HGGT Transport Strategy public consultation events.

Social media

Social media was utilised in both rounds of consultation, however, the HGGT social media accounts were relatively new in the first consultation and didn't have the reach or established user base they do at present. A lot of work was given over to growing the efficacy of the social media accounts between the two rounds of consultation.

During the first round of consultation social media was used primarily to promote events and information. During the Harvey Centre engagement day, the announcements on Twitter earned 3,455 impressions and the display day announcement at EFDC earned 1,982 impressions.

During the second round of consultation social media was again used to promote content but was also used to conduct a series of polls (a feature built into Twitter – see Figure 3) to encourage broader engagement. The polls themselves were successful at engaging local audiences with over 1,000 votes, over 2,300 interactions (clicking on links etc.) and over 38,500 views across the 8 polls. A key function of the polls was to direct users towards the full survey and this proved a successful feature. The polls also allowed for comments on each one which generated a good amount of feedback.



Figure 3. Example Twitter poll.

Surveys

During both rounds of consultation a survey was created to collect stakeholder feedback on the Strategy. This held a number of questions on the key elements of the Strategy – Objectives and Actions – alongside attitudinal questions.

In the first round of consultation stakeholders were able to respond to the survey through social media and website links, and paper copies. In the second round there was only a digital version available. The survey content was changed slightly in the second consultation with attitudinal questions on travel broadly removed to make a more concise and approachable survey. The key questions relating to the Strategy content were retained however.

The online survey platform was also changed for the second consultation to a more engaging and user-friendly platform (see comparison in Figure 4). This proved a success with survey responses almost doubling.

3. To what extent do you support the following objectives for mobility in the Garden Town? (see p.10-11 in the Strategy)

	Strongly support	Support	Don't Know	Do not support	Strongly oppose
1. Achieving a target where 60% of all journeys within new Garden Town Communities, and 50% across Harlow, will be sustainable choices.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Prioritising the transport hierarchy: Reducing the need to travel; Walking and cycling; Public transport; Private vehicles	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Supporting and encouraging a culture of active and sustainable travel.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Additional comments

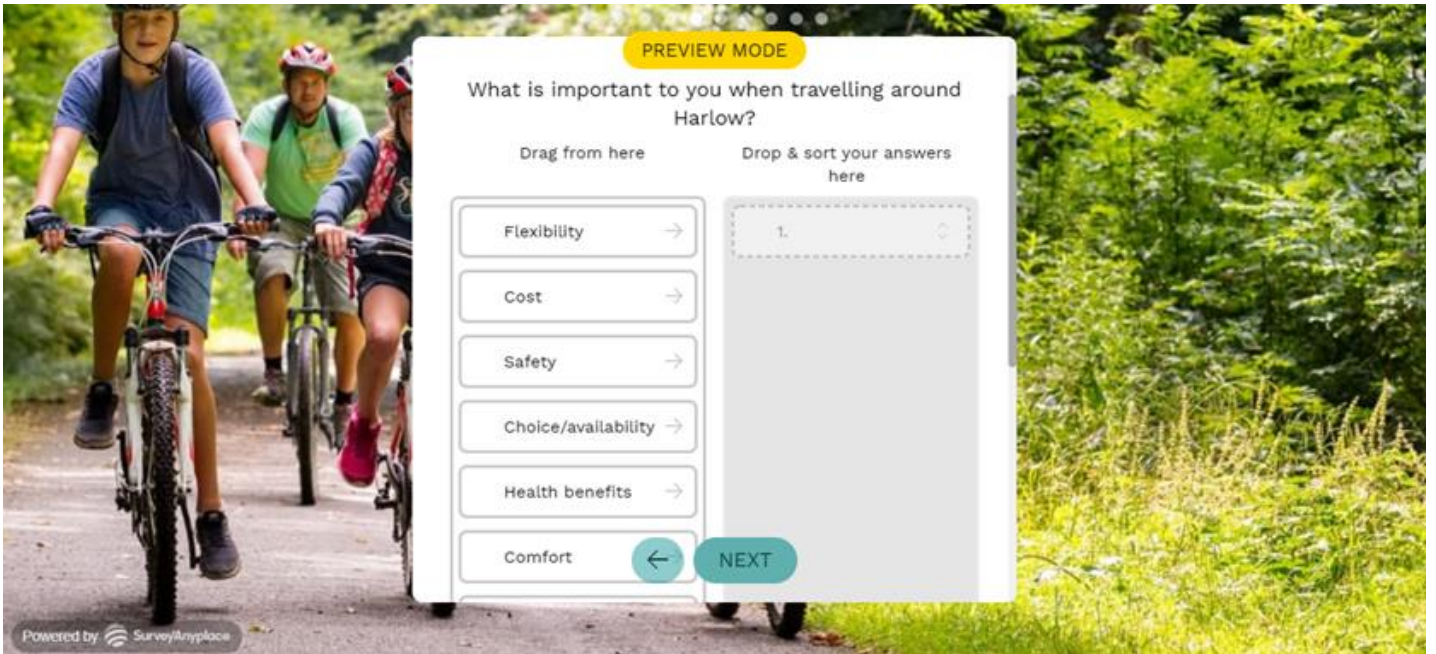


Figure 4. Comparison of the survey platforms used in the first round of consultation (top) and the second round (bottom).

Website page

A dedicated HGGT Transport Strategy consultation website page was established. This hosted the survey link, key documents such as the Strategy itself and supporting evidence, and further information. There were over 1,300 visitors to this webpage, predominantly in the first consultation when the website was more central to the communications.

Focused workshops

For the second round of consultation a series of workshops were organised to target the groups that were unrepresented in the first round. These proved successful at engaging with specific stakeholders and provoked interesting comments and feedback.

Internal workshops were organised with Officers from the five partner authorities. These workshops focused on specific topics and Actions within the Transport Strategy: public transport, road management, planning and technology, and active travel. Continued engagement with Officers has been held through the HGGT Sustainable Mobility Workstream.

External workshops looked at the Strategy more broadly with a focus on the Objectives and Actions. Feedback was gathered through polling and discussions but stakeholders were also signposted to the main survey for further comment. There was a total of 137 attendances at these sessions. Workshops were held with:

- Harlow College
- EFDC Youth Council
- HDC Youth Council
- Harlow Growth Board
- Local charities and third sector
- Local businesses

Members

Members were specifically engaged through a series of briefings detailing progress at various stages and with summary leaflets distributed to each individual. Feedback and comments were received and the Strategy was updated accordingly.

Survey Results

Survey responses

The second consultation was significant in increasing both the survey responses and general comments, roughly doubling both in a far shorter and more limited consultation.

Responses	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Survey respondents	81	73	154

Demographic data

A variety of demographic data sets were collected via the survey. The second consultation had a big impact on increasing the proportion of responses from young people and those in education which was a key focus for this consultation. However, there was a lack of responses from those aged over 75. Whilst

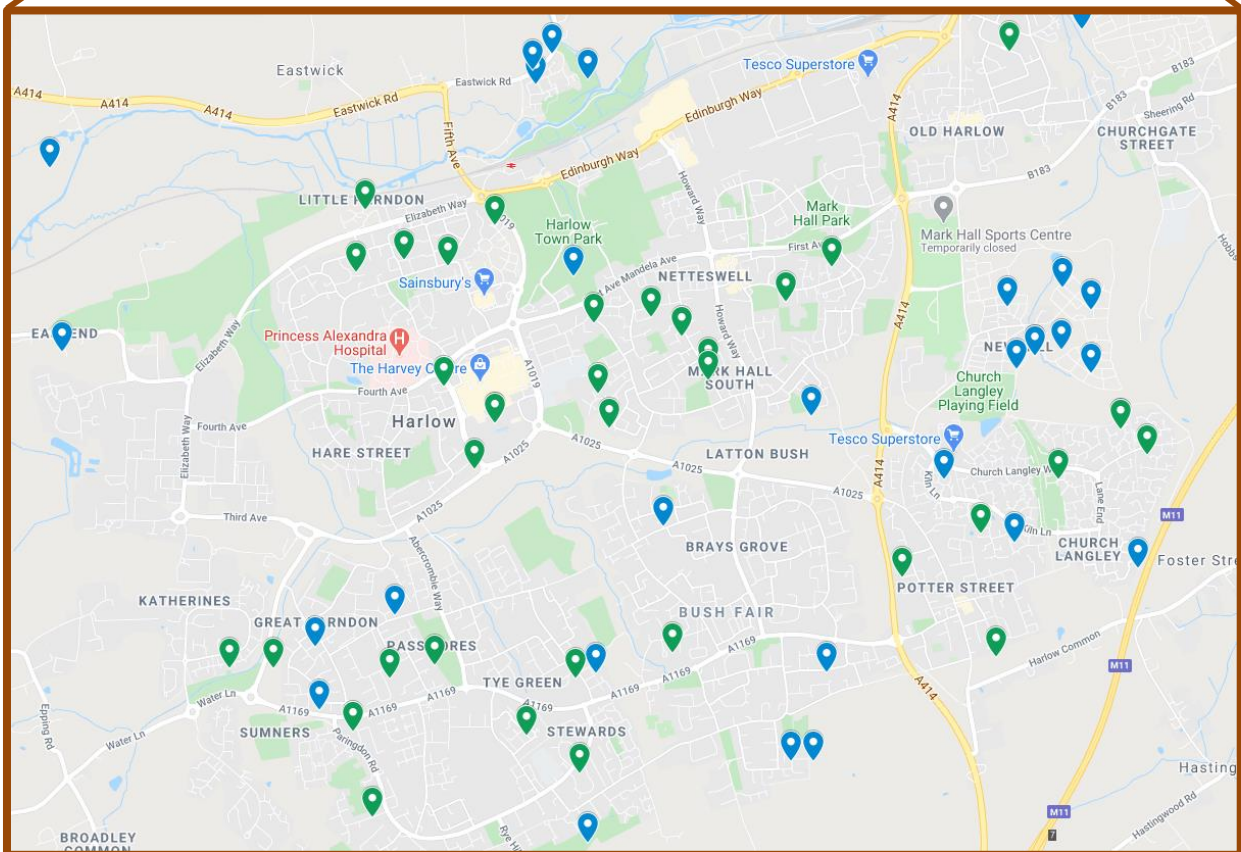
it was difficult to address this in the second consultation due to Covid-19 restrictions, it is a lesson learnt for future consultations.

Demographic data - Age	Round 1	Round 2	Total
24 and under	0%	25%	10%
25-34	6%	9%	8%
35-44	14%	42%	25%
45-54	29%	4%	18%
55-64	26%	15%	22%
65-74	22%	6%	15%
75 or older	3%	0%	2%
Demographic data - Employment status	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Employed	66%	71%	65%
Education	0%	13%	6%
Not working	1%	7%	8%
Retired	33%	6%	20%

Response locations

Overall there was a satisfactory spread of location data across Harlow and the surrounding communities. However, this differed noticeably between the first consultation and the second with the former eliciting responses from nearby settlements and the peripheries of Harlow in comparison to the second consultation which returned responses predominantly within the Harlow town area.

Blue pins – first consultation.
Green pins – second consultation



Objectives

The survey highlighted strong support for the Objectives as seen in the table below. There was overwhelming support for the mode shift targets and for supporting and encouraging a culture of active and sustainable travel. There was still majority support for the user hierarchy but this was not as clear as the other two objectives. However, as examined in the comments section below, this may well have been down to confusion and misunderstanding.

Objectives - Both rounds	Support	Don't know	Oppose
Objective 1 – 50% and 60% mode shift targets	58%	8%	34%
Objective 2 – User hierarchy	49%	10%	41%
Objective 3 – Supporting a culture of sustainable travel	79%	7%	15%

Actions

Similarly, to the Objectives, there was strong support for the Actions and again this was focused around active travel – Actions 3 and 5 – but the strongest support was with the action over public transport.

Actions - Both rounds	Support	Don't know	Oppose
Action 1 - Reducing the need to travel	66%	3%	31%
Action 2 - Making better use of existing infrastructure	76%	2%	21%
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Comments and feedback

The consultation allowed numerous opportunities for the wide range of stakeholder engaged to feed comments back. These comments were predominantly gathered through the survey but also at workshops and events. The second round of consultation, despite being smaller in scope, returned far more unique responses, in part due to the efficacy of the survey and social media.

All comments were inputted into a Comments Tracker and addressed individually. The key questions and comments, and how these have been addressed, have been summarised in the You Said, We Did document appended to the Transport Strategy.

It should be noted that received was feedback from the following respondents:

- Vectos on behalf of Places for People
- Hunsdon, Eastwick and Gilston Neighbourhood Plan Group
- CPRE Herts
- Roydon Parish Council
- Harlow College
- HDC and EFDC Youth Councils

Responses	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Unique comments	394	509	903

Responses

The following sections have consolidated all the comments received to draw out the key themes. Where comments were repeated almost verbatim, it has been noted and only one summary quote has been included. Quotes have only been edited insofar as to change spelling errors and should otherwise be accurately transcribed from the online and paper surveys. Where a significant amendment was made by the author of this report in a quote, corrective braces have been used, or left as is, followed by [sic].

This has aimed to provide as neutral a platform to present the feedback without bias. All respondents have been anonymised and have been treated equally. Some comments were broadly offering an observation or noting a point, and they have been included as useful background information. Where a comment offered a suggestion for additions or revisions to the Strategy, they have been included in **RED** text.

The below table outlines the frequent/key questions and comments and how they have been addressed.

Comment	Changes
Too long	Public facing summary section, consolidation, re-formatting
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Overall comment

It was expressed a number of times that an overall transport Strategy including all modes of transport, public and private, is very welcome.

The plan for transformative growth in and around Harlow has been in public awareness for many years, and local residents have consistently raised the issue of travel infrastructure as something that needs to be addressed. **Therefore, consultation responses unanimously called for proactive transport provision ‘in sufficient time and at a sufficient level’ to support planned development and address existing barriers to reliable active and sustainable travel.**

Consultation process

There were a number of comments regarding the consultation process, notably that the surgeries were predominantly geared towards HGGT, rather than the outlying villages and towns who would also be impacted by the proposed actions.

There was disappointment expressed around the level of community engagement, and the means of information dissemination. Respondents noted a lack of notices in shops and across the town, rather hearing about the sessions via word of mouth, on Facebook and through local charities. The on-line material prompted some to believe there was a lean towards younger residents, and others felt that the process didn't allow respondents to raise their concerns properly, and key messages were obscured by vague 'political jargon'. This only served to reiterate the feeling that, *'The proposals are clearly based on facilitating private housing developers - much of it really only of benefit residents in the new homes.'*

This has been noted and will help inform future consultation processes for the Garden Town and the relevant Local Authorities, where meaningful and constructive engagement will be a priority.

Strategy timing

A number of residents, notably HEGNPG, enquired why this proposal is coming at this time, dated January 2019 but only being consulted on 12 months later. There was a feeling that as a Strategy document is now too late, coming 12 months behind the main planning applications, and referencing other relatively old documents like the 2016 Anglia Corridor Study.

The transport initiatives are being proposed after major land use planning decisions permitting large releases of open countryside and Green Belt around Harlow have been approved, which was not for this consultation to address.

Maps and diagrams

A number of comments received noted that few detailed plans featured in the Strategy, instead just 'vague arrows on a drawing of the town', which didn't allow them to understand how new plans will directly affect them.

Maps were criticised as being unclear – *'mixing high-level proposals in the text with specific propositions in the diagram'* and didn't have *'roads marked out'*. It was also deemed *'potentially misleading'*, since it indicates that only some of the Gilston villages will need to deliver a Sustainable Transport Corridor, limited cycle provision and no links to the three Harlow area rail stations (for example *'a cycle link from Water Lane to Roydon and East of Harlow to Harlow Mill'*).

A *'current situation diagram and a strategic transport diagram would be clearer and preferable'*, which also addresses *'essential strategic requirements in new developments and the identification of current issues that development should seek to improve'* while *'setting the principles for future mobility across the wider area'*.

Similarly, the anecdotal evidence of high car modal share, etc. in the Challenges and Opportunities section *'should be integrated with a more complete presentation of the challenges faced today'* through *'strategic diagrams of current and expected future transport by all modes'*.

Policy context

A concern raised was that *'the plan appears to lack references to all updated national and regional transport policy'*. This could be further strengthened with further reference to HGGT's Vision as a significant component within *'the wider Strategy or plans for the whole of Essex/Herts particularly in relation to the A414 corridor'*, and *'the M11 growth corridor'*.

Governance

It was acknowledged that the key challenges for the success of this Strategy and its ambitious targets will be getting funding in advance of developments and to ensure delivery across all local authorities and developers 'through adequate resources and long-term programmes'.

Respondents requested more clarity on the particular roles of developers and the transport authorities, noting that, 'some measures such as parking levies, town wide cycle hire schemes etc. can only be taken forward by the local authorities and County Councils'.

Recent transport projects that were apparently poorly delivered, caused significant disruption and took far too long were used to call for a competent delivery authority for HGGT. There is no fallback position outlined in the Strategy if the developers do not comply. The Garden Town Board have no means of enforcement as they are not a statutory planning authority or a 'development corporation' with significant powers. *For some, a unified tier of transport planning for HGGT would be preferred to deliver the Strategy rather than provision by five different authorities, two whom plan transport and three of whom are responsible for land use planning. A valuable suggestion was for the Strategy to assess critical success factors, risks or alternative strategies, if for example the proposed bid for funding is not successful or if the owners of the site are resisting contributing to the infrastructure.*

Respondents suggested that developers must provide a clear approach for the prioritisation of infrastructure and specific actions for the proactive promotion of sustainable travel at the point of outline applications. *New developments should be required to link up to the wider network, in Harlow and beyond, and connect new key destinations with clear cycle and pedestrian priority networks plans, as part of the Parameter Plans and transport assessments. Similarly, 'funding towards sustainable modes should be a condition for all planning consents.'* A standard approach to transportation (*'vague commitments to bus provision, contributions towards off site cycle route whose deliverability is unconfirmed etc.'*) should be discouraged in HGGT as it is *'clearly incompatible with the delivery of substantial sustainable transport infrastructure'*.

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan and viability assessments are the point of reference for more detailed and specific expectations from developers.

Costings

It was acknowledged that *'to achieve modal shift will take monitoring, significant resources and commitments for spending on walking and cycling infrastructure'*. As such, residents wanted a better understanding of the financial implications and funding priorities to demonstrate how this Strategy will be achieved. It was questioned whether *'the officer teams and budgets (will) be provided to ensure the Strategy is followed through over the long term?'*

Several respondents suggested ways of providing other income streams to support enhanced public transport investment and STCs, such as road user pricing, localised congestion charging, or reprioritised from road schemes. For example, *'how much better would it have been for funds to be directed towards sustainable travel instead [of the new M11 junction 7a (£71m)]. This junction can be expected to increase the amount of traffic in town... The highway spending seems completely at odds with the aspirations of the HGGT Transport Strategy.'* Additionally, *'research has suggested an average spend at local government of only £2 - £6 per person on active travel when Sustrans is calling for 5% of highways budgets, rising to 10%, to be for walking and cycling. This would equate to £17 - £34 per person or an annual budget for Harlow alone of £1.45 to £2.9 million. The sums not only increase people's choices; they... will also pay for themselves as improvements in personal health reduce demands on Health Services and improve Work productivity.'*

Land use planning

The impact of these plans on the landscape appeared a number of times in the responses to the survey, because it is perceived that the *'Gilston Villages sprawl across wide areas of Green Belt and in their location and layout do not lend themselves to being well served by efficient public transport routes'*. However, *there is potential for 'the increased economic opportunity and potential of the town centre and other sites for improved use with the enhanced transport accessibility.'*

It was suggested this could be mitigated if there was *'a different form of land ownership for the Garden Town expansion'*. *'This would have encouraged brownfield land reuse, urban regeneration, place-making and reduced congestion and carbon emissions, would make the existing hospital site and town centre far better connected for public transport use increasing options to flexibly redevelop existing car parking and for the hospital to remain in its current central location'*. *Therefore, 'Land use planning and sustainable transport must be integrated and planned together'*.

There is fear the proposal, *'destroys Harlow's green belt, drives wedges across green spaces in the town, destroys allotments'*. There are *'concerns about the N-S transport corridor using the green wedge as a route. This needs careful thought and execution and must not have any car use or other developments.'* However, constructive feedback included the suggestion to *'Protect pedestrians from air pollution by planting hedgerows between pavements and busy roads', 'Include pocket parks in as many locations as possible that include trees', 'plant low level bee friendly plants and mow minimally' on roundabouts, and 'plant wildflowers', 'low level hedges, or flowerbeds with bee friendly planting' on verges.*

Geography

For some, it was felt that *'the proposal is very short-sighted for Harlow only and nowhere else'*, it *'fails to view the town in the context of its surrounding environment, population and infrastructure.'* This sense of limited relevance to communities outside the bounds of the Garden Town was repeated again and again. *'You seem to present Harlow & Gilston Town as a self sufficient area with no need to consider its impact on the surrounding area.'*

The Strategy was deemed to have a *'Total ignorance of villages like Nazeing, Sheering & Roydon'*, and *'only passing reference to links to neighbouring settlements such as Epping (tube station).'* There are *'No transport proposals to travel north of HGGT and proposed villages. People will also want to travel to Bishop's Stortford and surrounding villages.'* A repeated concern is that *'Living in Hunsdon you have to travel by car as the buses are practically non-existent', 'and the rural roads are used as rat-runs.'*

The Strategy must address this lack of a sense of ownership of the plans: 'You may have created an idyllic travel plan within your garden city, but you certainly have not considered any issues at all once they leave the confines of Harlow and Gilston Town!' 'There has to be a Strategy that looks at mitigating the impact of the existing non-Harlow generated traffic as well. Harlow is not an island!!!'

Therefore 'the focus needs to be on transport links across all areas of the Town and to surrounding towns.' *'Drawing a red line around the Garden Town is restricting the Strategy to policy guidance on new development only.'* Additionally, the wider impact on Harlow could be mitigated if the Strategy did *'extend ideas and options to the travel to/from Harlow area to reduce peak traffic inflows and outflows.'*

From the extensive feedback received, it seems necessary to *'include a comprehensive approach for the existing villages surrounding the main urban area of Harlow and to put forward proposals to improve the modal share of these communities.'* Additionally, it is important to mention key trip attractors such as Stansted, which is *'expanding as an airport serving London but with almost no transport improvements'*, and *'important features within Harlow e.g. SSSI at Eastwick', and 'Access to Harlowbury Chapel.'*

Challenges and opportunities

Many of the comments received were along the lines of the following: *'Be realistic and... recognise that there is a significant proportion of journeys which will always be made by car, as no sensible public transport alternative exists.'* Therefore, the following section has grouped comments related to barriers to walking, cycling and sustainable transport according to travel patterns and demographics. *This might help the Strategy tailor itself to the existing context and address the challenges we are likely to face with regards to behaviour change.*

Specifically, 'text referring to 'trials' (2.14), potential for Mobility as a Service, walking for health appears to imply that these are mere desirables, rather than essential for daily movement. The whole section should be strengthened.'

Commuting

Some respondents felt the Strategy *'fail[ed] to address the very real requirements for people to get to work, with a poor infrastructure being in place.'* *'It doesn't address or incorporate measures to accommodate the massive influx of commuters in the mornings or their exit in the evenings.'* Again this *'daily challenge'* is because, *'Unreliable public transport makes it impossible to get to the station at a time for me to get the morning train into work and the evening train home'*, and is *'impractical for child care and quality of life.'*

The Strategy needs to include 'Support by survey data on how people will travel to work.' Particularly since *'The DWP requires job searchers to travel 90 mins to a place of work.'* Additionally, echoing the proposed transport hierarchy, *'this will only work if business allows people to work from home or remotely. the knock-on effect... would be the smaller need for larger office space in the town.'*

Elderly/mobility impaired

Some respondents felt the Strategy *'does not meet the need of our ageing population.'* *The 'ageing demographic needs better connectivity to key parts of the town'*

Public transport is key to providing for people with mobility restrictions, including designing them with *'no high steps'*: *'The bus service is a vital resource for the elderly.'* Buses can also provide additional connection with other people: *'There is a community bus from Churchgate street which provides real fellowship for those who use it - an added bonus that is so important for the elderly.'* *It was also noted that, 'Better road transport is needed in order to support those with caring requirements who have a need to make multiple journeys in one day.'*

The Strategy needs to make it clear that it understands that *'many individuals face physical constraints on their capacity to use such active modes.'* *'The elderly generation do not cycle & walk long distances. By significantly reducing available parking you will reduce their access to shops etc. They will be "driven" to surrounding communities which remain car friendly. Another "nail" in the High St.'* As such, how do we cater generously for those that *'rely heavily on public transport, have walkers, also lots of mobile scooters are used.'* Additionally, *'Many elderly people do not own expensive mobile phones, so 'apps' are of no use.'* *It is an imperative that HGGT is 'providing for the increasingly elderly population and for disabled people to travel within the town who cannot physically use public transport or cycle or afford taxis.'* One suggestion was for *'Special facilities and exceptions /permits for disabled commuters.'*

Shopping

'Apart from residents needing to travel out of town it seems that most people travel to Harlow for the hospital, the leisure centre, but mostly shopping.' *Therefore, it's important to 'Invest in Harlow's local shopping facilities and promote them as convenient local choices.'*

However, a common concern raised was that *'There has been no obvious consideration for what will replace the car to do the weekly supermarket shop when several heavy bags of shopping need to be transported to home with as little extra effort and cost as possible (bus or taxi would not be an attractive option)'*, *'People can't carry a*

weekly shop or anything other than light items on public transport and taxis, paying for delivery is costly.' Similarly, 'Cycling and walking is not so appropriate for shopping and the buses don't go around the shops.' **HGGT must prioritise social equity, and therefore identify if there will be 'assistance for people shopping at the major supermarkets with heavy bags full of shopping, to and from the buses?'**

School

A number of questions were raised along the lines of: 'How will you prevent parents from running their children to school in a car? School allocations are not necessarily made with transport for the children in mind', School runs were deemed 'a major cause of bottle-necks and especially when the weather is bad.' **In response, suggestions included 'School bus routes', and 'Get school runs off the road and make them accessible for walking/cycling or provide suitable safe transport.'**

The delivery of school is particularly critical since 'families will need to travel outside the area to secondary schools until more schools are built later in the development phase.' It was noted that there are 'already oversubscribed schools in Sawbridgeworth and Bishops Stortford and the villages.'

Leisure

Since 'the town is not just about people getting to work or visiting the shops', it is important the Strategy addresses leisure travel. For some, 'Most... leisure is London based', but others, it will be encouraged more locally. HGGT could learn from the existing 'Community Transport bus', however on occasion, 'it costs £8 return journey which added to my exercise fee is too expensive.'

Servicing/deliveries

'There are numerous people who travel for their employment and need a van or car to transport their goods e.g. Builders, engineers, visiting Salespersons, health professionals etc.' Some respondents felt that the Strategy had 'little regard to deliveries and increasing road usage by van and lorries.' **Since 'this had multiplied in recent years and continues to expand', and 'home delivery by supermarkets involves a much greater journey length in a larger and more polluting vehicle (probably diesel)', this must be addressed in the Strategy.**

Hospital

Pertinent questions regarding essential travel to the hospital and medical centres must be addressed. For example: 'Will you be making the elderly and the ill ride bicycles to the hospital?' And 'With 3,500 staff and 100,000 patients a year how does locating the hospital to a less well connected site on the eastern fringe of town accord with the transport hierarchy and reduce the need to travel? How does it reduce carbon emissions or help staff and visitors to easily reach the hospital?' 'The positioning of the new hospital means there will be many more journeys by public transport and or cars.'

Objectives

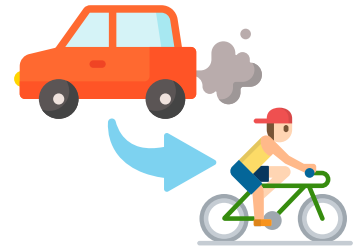
The Transport Strategy Objectives



Nearly 80% of people would like more support and encouragement for active and sustainable travel – the most supported objective.



49% of respondents agree with prioritising the transport hierarchy – the least supported objective.



Over half support the 50% and 60% modal shift targets.

The aims and objectives were largely perceived as admirable and positive – ‘A good set of objectives’.

A couple of people indicated that ‘the hierarchy should start with public transport’, particularly in terms of the ‘older population’.

However, despite the Strategy containing ‘promising aspirations on sustainable travel’, it was apparently ‘short on solutions that will deliver aims’ and needs ‘significantly more detail’. A common theme emerged, with respondents saying the Strategy ‘Sounds like a fairy tale’, ‘sounds like an unobtainable utopia’, ‘an unrealistic solution’, ‘too far reaching’, ‘admirable in theory’, ‘not a solution that will work in practice’ and a ‘wish list without any firm evidence to suggest that what is being proposed is at all possible’: ‘Of course these are all supported - but how? Nothing in the Strategy. No policies. No money. No teeth.’ If this is true, then it poses the risk that people will ‘fall back on car-based travel’.

This shows that the Transport Strategy needs to be more convincing in its evidence base, so that we can dispel doubt in whether these are practical solutions to the problems at hand (*‘can it be achieved? Probably not!’*). We need to ‘provide real achievable solutions’ that present an ‘evaluation of options and environmental impacts’ that are ‘carefully prioritised’ and supported by ‘information on how this will be achieved’ to ensure these targets don’t appear as a ‘naïve assumption’.

The structure of the Objectives was also questioned with comments (particularly from Officers) that ‘a simple and defined single objective would make communication easier’. Having a single Objective that everything else hung off was considered more effective and this could be supported by Principles that supported the achievement of this Objective.

Targets

On a similar vein, the response to the Strategy Targets were largely deemed ‘unrealistic although laudable’. A number of concerns and questions were raised around the sustainable mode share targets, since it ‘doesn’t account for people travelling to and from the villages for work or servicing and deliveries’, ‘for people moving outside of the developments into the surrounding areas’ or what happens ‘either side’ of travelling through the town. For some, this ambition is not ambitious enough:

'This is a very low figure for people travelling within the villages, given they should be extremely sustainable places to live. For example, local shops, schools and health should all be within walking or cycling distance. This means that 40% of people will still need to travel by car for access to key services. That could be over 10,000 car trips being made within peak times.'

For others, the targets *'might be achievable for journeys within the bounds of the villages on a warm sunny day'*, but other than that are unattainable. *Therefore 'targets need to be made compulsory rather than an ambition', since there will always be a desire for 'individual forms of transport and the Policy does not take that fully into account'.*

It was noted that the targets are not the same as the TCPA's in their *'Garden City Standards for the 21st Century – Practical Guides for Creating Successful New Communities – Guide 3 – Design and Masterplanning' – 'A Garden City's design must enable at least 50% of trips originating in the Garden City to be made by non-car means, with a goal to increase this over time to at least 60%.'* *There is a need for an explanation of 'the origins of the targets and how the Strategy seeks to achieve those targets in a holistic and town wide way.'*

A number of comments questioned *'what happens if people don't meet the 60% target'* and the fact that *'this cannot be done overnight - it will take generations to carry out the change that is being predicted.'* As such, the Strategy should show that it will *'cater for a progressive change'* through *'intermediary targets'*, and *'with plans in place to deal with the interim lower levels'*. *There were calls for 'a study... to show what will happen to the traffic if only 30%, 40% and 50% is achieved', and 'how the existing roads will be able to cope with the extra traffic from new housing developments' in the meantime. 'Data is needed to support either the model shift or proposed projections.'*

'The implementation of this Strategy should be closely monitored and adapted in the light of experience.' For example, it was noted that, *'Places for People has made commitments to 'monitor the effectiveness of the Travel Plan and provide additional funding if the Garden Town target of 60% of travel by sustainable modes is not achieved' and 'to liaise with local communities over the impact of the proposals and to provide an Unforeseen Impact Fund to address and issues identified''.* *Residents want all applicants to make the same commitment. Respondents questioned, 'are the best technologies being chosen that will most likely achieve modal shift?' and 'what other incentives or measures can be employed to achieve the targets?'*

Action plan

With reference to the Action Plan, there was a hope that it would be more detailed, offering 'a clear comprehensive approach for movement in the HGGT'. Additionally, there was a suggestion that 'some actions, currently presented as simple aspirations (e.g. Para 4.4 a), b) and c)), could be moved to 'Objectives' and replaced with more detailed actions or requirements.' Other comments, however, noted that *'the actions should be condensed and reformatted as there is too much crossover'.*

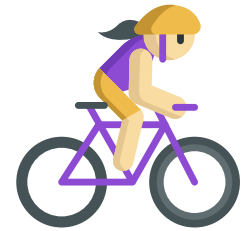
The Transport Strategy Action Plan



Almost 90% of respondents want better public transport – the most supported measure.



66% think the need to travel should be reduced – the least supported measure.



Over 80% of people support walking and cycling improvements.

Action 1 – Reducing the Need to Travel

Employment

It was observed that a ‘joined up Strategy on employment’ is required ‘to ensure transport is minimised’ by integrating employment into the developments, otherwise there is a danger the developments become ‘dormitory towns for commuters travelling in to central London’; people will ‘commute to London or need to drive outside the area in order to access employment.’ One respondent claimed, ‘There does not appear to be anything in the Policy or in the recent applications for Gilston Garden Villages that will reduce the need to travel. No industrial or commercial estates being proposed and nothing that will provide additional local jobs.’

Therefore, the Strategy should be ‘clearer on the range of desirable changes in new and old communities in addition to fast internet connectivity (so things like business support facilities, shared meeting rooms, flexible rooms within houses to be used as live-work spaces, etc.) and, in consequence, what developers are expected to deliver.’ This would help answer the question on whether there is, ‘any indicative expectation of what percentage of flexible working should take place in new communities.’

Community

A number of comments around this action were summarised by the following: ‘Many of today’s concerns over mental and physical health can be related to ‘isolationism’, so ‘reducing the need to travel’ would only exacerbate those problems. Society is built on the ability to interact with others.’ Here, a reliance on walking, cycling and public transport was seen to be limiting mobility rather than improving it: people ‘do not want to be isolated as they rely on walking and cycling.’ ‘To prevent loneliness and isolation a great number of elderly people rely on buses, taxis and car-share to get to and from various clubs/shopping etc, so here again your proposed action does not tell us what can be expected.’ A clarity of this definition is therefore required to assuage these fears. ‘We need to improve mobility not limit it.’

Action 2 – Making better use of existing infrastructure

Comments regarding challenges posed by existing infrastructure to travelling by active and sustainable means have been addressed under other Actions that are mode specific.

The HGGT has committed to support actions to make better use of existing infrastructure, and, it was noted that communication is key to this, ‘so that visitors as well as residents can know how to get around

easily.' This includes up to date 'bus stop signage', 'a website that has all the travel information in one place rather than having to google busses, cycle routes, walking routes separately', and 'leaflets too for those who don't use smart phones (not just the elderly)'.

Action 3 – Supporting and encouraging a culture of active and sustainable travel

The HGGT has committed to support and actively encourage a culture of multi-modal mobility where people are inspired and motivated to travel actively and sustainably. There was concern this 'social engineering' will, "force" people to use public transport/cycles/walking.' Such an approach was deemed 'Stalinist to say the least' by one contributor. However, others accepted that 'cultural change is hard', 'this addiction with car use has to be broken' and 'business and people's mindsets need to change to fit this'. Hopefully as a result, 'this would encourage a healthier lifestyle.'

Suggestions for addressing this included the proposal to 'get people out of their cars for short journeys i.e. school runs, local shopping runs, and work runs.' Similarly, another appealed to 'include demand management measures, including discouraging short trips by car (for example making journeys to school very short by sustainable modes and longer and convoluted by car) while recognising the rights of existing residents.' To be successful, 'it should be made clear that Travel Planning should be implemented for existing as well as new communities (e.g. 4.4 k).' This is reliant on the requirement for 'good alternatives to car in advance/in parallel with new developments to make it easier for people to change', as well as an attractive town centre 'for people to move to and work in', and 'affordable housing and a place with activities and things to do in evenings.'

Action 4 – Sustainable Transport Corridors

Gilston Villages

Respondents requested that 'expectations for sustainable transport corridors in new development should be clearly set out, as these are at present an elusive concept.' 'the expectation for the Gilston 'ring road' (a sustainable transport corridor? - a car route with additional cycle lanes?) and for sustainable connections between Gilston and Harlow should be very clear. The HGGT will be aware that the Gilston main spine road has been presented as a 30-50mph multi-lane partially dualled road: hardly compatible with the concept of a sustainable corridor and an integral part of the villages. The spine road serving the new development should clearly prioritise sustainable transport modes and discourage car use: if designed as a (even landscaped) ring road, it will achieve just the opposite. (There will also need to be facilities to maintain the access to existing residents).' This was further reiterated in other comments: 'the northern 'circuitous loop' around Gilston Villages 3 and 4 does not provide convenient or effective public transport but by its nature promotes car dependency', and there is, 'no need for a large road to be built through an existing village and nature reserve'.

Regarding the construction of the STCs, there is 'concern of the new route being diverted through Village 7 and all the traffic which will go with it. It will be detrimental to the village of Hunsdon. The skips and container lorries, the pollution - do you really want all this going through the new town.' Additionally, 'The roadway through Gilston to the proposed second crossing is not Dual Carriageway meaning HGVs will be directed through the village of Gilston.'

Harlow

The design of the STCs came under criticism, since one respondent believe the 'N S E W routes [are] fundamentally flawed: it focuses congestion towards the centre in the mornings to 4 exit points in the evenings and thus will suffer most of the faults and flaws of the current and past systems.' **Instead, 'A motorway standard ring road with at least 4 park and rides... would effectively solve these problems and enable the NSEW corridors to function without being overloaded.'**

Transport Offer

A range of ideas were put forward as to what the STCs could offer. One included, 'public fleet of all electric mini-buses (on major routes) and shared electric taxis', 'instead of traditional sized buses.' This would apparently provide 'economy of scale', a 'more frequent/convenient system' and would be 'cheaper to run than diesel'. This could 'within a carbon free community zone covering the centre of town to provide a door to door service for the price of a bus fare.' Additionally, 'Shuttles from the station to neighbourhoods linking to train arrivals must be considered.'

Alternatively, a tram or light rail was proposed because it 'has a proven record of changing travel behaviour with a greater propensity to attract car users and achieve modal change.' They are perceived to be 'clean and efficient and part of the wider regeneration.' They have potential to 'deliver more successful enhancement of the public realm', 'result in the best air quality and quietest form of public transport', and 'can realise greater long-term capacity to meet future demand.' Interestingly, light rail is being considered as an option 'east west across the County of Hertfordshire as part of the A414 corridor Strategy work which could potentially link all the way to Harlow.' **The Strategy should state a position on whether the STCs will be 'tramways which take people through the centre of town and round the hatches and connect them to the new towns being created on the northern side of Harlow' or will be designed 'for future adaptability to light rail / tram.'**

See Action 5 and 6 for further comments on walking, cycling and public transport.

Action 5 – Supporting Walking and Cycling

It was acknowledged by several people that 'Harlow has a large cycle network already although it is still underutilised.' A number of these reasons are expanded upon below, such as safety, maintenance, weather, and facilities. Many of these are in HGGT's scope to influence, as 'the cycle network needs remedial investment' and 'a fundamental rethink of the council's attitude towards cyclists.' Other elements are a matter of personal perception since some said the 'shops in Harlow are far to ride', 'I do not have time to cycle or walk', while others said 'Living within the Harlow boundary I can walk to more or less any destination.'

'Walking and cycling routes should be encouraged, this will reduce emissions and exposure to highly polluted areas, reduce congestion and make travel using public transport more accessible & convenient.'

Safety

In terms of safety, Harlow's existing 'cycle ways are perceived as unsafe'. More than one commentator claimed, 'people are attacked robbed and stabbed on these routes and although such instances are few the public's behaviour is strongly affected.' 'Residents are worried about safety, lack of police on the streets', therefore, **'more effective policing would help this, ensuring that there are PCSOs on the streets.'**

However, safety goes beyond just antisocial behaviour, into the quality of infrastructure: in Harlow, 'the lanes are unlit', and there are, 'raised paving stones', 'underpasses' and a lack of 'street lighting or other safety provisions.'

As such, it seems, 'the cycle networks in Harlow are in dire need of an upgrade'. HGGT needs to, 'Prioritise walking and cycling (segregated cycle lanes) and people will walk/cycle if they can do it in an environment that feels pleasant and safe.' To this end, a number of suggestions have arisen about the type of infrastructure needed to ensure there is a perception of safety and comfort: 'ensure that every development has segregated, Dutch style cycle routes included & paid for by the developer, at point of build', 'walking and cycling should be prioritised over car use', 'ensure that each school has Street for Schools approach', add 'zebra crossings on the B183', and remove 'striped brickwork round roundabouts and triangle islands at junctions', 'minimise road signs and railings', improve 'connectivity, the surfaces, the visibility of users and security using CCTV', and consider "quietways" which are relatively low cost and simple provisions. These can provide safe and attractive corridors away from heavy traffic

which benefit from better air quality, reduced noise and disturbance from traffic.’ In addition, there was a request for ‘regular compulsory safety checks for tyres, efficient lights, brakes etc.’

Maintenance

Regarding maintenance, ‘Harlow’s cycle network is excellent but fails in many respects through historic lack of investment and neglect.’ ‘Some bike routes are very good, other routes have significant gaps such as Newhall to Old Harlow.’ According to local residents, ‘cycle paths are infrequently cleaned, and the rest of the time are covered in mud, branches, slippery leaves and broken glass’, ‘some are in an absolutely appalling state with potholes’, ‘subways... [are] completely flooded due to blocked drains for most of the winter’, ‘some cycle routes are broken up by roads’. This demands an answer to the question of, ‘If you expect people to walk will the footpaths be repaired?’

Weather

Weather was raised as a major barrier to achieving the targets. Since, ‘the UK is prone to poor weather, that’s why residents of Harlow, already blessed with good cycle ways, don’t use them more.’ Making sure walking and cycling is attractive all year round is important, otherwise it will be true that ‘the weather and winters simply won’t permit it.’ HGGT must ‘Give people an incentive to use existing and new sustainable routes.’

Cycle Parking

Unfortunately, across Harlow, many locations have inadequate cycle parking: ‘There are no such facilities outside the community centre, doctor surgery or pub.’ A key location identified a number of times as lacking sufficient facilities is Harlow Town Station. Here, ‘the cycle facilities are very good, but not enough space.’

A lack of adequate cycle parking has a number of issues: ‘bikes are getting stolen every day’ and ‘leaving a bike out in the rain drastically increases the amount of maintenance required and it’s unpleasant to arrive at a water-soaked seat’. Similarly, ‘Many locations for cycle parking only have bars that allow the rear wheel only to be locked. Modern bikes have quick release wheels, allowing the rest of the bike to be stolen. Properly waist-height bars are not ubiquitous.’

Therefore, HGGT needs, ‘many more SECURE bicycle parking facilities in all shopping and transport interchange centres around the town.’ For example, ‘If 20 car spaces in the undercover part of the Water Gardens were converted to cycle parking, it would be amazing.’ Workplaces should also be encouraged to consider ‘adding showers and changing facilities’.

Stort Valley

A number of responses related to walking and cycling in the Stort Valley, ‘particularly a further cycle/pedestrian bridge over the Stort near Briggins Park to give direct access to West Harlow and the Pinnacles employment area’, and the ‘two different routes proposed from village 7 to Roydon Station, one through Briggins Estate Golf Club and one which is actually the towpath on the Stort River and which may form part of the proposed Stansted – Harlow – Lea Valley Cycle corridor.’

Issues and complexities were flagged here including, ‘issues regarding access at Roydon Station’, ‘a low clearance railway bridge which abuts the flood plain’, ‘there is often flooding here and the route made impassable’, ‘lighting and... bridge issues’, ‘widening the towpath from 1 metre to 2.5 metres is not supported by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust because of its impact on biodiversity’, and proposals ‘would encroach on the SSSI of Hunsdon Mead which is contrary to Policy NE1 of the East Herts District Plan.’ Therefore, ‘The environmental impact of this work needs to be considered in detail’.

Additional Links

There were requests for additional links to be provided as part of these proposals. Firstly, *'a proper fit for purpose dedicated cycle highway running alongside the A1184 from Harlow into Sawbridgeworth and through to Bishop's Stortford - this may involve narrowing the road to vehicles so that cyclists get enough space'*, and a *'cycle way from Sawbridgeworth through High Wych to the Gilston villages.'*

Action 6 – Public Transport

'People are wedded to their cars because public transport is generally dire and unappealing and no quicker to move around town. There has to be an advantage to using sustainable transport methods.' There was a unanimous feeling that Harlow presently offers *'a lack of suitable alternative and frequent, reliable public transport'*: *'public transport is hopeless, unreliable and expensive compared to taking a car.'* Therefore, the public transport infrastructure has to be amended to accommodate this.

Buses

There was a lot of discontentment expressed around buses in Harlow. Apparently, *'the bus service is beyond appalling: it's extremely expensive, infrequent, not integrated with train times, and frequent unannounced cancellations'*, *'limited out of the working day and are really only useful to travel to the centre'*, *'some bus routes don't exist, others take far too long and are too costly especially for a whole family.'* **Suggestions include, 'a more extensive route list, cheaper fares and a London style frequency'**, and **'a network that doesn't require changing buses at the town centre.'** **'Rapid, reliable, frequent and cheap public transport needs to be provided throughout the day and evening to the railway station and town centre, and also further afield.'** The following points draw out more detailed comments and suggestions around addressing these issues.

Convenience

It was commonly expressed that people want convenience in their mobility choices: *'I like to move from A to B at my pace & when I want to & not be governed by Public Transport timetables.'*

Availability/Choice

Availability of regular and reliable buses appears to be suboptimal, with, *'long waits on several occasions due to the buses being cut out'*, and *'no service at all in the evenings.'* Residents claim they *'Would use the bus more if it was available.'*

Cost

Bus journeys are perceived as *'super expensive'*: *'When it costs more to ride on a bus than it does to park in the town, why would anyone want to use public transport'* **HGGT needs to address the fact that it's 'cheaper to drive and park in the town than to buy return tickets for a family of four.'**

Journey Time

A common concern is that residents, *'don't have the time to walk to a bus stop, wait for a bus, go round the houses... and then do it all again on the way back!'* Anecdotal examples offered in the comments showed that driving was much quicker than relying on buses.

Reliability

It was frequently noted that, *'Reliability is more important than journey time - you can adjust expectations on the first if you have the second.'* This was deemed *'most important'*, and especially problematic for *'travelling to and from work'* and to the stations, including Epping tube station, with current *'waiting times varying considerably.'*

Destinations

A number of concerns were raised around how the Strategy applies to those living in rural areas around Harlow, where presently, *'you can get nowhere without the car.'* *'Perhaps within the town centre, with a good public transport system, it might be possible to reduce car use but in a rural environment it is simply not practical',* *'a car is essential for day to day existence.'* This is because of stated impracticalities, safety, time and lack of service provision. Respondents felt that the Strategy *'didn't address the real challenges faced by rural commuters getting to work',* and there are often significant distances to reach the transport interchanges or bus stops.

The revised Strategy must address the perception that *'surrounding villages which are not currently supported by Public Transport appear to have been omitted & will continue to be 100% reliant upon cars.'* Additionally, it needs to commit to routes that go to where people need to get to without multiple changes. **One resident commented that they, 'found the buses good and frequent - but didn't go to the hospital or to supermarkets or along Edinburgh Way and I struggled to walk from the bus routes to any of these places.'** The following destinations were suggested as routes for direct bus services to go to:

- Edinburgh way and they 'myriad of businesses there as well as people living there';
- Out of town retail parks;
- Harlow edge of town shopping
- Newhall;
- The new hospital out by the new M11 junction;
- Outlying villages;
- Other important nearby towns like Hunsdon, Cheshunt. Stanstead Abbots, Ware and Hertford to the west, and High Wych, Bishop's Stortford, and Sawbridgeworth to the east;
- Newhall to Epping station or the high street;
- Between Roydon and Hoddesdon or Hertford;
- Church Langley to Epping tube station;
- Covering Terlings park towards Sawbridgeworth.
- A circular public transport route to connect all sides of the town
- Gilston should be covered with a bus stop and train infrastructure

It is important we take these on board, and *'prioritise all areas having access to a decent reliable public bus service that will take people to Epping underground station, Harlow Mill and Harlow town stations and to Bishop's Stortford without having to make a journey into the town centre.'*

Attractiveness

In addition, *'Buses or other modes of transport need to be clean, modern and cost effective for people to use them.'* The attractiveness of the bus provision can be addressed through enhancing the following: *'Bus stops and shelters for those getting the bus', 'street lighting', 'new busses should be electric not smelly diesel',* and *'we need to have a more attractive place to arrive in Harlow than the tradesman's entrance which is the current bus station in Terminus Street.'*

Delivery

Residents are concerned that local track record of bus provision has been problematic: *'No bus service to speak of. All cancelled.'* Concern about consistency in approach was also evident: *'Bus lanes have been used in Harlow in numerous places, and then removed as again...',* while *'Bus services are being cut all over this area.'* *'Despite promises of a dedicated bus route, residents of New Hall in Harlow, for example, are still waiting for one'* *'locking me into using the car for longer journey'. There are 'no guarantees about future bus services... after 25 years there is still no bus service to parts of the town.'* **The Strategy must therefore have a clear position on delivery and ability to action the promises it sets out.** This has reiterated the point that these improvements *'need to be in place from start.'*

A number of comments were concerned that the Strategy offered, 'no clear plans who will put the buses on the road.' As such, 'More explicit reference to what it is expected of new development would be welcome. For example: 'Action 6 – Para 4.10 c) could be expanded to refer to 'frequent, efficient high quality public transport'', and 'Action 6 – Para 4.10 m) seems to suggest that only demand responsive transport will be required in new communities.' More clarity in the Strategy might answer questions about timings and cost, as it 'should be factored in as early as possible'. However, residents had concerns that 'There is no funding stream for additional public transport and no pathway or plan towards this', particularly since, 'public funding of buses will be essential to cover less popular areas.' Respondents wanted to know 'what New Hall and Gilden Way developments are offering as contributions to achieve modal shift'.

Park and Ride

It was noted that 'there is no apparent provision for car drivers when they reach the town boundary, there should be parking at the ends of the travel routes.' Since, 'Park and ride schemes are run very successfully and are popular in other urban towns', and 'with the new hospital going by junction 7a, we need to get people using public transport to access the facilities.' Suggestions included 'a subsidised park and ride site on that junction with at least one other on the North West side of town, with fully supported electric vehicle recharging', 'a park and ride facility in the vicinity of Latton Priory / Hastingwood roundabout which could reduce congestion into Epping/Harlow Town Centre - and possibly to new hospital', and 'a ring road with massive park and ride at points of entry i.e. Eastwick Harlow Town Station, J7a and Harlow Mill, J7 M11 A414, and Water Lane.'

Respondents see this being the catalyst to, 'enable NS EW public transport/ bicycle and residential traffic to flow within the town, stop commuter car traffic entirely, facilitate cycling and reduce both congestion and pollution.'

Rail

As with comments on buses, trains were perceived to be 'not frequent and super expensive.' The current provision is seen to be over capacity already – 'The train station is bursting at the moment. No seats available on the trains at peak time. How is this going to improve with 10,000 properties being built?' Therefore, 'Expanded passenger capacity and frequency should also be explored and any specific requirements confirmed.' This was a particular concern for the 'Stansted Airport to London line', particularly since there is 'no end date of when new rolling stock will be delivered onto the Stansted Airport to London line.'

Respondents felt that 'Network Rail appear to have had limited engagement with the Strategy', and 'A frank conversation with Greater Anglia must be a high priority so that this... can be scrutinised for its viability.' A series of questions remain unanswered by the current Strategy, including: 'capacity for additional commuters', 'Longer trains - how will these work on short platforms?', 'Why not Cross Rail to Harlow and Bishops Stortford?', and '4 tracking rail, to Broxbourne Only? Land is unavailable to increase this beyond Broxbourne.' A number of comments appealed for an 'extension of central line (TfL) to Harlow south where no train stations are located', or to 'Harlow town station.'

A few comments refer to train stations as valuable, and poorly served, transport interchanges: 'Harlow Town Station and its interchange has problems', 'Harlow Mill Station seems ignored as a stop on a massively valuable transport system', it 'is suboptimal and not maintained', and ultimately, 'Cycle parking and improved accessibility by sustainable modes (so new cycle lanes to stations) should be clearly required at all three stations.' This will address the fact that 'many [Harlow residents] work in London daily and spending two hours getting a bus to/from the station is just not practical.' As an interchange, the station 'needs safer and bigger bicycle parking', and it is worth noting that 'the top floor of the car park is allocated to surrounding businesses and not available for use of commuters.' Additionally, there was the proposal for a 'STC linking up with the London to Cambridge line.'

Existing stations could be made more accessible by developing more attractive routes to them and for Harlow Town Station and Harlow Mill Stations to have north side pedestrian access which they do not at present.'

On that note, the Strategy included 'very little about the North entrance to Harlow Town train station.' *'Harlow train station needs another entrance and exit route for the development'*, and this would, 'make a massive difference to the new villages and Terlings Park residents', and 'address the safety issues of the current pedestrian routes around Gilston.'

A number of comments were received regarding Roydon Station specifically and the infrastructure around it: 'The junction of the rail line with the B181 (at Roydon Station) is extremely busy with over 5000 vehicle movements a day... At peak times the village is currently dealing with severe traffic issues, primarily because the crossing is closed so often, and this proposal would increase safety concerns at the level crossing (when combined with traffic using the marina entrance). *The feasibility of this proposed cycle crossing point requires more detailed analysis.'* The Strategy was deemed to 'put Roydon village in the direct path of drivers seeking a short cut. *How will this be monitored and what will be put in place to prevent this from happening?*' There was a request for a 'safe crossing point across Roydon Road featuring raised tables and material treatment to encourage motorists to slow down and give way to cyclists.' This is important because 'Commuters from village 7 and beyond will require a regular train service or will revert to using their cars and travelling to better serviced stations.' However, 'The Stort Valley's green infrastructure is recognised as being of ecological and strategic importance and that improvements are necessary to strengthen its quality. Routes to connect Village 7 to Roydon are at odds with this statement in the local Plan.'

Action 7 – Infrastructure for road-based travel

Action 7 provoked a whole spectrum of responses – everything from: 'No more new roads for cars, any new roads built soon become gridlocked', and 'zero need for a large dual carriageway to be build through an existing village, dangerously close to current dwellings', to 'Stop seeing the car as the enemy and work to improve traffic flow through the town for all.'

Those supportive of restricting road-based travel offered comment on the basis that 'Harlow is already gridlocked now', 'The area is already hugely congested, highly polluted', 'The current traffic situation around Harlow, Sawbridgeworth and Bishops Stortford is at maximum capacity and surely near to breaking point', and 'the narrow roads can't accommodate any more traffic.' *As such, the Strategy, 'should not be encouraging major roads but incorporating sustainable travel through walking and cycling and promoting our green environment', as, 'Delivery of limited highway infrastructure won't meet the suggestions in this report.'* A proposal for new roads potentially, 'does little to solve, indeed will make traffic congestion even worse.'

On the other hand, 'unless you improve the existing road system, you will have a situation where the existing roads will not be able to cope with the increase in traffic from the new developments.' These suggestions included the 'need to consider, and improve, the design of the existing road system so that it can at least cope with current traffic levels before you embark on your 'blue sky' journey changing ideas that will not happen immediately', and 'ensure the roads can cope with a reasonable level of additional traffic that is commensurate with the volume of new housing.'

Doubt was cast on the ability to deal with Harlow's roads since, 'Harlow has been subjected to major roadworks for years, creating dual carriageways within the town and industrial areas, but every access point is single carriageway causing major delays.' Similarly, 'The Edinburgh Way road widening has taken years and still not completed.' Subsequently, view included: 'Traffic is caused from shoddy work to the roads therefore creating roadworks therefore creating traffic... *Complete the improvements to the infrastructure first and build the houses second not*

the other way around.’ Assurance needs to be provided to the question of: ‘Will the new ‘corridors’ prove a non-stop nightmare with roadworks everywhere?’ and will measures ‘be taken to ensure that adverse impacts from traffic and road infrastructure on the existing communities will be negligible in terms of safety, speed, pollution and local character?’

Suggestions were offered regarding roads during the construction period: ‘New vehicular access arrangements should limit additional traffic on existing road and lanes and retain convenient access for existing residents and activities’, ‘developers should demonstrate that there will be no increase in the volume of heavy vehicle movement through existing communities’, and ‘ a Construction Management Plan to be prepared to limit the impact of construction traffic with agreement with the community.’

The following comments have been collated as route or area specific feedback.

A414

It was observed that ‘The A414 cannot cope on its approach to Harlow, from any direction’, and ‘Offshoot roads off this main road are already under pressure as rat runs and the new housing will increase this and create major blockages and dangers.’ It is also currently, ‘too dangerous to cycle on with a family.’ A suggestion was to, ‘Do a traffic survey when the schools are open between 8.00 and 9.00 on weekday mornings on the A414 and London road try to access the B183 roundabouts.’

However, the Strategy was criticised since, ‘Solutions for the A414 are put forward in the plan with a disgraceful lack of evaluation of options and environmental impacts.’ The ‘A414 reroute via Terlings Park is not acceptable, would further divide the centre of Gilston’, ‘cutting the current Gilston village in half.’ Therefore ‘A ring road around Terlings Park would make more sense and be purposely designed as opposed to trying to cut through/around Pye Corner and trying to increase the capacity of already very congested small country lanes.’ Additionally, there were suggestions for the A414 including ‘upgrading to motorway standard to join A602 to the A1’ and ‘Connect... the roundabout at Eastwick Lodge to M11.’

There was a call to ‘Stop the rat runs between Harlow and Bishops Stortford’, this is probably because, ‘The C161 is a C road being used as de facto northern bypass – this is unsafe and has a history of accidents.’ It was felt that ‘The plans for the new roads in this area and regard are woefully inadequate when you consider the roads are constantly slowing to a standstill on the main road from Harlow through Sawbridgeworth to Bishops Stortford.’

Concerns about through traffic remains, and a bypass or ‘motorway standard ring road’ was repeatedly proposed ‘to mitigate the overall impact on the town’: ‘The A414 trunk route seems to remain a main road through the town, should there be a by-pass for this through traffic?’ ‘A physical upgrade is needed to allow greater traffic to flow on these roads - bypass of Harlow is required to link 414 Eastwick to M11.’ ‘A Harlow town by-pass does not appear to be given thought at this point - yet it is essential.’

Respondents deemed ‘the A414 northern bypass and second Stort crossing are urgent necessities, which will reduce congestion, pollution and HGV movements, and improve air quality, public safety and journey times by all modes.’ This would ‘divert what would have been through traffic around the town to link with the motorway network’, and also ‘keep construction traffic and long-distance traffic away from the town centre and Elizabeth Way retail areas.’ However, one commentator believed, ‘The construction of the second crossing is very late in the construction phase of Gilston Garden Village meaning there will be further congestion in the interim.’ Additionally, ‘The proposed improvement of the existing river crossing increases the carriageway to two lanes in each direction but dedicates one lane to Buses. The opportunity to improve this crossing to three lanes in each direction should be taken.’

MI1

'The full document correctly identifies Harlow as being a through access to and from the National motorway network and has even assessed the influx of commuters but have done little to address the major impacts these have and will increasingly have.' It was also observed that, 'The MI1 capacity must be under pressure with the already-committed growth', since 'much of the traffic going through Harlow is destined for the MI1.' 'The motorway junction 7A road network into onto the B183 past Markhall school will not work at peak times in the morning it is already impossible to access these roads from the A414 or London road. All the new junction will do is divert some traffic onto these roads from a different approach.' According to some respondents, the Strategy 'has nothing to say on all these issues.'

Therefore 'A better east west route to the new Junction 7a needs to be built that is not reliant on the developers' and 'a high-quality direct road link from this point to the vital new MI1 J7a, not passing through residential areas, is essential.'

B1393 and Latton Priory to Epping

There were concerns about, 'significant adverse road safety, pollution, congestion and air quality effects on the B1393 Thornwood Road and Epping High Street.' It was suggested the strategy could include 'a better bus service and segregated cycle route to Thornwood and Epping funded (including land acquisition) by HGGT development.', to help tackle 'road safety along B1393 Thornwood Road and... congestion at Palmers Hill junction.' In response to this, the Strategy's diagrammatic map could be altered accordingly: 'Page 15 (map) - the dotted lines showing 'potential' sustainable travel routes south from Latton Priory towards Epping should be solidified into definite proposals to cope with the demand for travel from HGGT south of Harlow to Epping tube.'

Concerns around the Latton Priory development are based upon the fact that access will be via 'already heavily congested roads in Harlow and Epping leading to junction 7 of the MI1', and 'The small local access roads around Latton Priory do not support any increase in any form of transportation - will only be detrimental to the areas.' However, there was a suggestion for a 'safe segregated cycle route from Latton Priory to Thornwood and Epping.'

Southern Way

One critic noted there were 'no details given on how to improve Southern Way.' Therefore 'Serious consideration is needed to ensure existing roads such as Southern Way will be able to cope with traffic from the new developments at Latton Priory, Sumners and Katherines as this route already becomes gridlocked most days.'

Pye Corner and Burntmill Lane

Existing residents commented on the 'implications of dangerous driving in residential areas - adding additional roads and major roads through and near the development hinders safety, causing congestion and pollution.' For example, 'the way people drive down burnt Mill Lane and Pye Corner is worrying.' Additionally, this is compounded by the fact that there's 'No mention of the lack of street lighting or other safety provisions on Burntmill Lane. This would become the main pedestrian axis to and from Harlow. Why not prioritise it over the very busy Fifth Avenue for pedestrians?'

Parking

Residents were largely 'perturbed by the suggestion that car parking provision in Harlow is to be reduced (page 20)' since 'that will encourage everyone living in the surrounding villages to shop elsewhere with consequent damage to Harlow businesses' and 'drive residents to another retail area where the quality of retail experience is better.' Similarly, higher parking costs were seen as 'a tax cash cow' and excluding people from being able to engage in normal everyday activities. On the other hand, someone appealed to HGGT to 'Curtail the amount of

parking at Parndon Woods', 'Consider parking problem at Parndon Mill' and address the fact that the 'car park at Harlow town is excessive.' One suggestion was for 'A workplace parking levy'.

Another element of parking which the Strategy must address is 'Safe and considerate residential parking', since that is clearly a contentious issue. *There were calls to, 'Stop people parking on all the pavements and all those green wedges in Harlow and provide some sensible solutions. Anyone blocking the paths with a car should be done for obstruction.'* Similarly, *'Parking within Harlow needs to be addressed - residential areas are blighted by cars and commercial vehicles parking fully on the pavement.'* Someone questioned if the issue will, *'increase during the day as well as night if people use cycles or walk instead?'* The Strategy's approach of flexible residential car parking for later conversion to other uses for the benefit of the community is *'a concerning statement. Use should be either clearly defined or not proposed at all.'*

Electric Vehicles

Respondents were on board with the government's objectives of a *'dramatic shift towards electric vehicles... within the build out time of the Garden Town.'* It was noted that *'People may change from diesel/petrol vehicles to battery driven cars but will not want to give up the freedom of their own transport.'* *'There should be a recognition of the role that electric vehicles will have in reducing emissions and the correct incentives and infrastructure put in place to support that shift. As such, there were calls to 'help people that do keep private vehicles to switch to electric vehicles as fast as possible. Currently there are no public electric charging point in Harlow making it a difficult prospect.'* To facilitate this, it's important HGGT does ensure new developments provide electric car charging. It was suggested that *'Planning permission should not be granted for any residential or industrial bidding without electric car charging infrastructure.'*

There was also a feeling that the Strategy isn't aspirational enough, since the definition for sustainable modes of transport includes 'low emission' vehicles. *'Only fully electric vehicles should be used in this once in a lifetime opportunity to revolutionise the town's transport.'* The Strategy was recommended therefore to, *'Replace low-emission with Zero emission. Low emission leaves the door open for hybrid cars which if used incorrectly can be the same or worse than Internal Combustion Engine powered vehicles.'* Additionally, there's an opportunity to set the example: *'The council should pledge to only buy electric vehicles permit new services with only electric vehicles in order to lead the way for Zero- emission transport in Harlow - creating Clean-Harlow.'*

Respondents considered how this might be supported, since *'the other part of electrification is in creating clean electricity.'* It was noted that the *'electrical supply to this area needs to be able to handle it. Installing low power slow chargers do not help when moving around the town in electric/hybrid vehicles.'* **Proposals included, 'Solar farms and Biomass/waste electricity generation plants'** and a *'wide scale roll out of solar panels on buildings and wind farms... to provide carbon-free power for the vehicles.'*

E-Bikes Cargo Bikes and Bike Share

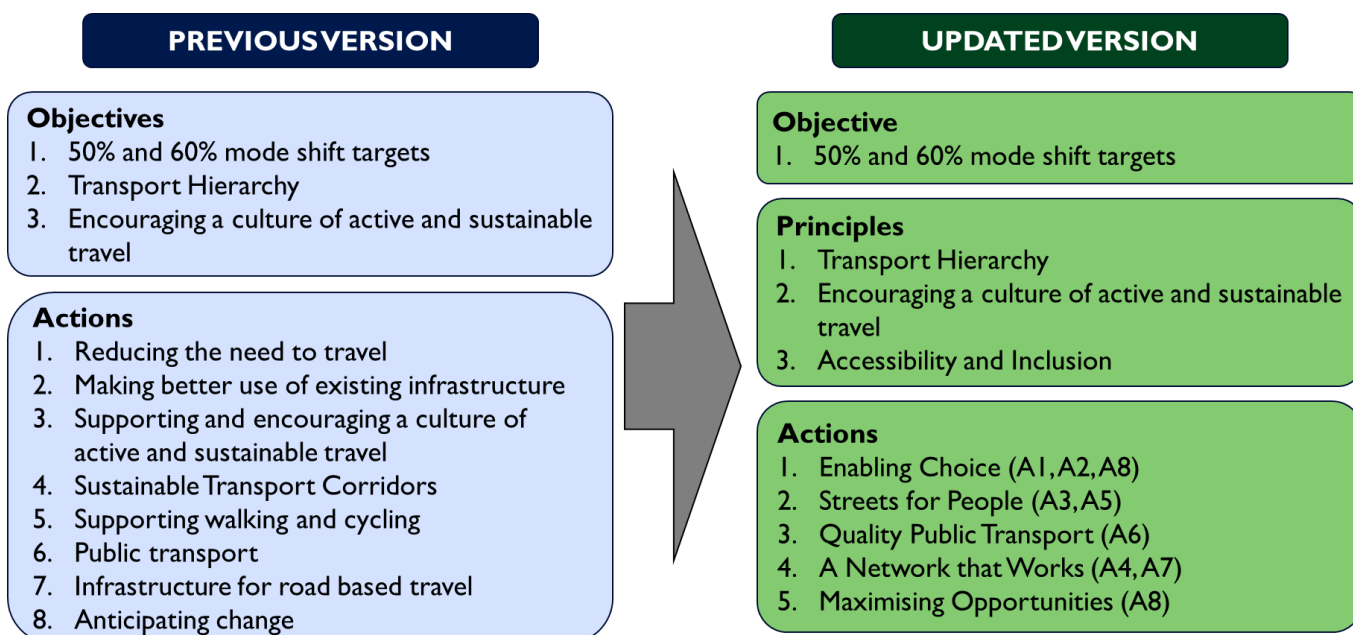
It was noted that, *'The use of ebikes should be designed into the networks',* since they will be likely to, *'make commuting distances of 10 miles easy for cyclists so this has to be upgraded as a significant mode of transport going forward.'* HGGT should *'Encourage the use of cargo bikes for local business with local delivery chains.'* And finally, *'the Garden Town should be leading and promoting the introduction of a cycle hire scheme, not merely supporting it.'*

Conclusion

After consideration of the various comments and feedback, a number of changes were made to the Strategy. This was predominately focussed around:

- The Objectives were streamlined into one overarching Objective and three Principles that supported the achievement of that Objective, with inclusion and accessibility inserted for greater prominence. The content of the Objectives remained largely unchanged, with small adjustments to the text for clarity.
- The Actions were condensed to reduce repetition and reworded to better align with the user hierarchy and Vision. The content of the Actions remained largely unchanged, with small adjustments to the text for clarity.
- The formatting of the document (ensuring it was more concise, easier to read and more engaging)
- The content of the document (updated maps and images, less jargon, less repetition, more detail or links to further documents etc.).

These key changes are shown in the image below.



Consultation Lessons Learnt:

- Use more and a greater diversity of media (particularly printed and accessible) and be prepared for requests for these at events.
- Consider using social media to gain feedback as well as direct towards further info/promotion.
- Other potential methods: Focus groups, phone surveys, forums, workshops, public exhibitions, champions (all come with advantages and disadvantages).
- Future engagement to capture wider input from
 - Harlow Youth Council
 - University of Birmingham suggestions for engagement with young people
 - Quick capture tools at events (iPads / quick questions)
 - Bus operators
- Make the consultation and content more approachable and understandable. Use FAQs, simple jargon, brief explanations etc.

- Make responses quick and easy to give if desired.
- Consider setting a minimum number of responses (quality vs quantity)?
- What are the most effective methods for communicating with different stakeholders (particularly young people)?
- Plan for engaging hard-to-reach groups (physical, language, cultural, social barriers).
- Actively monitor the consultation regularly during execution: and adapt where necessary.
- Is it worth extending the consultation period to allow time for more responses?
- Ensure that there is a core team of people working on each consultation to ensure the most expertise.
- Involve stakeholders at an earlier stage to give a greater sense of ownership.
- Set engagement targets at the start of the consultation process and evaluate progress against these going forward.

Appendix I – Quantitative Survey Outputs

Responses	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Survey respondents	81	73	154
Unique comments	394	509	903
Event attendance	65	94	159
Objectives - Both rounds	Support	Don't know	Oppose
Objective 1 - targets	58%	8%	34%
Objective 2 - hierarchy	49%	10%	41%
Objective 3 - culture of AT	79%	7%	15%
Actions - Both rounds	Support	Don't know	Oppose
Action 1 - reducing need to travel	66%	3%	31%
Action 2 - existing infrastructure	76%	2%	21%
Action 3 - culture of active & sustainable travel	84%	4%	12%
Action 4 - STCs	78%	4%	18%
Action 5 - supporting AT	81%	6%	13%
Action 6 - PT	89%	1%	10%
Action 7 - road based travel	73%	7%	20%
Action 8 - anticipating change	76%	13%	11%
Demographic data - Age	Round 1	Round 2	Total
24 and under	0%	25%	10%
25-34	6%	9%	8%
35-44	14%	42%	25%
45-54	29%	4%	18%
55-64	26%	15%	22%
65-74	22%	6%	15%
75 or older	3%	0%	2%
Demographic data - Employment status	Round 1	Round 2	Total
Employed	66%	71%	65%
Education	0%	13%	6%
Not working	1%	7%	8%
Retired	33%	6%	20%
Demographic data - Ethnicity	Round 1	Round 2	Total
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	-	77%	77%
Irish	-	0%	0%
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	-	0%	0%
Other white background	-	6%	6%
African	-	6%	6%
Caribbean	-	0%	0%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	-	0%	0%
Indian	-	1%	1%
Pakistani	-	0%	0%
Bangladeshi	-	0%	0%
Chinese	-	0%	0%
Any other Asian background	-	1%	1%

Arab	-	0%	0%
Any other ethnic group	-	3%	3%
Prefer not to say	-	7%	7%