



Cabinet

17 January 2024

Item

Public



Shrewsbury Movement & Public Space Strategy

Responsible Officer:

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Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder):

Cllr Ian Nellins
Cllr Dan Morris

1. Synopsis

- 1.1. To seek approval to commence formal consultation for a minimum period of eight weeks for the final draft of the Movement and Public Space Strategy for Shrewsbury. This strategy will ensure a cohesive, transformative approach to movement and public space across the town.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1. Healthy Environment is a key objective of The Shropshire Plan and commits to providing an integrated transport system and greater active travel options across the county. This draft Movement and Public Space Strategy (MPSS) for Shrewsbury aims to deliver on this commitment across the town as well as providing a reduction in vehicular emissions and improvements to air quality across the town, contributing to a cleaner, safer environment. The MPSS is cross cutting across the four objectives of the Shropshire Plan, which align to the objectives detailed in Appendix 1.
- 2.2. Stakeholder engagement has highlighted that the use of the term 'public realm' in its title and contents is ambiguous. Consequently, it has been replaced with the term 'public space' as this is considered to be a more appropriate and clearer description of the interventions proposed in the Strategy.
- 2.3. One of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan (SBTP 2018) key themes is 'Improving Movement and Place'. It is focussed on the principle that a town – and a town centre – that feels great to be in, to move around, is vital to Shrewsbury's future success and sustainable growth. Quality places, designed with people at its heart, make people feel welcome and create a canvas for public life; while ease of

movement, that strives for the right balance between modes, further supports quality of life and, as crucially, the business environment.

- 2.4. Following the SBTP in 2018, the subsequent Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Masterplan Vision (2021) acted as a timely development in the delivery of the ambitions set out previously, relating to movement and place. The vision identifies the need to implement a series of measures to reduce unnecessary traffic in the town, including through traffic. This was deemed necessary as improving movement across the town was a common dependency on accelerating many of the other proposals set out in the document.
- 2.5. The draft MPSS was commissioned by the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Partnership in 2022 and in the context of the Masterplan Vision, it sets out to put place-shaping at its core. In doing so, it meets the objectives defined in the brief that include:
- Create a vibrant, safe and inclusive town centre for residents and visitors.
 - Ensure a resilient place-based approach to adapting to climate change, air quality and promotes health and wellbeing.
 - Identify principles for improving access to, and mobility across the town, whilst supporting connectivity to surroundings areas, including through access to integrated modes of transport.
 - Maximises opportunities for active travel, particularly for people in the Protected Characteristic groupings of Age and Disability and others for whom safety is a key consideration: rebalancing the movement, hierarchy giving priority to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.
 - Influence highway infrastructure improvements that inform and facilitate major projects, aligned to the aspirations of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan.
 - Identify measures and incentives that discourage/control traffic passing through and unnecessarily entering the town centre, contributing to congestion.
 - Informs a prioritised programme of public space improvements; identifies and prioritises interventions and actions that deliver the objectives of the Movement Strategy and providing a basis on which to bid for new investment.
- 2.6. Following extensive stakeholder consultation during the commission, the draft MPSS has identified a series of key themes, key principles and a delivery plan for strategic interventions that, subject to further scoping, development and assessment, including traffic modelling, will ensure that MPSS objectives are met. The MPSS also provides an overarching framework for projects and activities currently in delivery, in development and yet to be identified. It further ensures an integrated approach to related activities such as parking, park & ride provision, and rail and bus services.
- 2.7. The MPSS is an ambitious 10-year strategy designed to be phased, subject to further detailed surveys, assessments and traffic modelling, the availability of funding and to align to local priorities. The Strategy includes a draft delivery plan that suggests priorities for consultation. The SBTP Partnership wants to ensure residents, visitors and businesses are excited about how good the town could be if the problems we have now could be resolved. The MPSS is summarised in appendix 2.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. Cabinet agrees that the draft Movement and Public Space Strategy for Shrewsbury be subject to public consultation for a period of eight weeks, commencing on Friday 26 January 2024, with the final terms of the consultation being approved by the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport.
- 3.2. Cabinet agrees that, following the conclusion of the public consultation, a further report will be presented to Cabinet for final approval of the Movement and Public Space Strategy for Shrewsbury, and authorises the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Climate Change, Environment and Transport, to develop a delivery plan to sit aside the Strategy as a working document and be subject to periodic review.

Report

4. Risk Assessment and Opportunities Appraisal

- 4.1. An ESHIA has been undertaken and updated to reflect the outcomes of the draft MPSS. It continues to demonstrate that the draft MPSS is anticipated to have a positive impact on communities in Shropshire, ensuring that the goals and objectives of both the Shropshire Plan and the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan to create a vibrant, safe and inclusive town for residents and visitors are met. This is provided as Appendix 3.
- 4.2. Positive impacts would be intended for a variety of intersecting Protected Characteristic groupings as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (Age, Disability, Pregnancy and Maternity, Sex) through tackling issues associated with the transport network, ensuring that Shrewsbury is accessible for all. Furthermore, there is potential for an increase in the positive impact in equality terms from low to positive, for the groupings of Gender Reassignment, Race, Religion and Belief, and Sexual Orientation. This will be achieved through measures outlined within the Strategy anticipated to result in safety gains for; pedestrians, cyclists and other active modes of transport, such as mobility scooters, wheelchair user and people with pushchairs and prams. The reduction in vehicular traffic in the town centre will create more space for pedestrians and cyclists and allow for the introduction of pedestrian areas and dedicated cycle lanes.
- 4.3. Given the recognised intersectionality across the nine Protected Characteristic groupings as set out in the Equality Act 2010 above, there will be a predicted positive impact for individuals and households across groupings, particularly in the groupings of Age and Disability. For example, young people who may have a learning disability will benefit from much quieter streets within the town centre, empowering individuals to feel confident walking and cycling within the town centre, creating a much more pleasant environment for all to enjoy. Strategic interventions outlined within the MPSS will also benefit neurodiverse individuals. This will be achieved through public space improvements which will make public spaces safe and accessible for everyone. Similarly, older people who may be frailer due to associated physical disability may also feel more confident about venturing out, therefore mitigating against loneliness as well as improving physical wellbeing.

4.4. Further engagement work will include efforts to strengthen engagement with people in protected characteristic groupings and people at risk of social exclusion, to maximise positive health impact benefits for individuals and for the wider community, and to define and deliver actions accordingly to mitigate any negative impact and enhance positive impact of the proposals as they progress.

4.5.

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Mitigation</i>
<p>Reputational risk: draft MPSS outcomes and interventions proposed are perceived not to be appropriate to Shrewsbury context.</p> <p>Public opposition to MPSS and or delivery plan/ interventions</p>	<p>MPSS delivered via SBTP Partnership with cross-sector representation.</p> <p>The MPSS has been developed with key stakeholders from across the public, private and voluntary sector, with stakeholders helping to develop the key principles and shape the strategic interventions as part of a Core Advisory Group.</p> <p>The detailed procurement process attracted subject matter experts with demonstrable experience in the development of movement and public space strategies from inception to design and delivery on site and in locations appropriate to the Shrewsbury context.</p> <p>The proposed formal consultation process will ensure the draft MPSS is communicated to stakeholders, with extensive consultation analysis being undertaken prior to formal adoption by the Council.</p>
<p>Technical ability to deliver interventions identified in the MPSS.</p>	<p>The delivery plan will recognise the need to undertake detailed assessments, surveys and modelling necessary to generate full business case for interventions.</p>
<p>MPSS delivery plan unaffordable/fails to attract funding.</p>	<p>Delivery plan will be indicative and will be required to respond to emerging local, regional and national priorities and funding opportunities. The Strategy has been informed by exemplar schemes undertaken in similar contexts elsewhere and are likely to attract funding and/or be delivered within existing budgets; many are relatively low-cost traffic management interventions.</p>
<p>MPSS indicative delivery plan conflicts with interventions currently in delivery/ under development.</p>	<p>The MPSS has been developed with representatives responsible for current/ proposed projects; no conflicts identified.</p> <p>The delivery plan, when complete, will continuously be updated to reflect other interventions taken forward across the town, ensuring conflicts are minimised</p>
<p>An incremental approach to the delivery of interventions fails to generate the</p>	<p>The MPSS provides the overarching framework for all interventions; in delivery, development and to be identified.</p>

intended positive impacts.	
Interventions have an adverse impact on economic activity within the town.	Economic Impact Assessment to be undertaken as part of business case development, and as funding bids are developed.
Interventions fails to deliver environmental/ air quality/ carbon reduction/ health and wellbeing benefits/ improvements	An initial ESHIA has been conducted for the contents of the MPSS and has indicated that there will be a positive impact on communities across Shropshire. Environmental and Health and Wellbeing assessments to be undertaken as part of business case development. Monitoring strategy to accompany interventions.

4.6. Key risks were raised and understood by the SBTP Partnership very early on with mitigation measures identified centred around the need to interpret, animate, and activate the MRSS so that the proposals can be easily understood, through testing and demonstrating what change could look like in the future. This has resulted in 'Shrewsbury Moves' as a stand-alone brand for the MRSS and the allocation of additional SBTP Partnership funds in support of the proposed 8 week public consultation to ensure the strategy is communicated in an engaging, innovative, and inclusive way.

5. Financial Implications

5.1. The draft MPSS has been co-developed and funded by the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan (SBTP) Partnership and will be a key delivery mechanism of the Big Town Plan which has been in existence since 2018. The proposed formal consultation including launch events and marketing collateral will also be facilitated and funded by the SBTP.

5.2. The delivery plan will identify interventions that will have revenue and capital implications. It will also aim to identify (likely-competitive) funding streams that could be applied for to facilitate the planned interventions and suggest likely strategies for successful awards.

5.3. The emerging MPSS has already been cited in several funding bids and subsequent awards including those associated with the Levelling Up Fund, the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) project applications, demonstrating a cohesive approach to delivery and comfort to funders of a longer-term plan over and above their initial funding investment.

6. Climate Change Appraisal

6.1. The Strategy will have a positive outcome and is designed to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport over private vehicles and create a modal shift towards more environmentally friendly methods of transportation. To achieve this, it is crucial that we decrease the volume of motor traffic within the town centre. Much of the traffic passing through the town centre fails to contribute to the

town's economic prosperity and, in fact, is leading to congestion in the town centre and air quality concerns.

6.2. Carbon consumption: Shropshire Cycle Hub estimate that Shrewsbury's total carbon (consumption) footprint is currently about 1MtCO₂e/a (12tCO₂e per person, 77,000 population), and about 46% of local emissions (46% of 5.2tCO₂e/person x 77000 = 184,000tCO₂e/a) are due to transport. Current car ownership in Shrewsbury is about 38,000 cars and about half of these on current trends are due to be replaced with new battery electric vehicles (BEVs) during the period to 31 December 2030. Embodied carbon in a new vehicle averages 15tCO₂e more than an e-bike or bike, so this gives a baseline of 'business as usual' emissions and demonstrates the potential reduction in carbon consumption by delivering the MPSS. It is noted that 95% of Shrewsbury's population live within 20 minute cycling distance from the town centre.

In addition, a quantified transport carbon baseline will be prepared as a key part of the evidence base for LTP4. This gives Midlands Connect and Department for Transport (DfT) ratified 2023 carbon assessments for Shropshire and Shrewsbury for any future baseline.

6.3. Air Quality: The area near Shrewsbury's Railway Station has Shropshire's highest level of nitrogen dioxide and large areas of the town centre are within the designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). As per the Environmental Act (2021), local authorities are required to develop a clear action plan outlining measures aimed at achieving and maintaining air quality standards and objectives in the area. A reduction in vehicular emissions and a robust improvement to air quality in the town centre will contribute to a cleaner, safer environment. Interventions within the MPSS can contribute towards potentially revoking the AQMA, for example the successful delivery of the 'Transforming Movement and Public Realm' project funded by DLUHC via Levelling Up funding will reduce NO₂ levels by 21% in the immediate area and is one of the first capital funding projects of the MRPS.

6.4. Public Realm / Space: Through reducing traffic through the town centre, there will be more space for public realm opportunities, including planting new plants and trees. Overtime, the town will be dominated by a more inclusive green environment, helping to absorb CO₂ from the atmosphere.

6.5. Climate change adaption: The draft MPSS will enhance pedestrian and cyclist access to the town. This will play a crucial role in lowering the town centre's susceptibility to climate change effects, especially during severe weather events when the town centre can become inaccessible due to flooding. Creating more accessible and inclusive connections to the town centre through walking and the installation of infrastructure designed to capture and manage rainwater will ensure that the town centre remains open and accessible.

7. Background

7.1. In 2018 the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan, co-created by Shropshire Council, Shrewsbury Town Council and Shrewsbury Business Improvement District (BID), was adopted by Shropshire Council as a material consideration in planning terms. It is also recognised within Shropshire Council's emerging Local Plan Review regarding its influence on the town's development to 2037.

7.2. The SBTP set a vision for the town centre, with a particular focus on movement:

“Traffic in the town centre is very light and slow moving. Pedestrians and cyclists can walk and move wherever they want, making the streets their own. The whole town is much better connected by cycle or on foot, in a safe way, avoiding conflict with vehicular traffic. It is possible now to make your way across town by cycle or on foot”.

7.3. In 2020/21 further Visioning and Masterplanning work was undertaken as part of the development of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Masterplan vision. Stakeholder feedback identified that that the planned movement interventions within the Vision required a more detailed strategy, necessary to transform and rethink movement and the public spaces in Shrewsbury, a key principle of the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan (SBTP).

7.4. Following a detailed procurement exercise, PJA were commissioned in Spring 2022 by the SBTP Partnership to produce the draft MPSS for Shrewsbury. The geographic scope of the MPSS commission is included in appendix 4. In summary the commission included, though not exclusively, the following key areas of enquiry:

7.5.1 *Review of Strategic Context:* the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan articulates the overarching aspirations for the town centre with the following activities to be considered during the development of the draft MPSS.

- Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Masterplan Vision
- Shropshire Local Transport Plan (LTP4 under development)
- Shropshire Local Plan Review
- Shrewsbury Place Plan
- Smithfield Riverside Strategic Development Framework

7.5.2 *Appraisal of Current and Proposed Interventions:* it is a core requirement that the draft MPSS appraises the fit of related activities and interventions under development and/or in delivery, namely:

- Shrewsbury Town Centre Redevelopment Programme: Phase One Smithfield Riverside.
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)
- Shropshire Bus Service Improvement Plan
- High Street pedestrianisation trials
- Shrewsbury Movement Recovery Task Force
- Shrewsbury Integrated Transport Package (SITP)
- North West Relief Road (NWRR)
- Rail Interventions and Midlands Connect
- River Severn Partnership Adaptive Pathways Pilot
- River Severn Partnership Climate Resilience Strategy

7.5.3 *Consideration of Emerging Requirements:*

- Integrated public transport opportunities; bus and rail facilities within the town centre and serving the County hinterland and regional connectivity.
- Identify and reduce through and unnecessary traffic, allowing priority for residents, businesses (including servicing), tourism and leisure and to support wider regeneration initiatives within the Big Town Plan.

- Ensure town-wide servicing and access necessary to retain the economic vitality and vibrancy.
- Improved connectivity and access to sustainable modes of active travel, through an enhanced network of walking and cycling routes.
- Parking strategy integrated with Park and Ride, Bus Service Improvement Plan and other related initiatives that can be developed over time as
- Improve connectivity to key assets in the locality including through the Northern Corridor to Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings.
- Contribute to Health and Wellbeing, and health inequalities.

7.5.4 *Stakeholder engagement, consultation and mapping*: a substantive component of the commission was the requirement to undertake detailed stakeholder engagement. A ‘Core Advisory group’ has been established to capture and ensure representation of key stakeholders during the development (and potentially ongoing delivery) of the draft MPSS. Continuous internal engagement has also been conducted with the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Partnership, with a Movement Steering Group and Working Group being developed with strong governance supporting this. Following public consultation, it is intended that following any amendments, the strategy will be formally adopted by Shropshire Council.



7.5.5 *Identify Outcomes and Deliverables*: resulting from a baseline review of the above the draft MPSS is required to deliver the following:

- Movement analysis.
- Development of Key Principles.
- Identify public realm / space interventions: streets, squares and other open/greenspaces.
- Sequence, phasing and delivery plan, with next steps and dependencies/additional studies/modelling/assessments necessary to prioritise future activities and inform funding applications.

8. Additional Information

8.1. The draft MPSS has identified four key themes and fourteen key principles that have collectively identified potential strategic interventions (appendix 5). The four key themes are summarised as follows.

- Traffic Management/Active Travel Inside the River Loop: shifting the focus from private motor vehicle to sustainable, active transport.
- Traffic Management/Active Travel Inside the River Loop: encouraging walking, cycling and public transport for local trips across the town.
- Public Transport and Micromobility: establishing a comprehensive network of public transport and micromobility options (such as bicycles or scooters, especially electric models and short-term hire facilities) across the town.
- Parking Plus: remodelling parking charges within Shrewsbury to make sustainable alternatives more cost-effective incorporated and supported by bus (especially Park and Ride) and rail facilities.

‘Shrewsbury Moves’ Public Engagement

8.2. Whilst the draft MPSS has been developed following extensive, wide ranging stakeholder engagement, it is proposed to proceed with a further stakeholder engagement, complemented with public consultation on the final draft Strategy document (appendix 2). Delivered by the Shrewsbury Big Town Plan Partnership, this further consultation will ensure all opportunities have explored to reach out to as many stakeholders, community groups and other interested parties as possible. Furthermore, it will ensure alignment with other activities underway in Shrewsbury, with reference to Smithfield Riverside (for which the draft MPSS has informed and been tested by the emerging programme of development), Levelling Up Fund Round 2 grant award for environmental and active travel improvements adjacent to the rail station gyratory, Castle Foregate and St Michaels Street, the Park and Ride, Bus Service Improvement Plan and bus OnDemand service.

8.3. To maximise awareness, accessibility to, and engagement with the draft MPSS, the SBTP Partnership is proposing to present the Strategy utilising engaging, innovative, and inclusive techniques that have been demonstrated to inform and inspire local people and businesses to participate more effectively in public consultation exercises.

8.4. It is proposed to launch the formal public consultation with a series of events and activities including:

- A pop-up shop / in-person presence within the town centre for the duration of the consultation.
- Events & activities showcasing key interventions in the town.
- Guided and self-guided tours around the town (using QR codes).
- A branding, social media campaign and website.
- Using the Steering Groups as advocates and champions of the strategy.
- Informative videos, CGIs, FAQs, leaflets and an easily understood summary document.
- Showcase the UKSPF-funded “On Your bike!” - hire bike scheme due to launch in Spring / Summer 2024.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1. The draft MPSS has been developed with extensive stakeholder engagement over an 18 month period, supported by a Steering Group administered by the SBTP Partnership. The engagement to date has demonstrated there is significant, positive interest in the MPSS from all sectors of the residential and business communities, as well as those across the county and the wider region. It is proposed to complement the engagement undertaken during the commission with the proposed further formal public consultation before the strategy is finalised.
- 9.2. The draft MPSS sets out the vision, aspirations and a deliverable plan of actions and interventions to realise many of the opportunities that it highlights for Shrewsbury. It is also recognised that some of these interventions will require further scoping, technical assessment and traffic modelling in the locality, as well as a period to sensitively introduce any interventions.
- 9.3. Therefore, the draft Strategy must be adaptable and flexible, yet with clear objectives, as set out in the document, for which it must be recognised that any associated changes in the town are managed sensitively and over a realistic period that allows interventions to be well developed, appraised and introduced, possibly through trials, that minimise any concerns or generate any adverse implications for the town. Consequently, and subject to the outcomes of the proposed formal consultation and subject to periodic review, it is proposed that the final approved MPSS will be delivered over a period of up to 10 years.
- 9.4. Following the formal consultation, the proposed MPSS will be finalised and be the subject of a future report to Cabinet for approval.

Local Member:	Cllr Nat Green
	Cllr Alan Mosley
	Cllr Julian Dean
	Cllr Bernie Bentick
	Cllr Dean Carroll
	Cllr Ted Clarke
	Cllr Rosemary Dartnall
	Cllr Mary Davies
	Cllr Julia Evans
	Cllr Kate Halliday
	Cllr Pam Moseley
	Cllr Kevin Pardy
	Cllr Tony Parsons
	Cllr David Vasmer
	Cllr Alex Wagner
	Cllr Rob Wilson

Appendices [Please list the titles of Appendices]

1. Movement and Public Space Strategy and delivery of the Shropshire Plan.
2. Movement and Public Space Strategy for Shrewsbury – Summary Report entitled “Shrewsbury Moves – A 10 year vision and plan” (provided as a separate attachment)
3. ESHIA for Shrewsbury Movement and Public Space Strategy (provided as a separate attachment)
4. Movement and Public Space Strategy – Commission Geographic Scope/Context
5. Movement and Public Space Strategy Core Themes and Key Principles

Appendix 1: Draft Movement and Public Space Strategy and the Shropshire Plan

MPRS: The BENEFITS for Shrewsbury
DELIVERING THE SHROPSHIRE PLAN PJA

Healthy Economy

- Additional space for spill-out activities
- Increased spend, dwell time and footfall
- Increased patronage on public transport and Park & Ride,
- Support delivery of key development sites
- Improved journey time reliability

Healthy Environment

- Improved air quality
- Improved setting for historical assets
- More pleasant environment for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users
- Promoting use of low/zero-carbon modes transport
- Improved resilience against flooding events.
- Delivery of Shrewsbury Big Town Plan vision

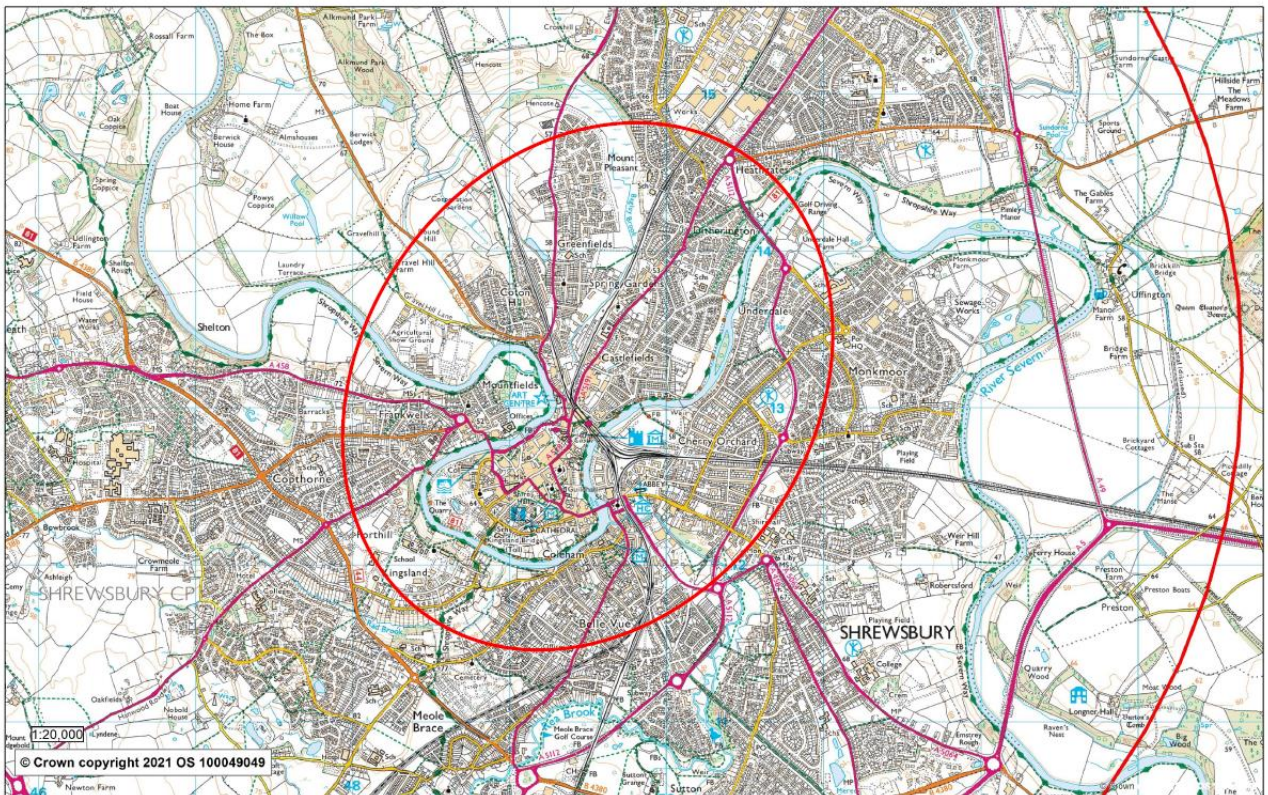
Healthy People

- Increased uptake of active travel modes
- Improved perceived and actual safety levels
- Improved connectivity by affordable, sustainable and convenient modes of travel
- Ensures equal access to town centre for all users
- Improved quality of life

Appendix 2: Movement and Public Space Strategy for Shrewsbury – Summary Report entitled “**Shrewsbury Moves – A 10 year vision and plan**” (provided as a separate attachment)

Appendix 3: ESHIA for Shrewsbury Movement and Public Space Strategy (provided as a separate attachment)

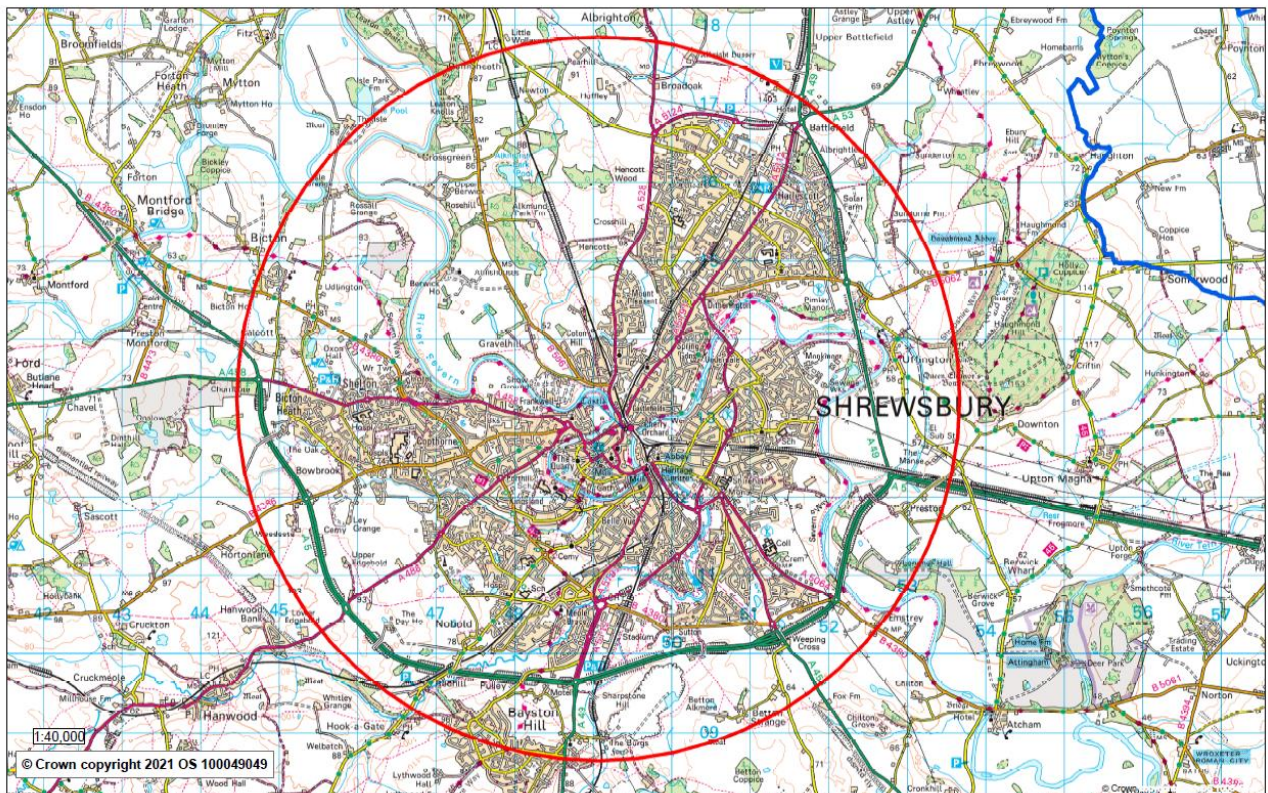
Appendix 4: Movement and Public Space Strategy – Commission Geographic Scope/Context



Core Study Area

ArcGIS Web AppBuilder

Date: 02/11/2021



Extended Study Area

ArcGIS Web AppBuilder

Date: 02/11/2021



Appendix 5: Movement and Public Space Strategy Core Themes and Key Principles

The key themes of the strategy are:

Traffic Management & active travel inside the river loop

Shifting the focus from private motor vehicle to sustainable, active transport modes.



Traffic Management and active travel outside the river loop

Encouraging walking, cycling and public transport for local trips across the town.



Public Transport and Micromobility

Establishing a comprehensive network of public transport and micromobility options across Shrewsbury.



Parking Plus

Remodelling parking charges within Shrewsbury to make sustainable alternatives more cost effective.



Emerging Key Principles	Traffic management / active travel inside river loop	Traffic management / active travel outside river loop	Public Transport & Micromobility	Parking Plus
Reduce / remove through traffic from town centre				
Ensure convenient access to town centre and local facilities and uptake of sustainable modes for these journeys				
Reduce vehicle speeds and volume of private motor vehicles				
Reduce severance caused by River Severn and railway line				
Increase priority given to buses, pedestrians and cyclists and improve road safety for all users				
Provide more sympathetic public spaces for historic and environmental assets				
Enhance Park and Ride offer, and incentivise use				
Improve resilience of local transport network to extreme weather events				
Provide an efficient public transport network with improved bus facilities in town centre				
Improve cross-town connectivity by sustainable transport modes				
Ensure servicing access to businesses and event sites is maintained				
Improve environmental quality and air quality				
Reallocate road space to provide more space for business and event activity, pedestrians and cyclists				
Enhance rail connectivity to better accommodate local, regional and national travel				