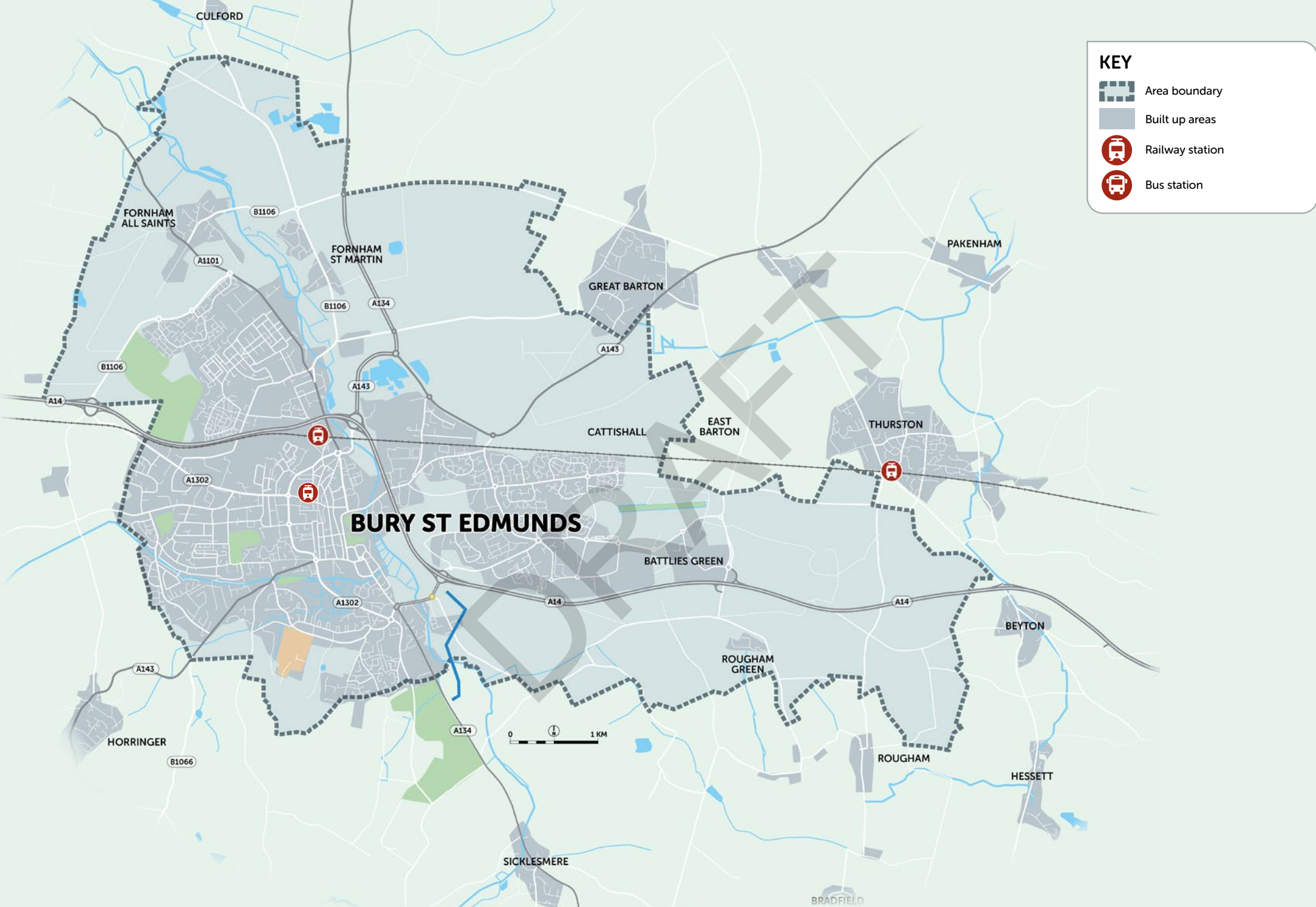






2024

# Bury St Edmunds Area Transport Plan





**KEY**

-  Area boundary
-  Built up areas
-  Railway station
-  Bus station

# Introduction

Bury St Edmunds is located in the centre of West Suffolk and is the largest town in this area. It is a historic market town, home to the Abbey and St Edmundsbury Cathedral, and is a cultural, leisure and retail centre for West Suffolk, making it a key tourist destination.

The resident population of the plan area is 44,374 residents<sup>1</sup>. This is expected to grow in the coming years with the large-scale developments planned to the northeast, southeast and west of the town in particular.

The plan area includes a variable network of walking, wheeling and cycling routes and provision is to a higher standard in the more modern parts of the town such as Moreton Hall where National Cycle Routes 13 and 51 pass through. However, severance and accessibility issues exist in other parts of the town including the town centre.

There is a limited bus service provision connecting surrounding communities and other urban areas to Bury St Edmunds often only hourly services. The railway station is on the Ipswich-Ely line with connectivity to Ipswich, Peterborough, Ely and Cambridge with hourly / two hourly services.

Within the geographic area, at average cycling speed, most households in Bury St Edmunds can access the town centre within 15 minutes. A large proportion of residents can reach the town centre at average walking speeds within a similar timeframe<sup>2</sup>.



# Bury St Edmunds population

**44,374**  
residents



**16%**

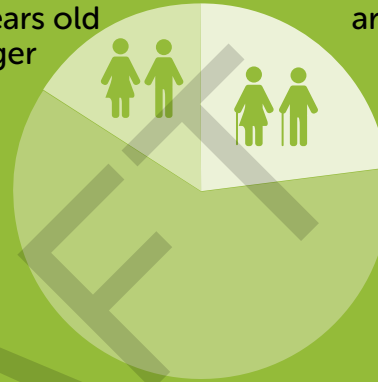
of people are 15 years old or younger

below average



**23%**

of people are over the age of 65



**49%**

of households are classed as deprived



## Travel patterns

**20%**

of households don't own a vehicle



**62%**

of people travel less than 5km to work



**17%**

of people walk, wheel or cycle to work



**24%**

of people work mainly from home



## School travel



Pockets of

**15%**

of school children cycle to school in the Moreton Hall area.

Less than

**5%**

of school children cycle to school in other areas of Bury St Edmunds<sup>3</sup>

Less than

**1%**



take the bus

Less than

**1%**



take the train



**51%**



drive a car or van to work

# Reasons for change



## Decarbonisation of Transport

In the Bury St Edmunds area, 19% of commuters travel to work by walking, wheeling and cycling or by bus or train. In order to meet Suffolk’s pathway to net zero, the proportion of commuter trips across Suffolk undertaken by these modes should rise to 35%<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, the government targets half of all journeys to be undertaken by active travel modes in towns across the country<sup>5</sup>. Existing infrastructure and sustainable transport services restrict people’s sustainable travel options.



## Health, Wellbeing and Social Inclusion

Increasing physical activity is linked to improved mental and physical health outcomes at all stages of life and prevention of chronic and acute health conditions. Increasing physical activity through walking, wheeling and cycling more trips will help to improve the health of the population in the Bury St Edmund’s area.





## A Strong, Sustainable and Fair Economy

Growth in housing and employment has been earmarked through West Suffolk Council's Local Plan for Bury St Edmunds in the East, South and West. The growth is unlikely to be sustainable in Bury St Edmunds unless issues on the transport network can be mitigated. The emphasis will be on a reduction in demand through a shift to sustainable and high-occupancy modes, though capacity improvements may be acceptable if no alternatives provide sufficient mitigation.



## Creating Better Places

There are opportunities to enhance how people interact with the town centre. Improved provision for walking, wheeling and cycling in the town centre, most notably at The Buttermarket and Cornhill and connections to the railway station in the northeast and the employment and education areas in the west of the town, will help to create healthier, more attractive and more accessible streets. The town's existing public rights of way network can help to provide access to green space.



# Summary of objectives

The Bury St Edmunds Area Transport Plan will support the development of sustainable travel options for the town's residents and visitors, so they become more attractive and realistic choices for everyone.



Enable active travel to be the default choice for shorter trips

Improve bus punctuality and reliability

Improve the integration of modes

Maximise growth opportunities

Support town centre economies

Engage with industry to limit the impact of lorries and other large vehicles on communities

## OBJECTIVE

# Enable active travel to be the default choice for shorter trips

A network of key walking and cycling routes in Bury St Edmunds have already been identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).

We will implement the following initiatives to make active travel the default choice for shorter trips:

### Invest in a core walking zone

We will increase the number of residents walking by improving the condition and appearance of pedestrian infrastructure along St Andrews Street and in the Cornhill area. This will improve safety and be developed alongside relevant plans for the town centre.

### Prioritise walking routes

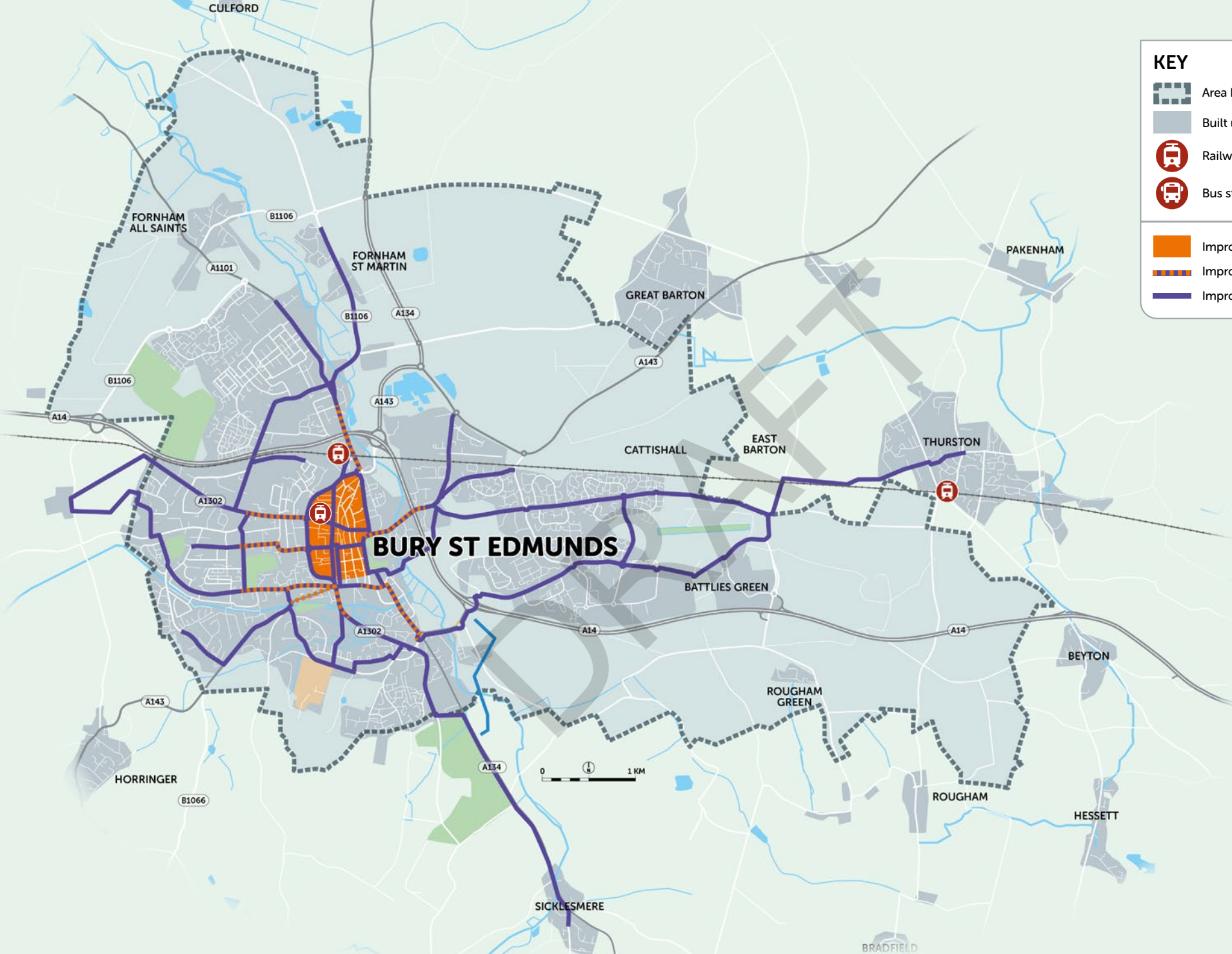
We will improve footways, crossing points and wayfinding signage along key walking routes in the town. We will focus on connecting the core walking zone with the town centre, railway station, educational and employment hubs, and West Suffolk Hospital.

### Prioritise cycling routes

To encourage more residents and visitors to cycle for short and medium trips (under 5 kms) we will introduce a number of installations including high-quality segregated cycle paths, priority crossing points for cyclists, modal filters and other traffic-calming measures to reduce speed and make cycling safer. We will also increase the number of secure cycle parking options. These key cycling routes will link the east to the west, stretching from Barton Road to Newmarket Road, which will help to overcome accessibility and severance issues in the town and to encourage cycling as a mode for occupants of new homes planned at either end of the town. Provision has also been made to connect Western Way, Beetons Way and Tollgate Lane which is a hub for education, employment, leisure and key services. Improvements will build on the existing walking and cycling provision.







**KEY**

-  Area boundary
-  Built up areas
-  Railway station
-  Bus station
-  Improved core walking zone
-  Improved walking routes
-  Improved cycle routes

OBJECTIVE

# Improve bus punctuality and reliability

A range of bus services operate in Bury St Edmunds which include connections to Newmarket, Stowmarket, Diss, Thetford, Mildenhall, Sudbury and Haverhill. Town circular services connect communities with the town centre and an on-demand community transport service connects those in more rural areas who are not served by a regular local bus service.

We will support opportunities to:

- Enhance service provision where long-term viability can be identified
- New services to new locations
- More flexible bus services that better meet local community demands

In collaboration with our Enhanced Bus Partnership operators we will identify opportunities to introduce physical bus priority measures in locations that are known to impact bus speeds, reliability and punctuality. This will include further examination of solutions for:

- A1101 Western Way delays – between the town centre and County Upper / St Benedict’s schools at peak times
- A143 Out Westgate congested – access via A143 Out Westgate and via Vinery Road at peak times
- St Andrew’s Street (South) – bus priority and enforcement of existing restrictions

Complementary measures will also be explored to alleviate delays to buses including:

- Addressing vehicle parking either blocking access to bus stops or general progress along bus routes
- The use of virtual bus priority at key traffic signals

We will continue to promote bus travel as a more sustainable way of connecting into Bury St Edmunds as we transition away from diesel buses to our Zero Emissions Bus Plan. This move will help alleviate local air quality issues, particularly around schools at drop off and pick up times.



## OBJECTIVE

## Improve the integration of modes

The main transport hubs in Bury St Edmunds are at the bus station located on St Andrew Street North and the railway station on Station Hill.

We will support a review of waiting facilities at the bus station inclusive of shelters, passenger information (preferably real-time) and sufficient high-quality cycle parking.

We will support measures to improve the layout of the railway station car park at the southern entrance to enhance modal integration and provide inclusive infrastructure that enables a choice of travel options for rail passengers.

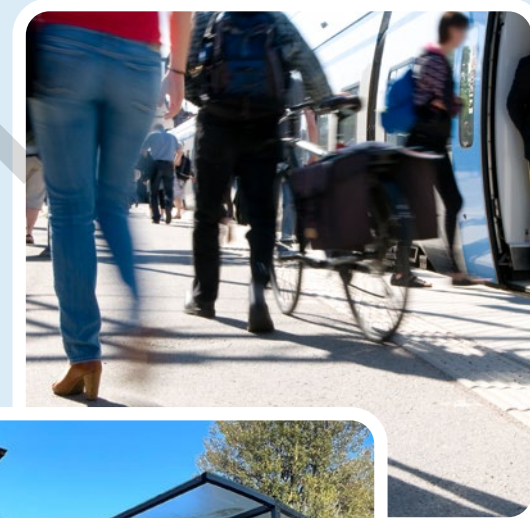
We will work with providers to promote the existing PlusBus discounted travel card scheme (joint train and bus travel) and encourage other providers to take part.

Improvements to the wider active travel network which connects to the railway station and bus station will be explored to ensure coherent connections to walking, wheeling and cycling routes are made to key services and facilities.

Electric vehicle car clubs will be delivered and promoted throughout the course of the plan, the first of which is proposed on Cannon Street.

Our work will continue with West Suffolk Council with the installation of electric vehicle charging points at more places people visit regularly. This will include maximising opportunities at district owned carparks.

We will also collaborate with partners to rationalise and consolidate car parking provision in Bury St Edmunds, so it is managed appropriately with consideration to highway efficiency and all its users including those walking, wheeling, cycling, and traveling by public transport.



## OBJECTIVE

## Maximise growth opportunities

Plans for growth are largely focussed on four large residential led development sites on the fringes of the town as well as the relocation of West Suffolk Hospital.

In the southeast, allocation is for 1,250 dwellings and a relief road with segregated cycle and pedestrian provision between Sicklesmere Road and Rougham Hill. This will include a new roundabout on Sicklesmere Road and a new toucan crossing and bus infrastructure.

Moreton Hall on the east of the town is allocated for 500 dwellings.

The northeast site is allocated for 1,250 dwellings. This site will include a foot / cycle bridge over the Cattishall railway crossing providing a continuous active travel route from the development to the town centre. Improvements will also be made to the existing railway tunnel for cyclists and pedestrians.

In the west of Bury St Edmunds, allocation is for 600 dwellings. The site is situated near Westley. There is a requirement for a relief road to be delivered to support this development.

The West Suffolk hospital redevelopment has been agreed on the Hardwick Manor site, behind the current hospital. It has planning permission and will bring forward some improvements on Hardwick Lane, routes to the railway station via Tayfen Road and St Andrew Street and a new link for pedestrians and cyclists from Horringer village. There will also be an improved bus service to and from the hospital's new site and this will

include an update to bus stop facilities. Other improvements have been agreed along the bridleway near the River Linnet to ensure it can be used as a cycling and walking link to the hospital all year round

Through the Local Transport Plan, the priority will be to mitigate the impact of new developments through careful consideration with the Local Planning Authority over spatial planning and a shift to active and sustainable modes. However, where severe impacts cannot be mitigated through sustainable travel measures alone, capacity improvements may be required to fully mitigate new developments. Analysis of forecast growth on the transport network indicates that the following junctions are likely to require additional capacity as a result of new developments:

- Tollgate junction / A1101
- A14 junction 42 – Westley interchange
- A14 junction 43 – Bury central interchange
- A14 junction 44 – Moreton Hall interchange
- A1302 Risbygate Street with Westley Road
- Compiegne Way roundabout with Out Risbygate
- A1302 Parkway with Risbygate Street
- A1302 Parkway / Cullum Road with Westgate Street



OBJECTIVE

# Support town centre economies

The Buttermarket and Cornhill are situated in the heart of the town. This area has great potential to improve the town centre experience for residents and visitors, particularly at the Cornhill which attracts illegal parking in the pedestrianised areas.

Access to and from the town centre and the Arc via St Andrews Street South, the Buttermarket, St Johns Street, Looms Lane and the Cornhill can be improved to create clear, safe and direct pedestrian routes. These areas would benefit from increased seating and social spaces, more trees and planting and co-ordinated and accessible signage and lighting.

We will continue to work with West Suffolk Council, to support the delivery of the Bury St Edmunds Town Centre Masterplan to enhance the experience and benefits of the town centre.



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OBJECTIVE

## Engage with industry to limit the impact of lorries and other large vehicles on communities

Suffolk's recommended lorry route map highlights key strategic routes that pass through Bury St Edmunds on the A14, A143 and A134 with local access routes serving destinations within the town.

Concerns about lorry movements, particularly during the nighttime, have been compounded by the development of Suffolk Business Park and the perception that lorries are junction hopping between Junction 44 and Junction 45 of the A14.

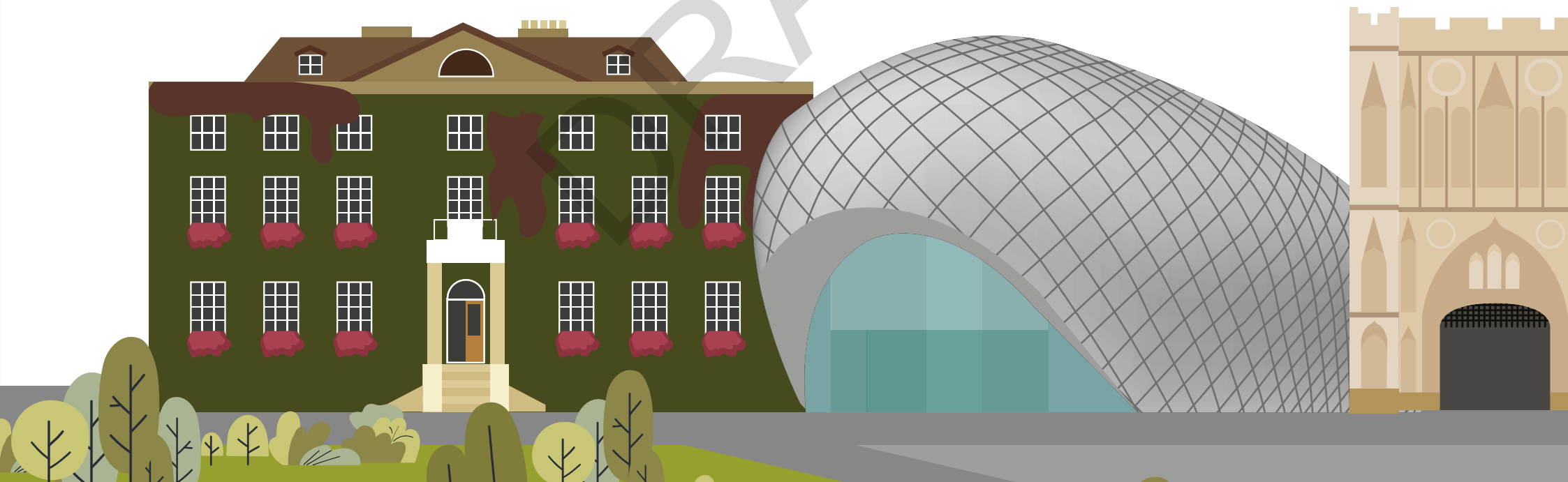
We will continue to monitor the movement of lorries throughout the town via our lorry route plan. This will include the area of Moreton Hall and Orttewell Road.

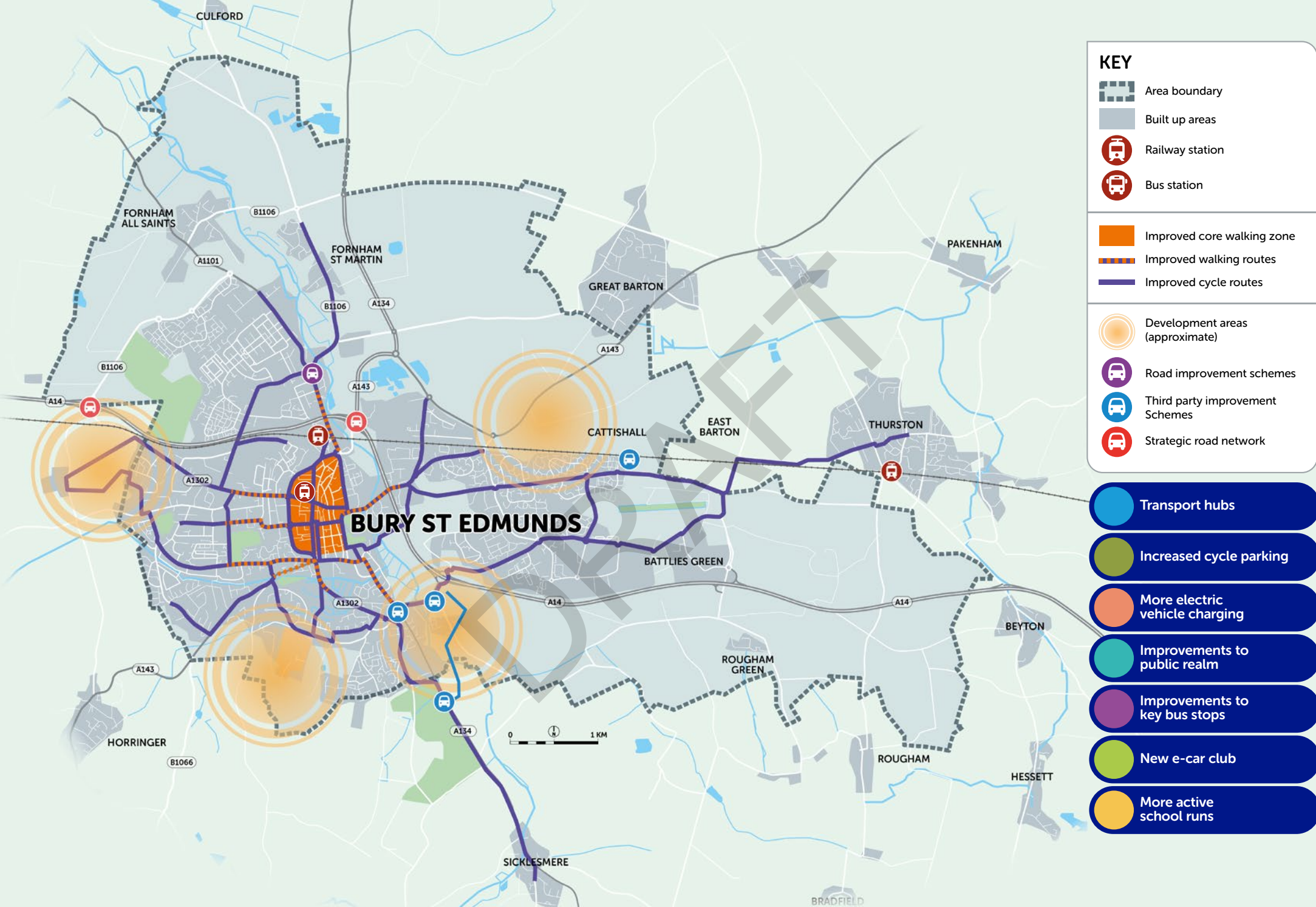
We will also support businesses to make and receive their deliveries more efficiently which may include options such as e-cargo bikes and electric vehicles, contributing to making our transport network more sustainable.



# Our plans for Bury St Edmunds

The development of the Area Transport Plan has identified a number of areas to improve sustainable travel movements. These areas together with housing and commercial development sites and the wider public realm, offer the opportunity for Bury St Edmunds town centre to meet the ongoing and future needs of its population, and those who visit and work in the area.







# Implementation plan

The table below indicates the county council’s priorities for investment over the next five years including schemes funded through the county council’s budgets, government funding and developer funding. The table does not include schemes delivered by 3rd parties.

Location	Description	Indicative Capital Investment
Bury St Edmunds	East-West cycle route improvements	£750,000
Bury St Edmunds	Junction capacity improvements	£5,000,000
Bury St Edmunds	St Andrews Street and Tayfen Road corridor sustainable transport improvements	£120,000

# References

- Office for National Statistics, Census Data (2021) [www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/](https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/customprofiles/build/)
- Travel Time <https://app.traveltime.com>
- Office for National Statistics, Census Data (2011) [Propensity to Cycle Tool - Suffolk \(pct.bike\)](#)
- Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan <https://www.greensuffolk.org>
- Gear Change. A bold vision for cycling and walking <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/>