

chapter

9

transport and access



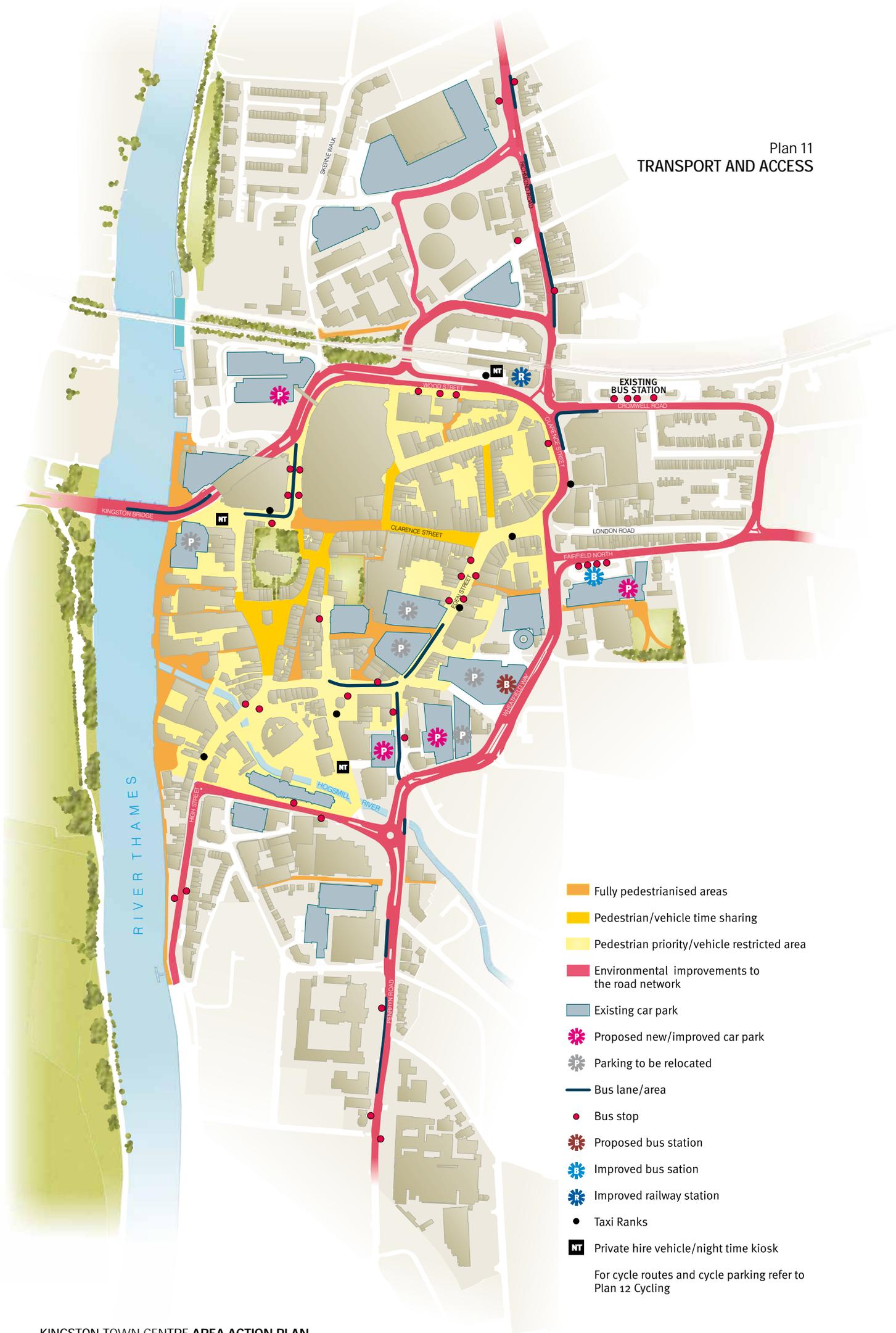


KEY OBJECTIVE 6:

To improve transport, access and connectivity for all

- 9.1 Town centres are sustainable locations for major development and facilities, as they are accessible by various means of transport and can cater for multi-purpose trips, which helps to reduce overall travel demand and car use. Ease of access plays an important role in maintaining vital and viable town centres and can affect a centre's attraction to visitors and businesses and its local economy. This is particularly so in the case of Kingston where access to the town centre is a significant local issue. In early stakeholder engagement, issues relating to congestion and the relief road featured as weaknesses, and the need to resolve transport issues as a major aspiration.
- 9.2 Kingston town centre is a transport hub with road, rail, bus, cycle and pedestrian networks. There is significant linkage between issues relating to these networks, so they need to be treated together as part of the wider transport strategy. The following features affect the way people access the town centre and future policy directions:
- Five main roads feed into the relief road system, which carries high levels of through traffic, much of it to cross Kingston Bridge, as well as town centre traffic, which results in some congestion at peak times
 - The relief road frees a large part of the centre from traffic and congestion, allowing vehicle restrictions and pedestrian and cycle priority
 - The focus of major shopping facilities with associated car parks in parts of the town centre, and driver preference, leads to motorists queuing to access these car parks having driven past other car parks with spaces
 - Rail accessibility is poor as Kingston is not on the main rail network, but served by the Waterloo to Richmond loop and Shepperton branch lines (both with half hour services)
 - There is a comprehensive network of frequent and reliable bus services
 - Public transport from the south and west, especially from Surrey districts is poor and so car use from these areas is high
 - There is a comprehensive network of cycle routes forming part of the London Cycle Network
 - The close proximity of surrounding residential areas and flat topography mean that many people can choose to walk or cycle into the town centre
 - The Mayor of London's Transport Strategy expects the car to remain the most popular means of travel in outer London for the foreseeable future

Plan 11
TRANSPORT AND ACCESS



- Fully pedestrianised areas
- Pedestrian/vehicle time sharing
- Pedestrian priority/vehicle restricted area
- Environmental improvements to the road network
- Existing car park
- Proposed new/improved car park
- Parking to be relocated
- Bus lane/area
- Bus stop
- Proposed bus station
- Improved bus station
- Improved railway station
- Taxi Ranks
- Private hire vehicle/night time kiosk

For cycle routes and cycle parking refer to Plan 12 Cycling

9.3 Recent trends have seen a growth in trips, a decline in traffic levels and a significant increase in bus usage, following bus service improvements. The Council is committed to maintaining such trends and improving accessibility to the town centre through the sustainable development of the various transport networks, to meet increasing travel needs resulting from new development and facilities, improve the environment and reduce traffic congestion. One of the aims is to manage travel demand, especially car use and achieve mode shift to more sustainable forms of transport. A sensitive approach is required so as not to put the town centre at a commercial disadvantage, which would affect the local economy. The Council recognises that its powers are very limited as it does not control the rail or bus networks and parts of the road network and that it needs to work in partnership to achieve its key objective.



9.4 This AAP proposes a number of policies and measures, within the context of the Mayor's London Plan and Transport Strategy, the Community Plan, the Council's UDP and Local Implementation Plan (Transport) 2006, transport constraints and community/stakeholder responses, which seek to:

- Balance the need to keep traffic flowing on the main road network to minimise congestion, especially delay to buses, with opportunities to give greater priority to pedestrians, cyclists and people with disabilities (K15)
- Further improve public transport, especially from the south and west, orbital and late night transport and provide a new bus station and improvements to Kingston Station (K16)
- Continue the programme of pedestrian improvements to provide safe, attractive and legible routes (K17)
- Further improve cycle routes and provide secure cycle parking (K18)
- Improve provision for taxis, community transport and Shopmobility and promote permanent park and ride schemes (K19)
- Make better use of parking capacity by providing clear signing and high quality car parks associated with major attractions (K20)
- Promote Transport Demand Management (TDM), including the provision of travel plans to promote sustainable ways of travelling and thereby reduce demand for car parking (K16)



POLICY CONTEXT FOR CHAPTER 9	TRANSPORT AND ACCESS
London Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3C.14, 3C.16 – 3C.18, 3C.20 – 3C.24 • Mayor’s Transport Strategy
RBK Local Implementation Plan (Transport)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies 1 – 7; 9; 14; 17; 19 – 22; 27; 29
Community Plan	Chapter 6 Transport: Priorities 1 – 8
UDP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STR13 Sustainable Transport Strategy • STR14 Roads Hierarchy • STR16 Developing & Promoting Sustainable Transport Modes
Other Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking Strategy for the Borough 2005 • TfL Walking Plan • TfL Improving Walkability • RBK Cycling Strategy 2006 • RBK Secure Cycle Parking Strategy 2004 • Parking Study 2003 • RBK Parking Strategy for the town centre 2005 • RBK Parking and Enforcement Plan • London Cycling Action Plan 2004



POLICY K15: TOWN CENTRE ROAD NETWORK

Through partnership working with Transport for London, the implementation of the Proposal Sites and policies in this AAP and the determination of planning applications, the Council will:

- Seek to balance competing needs on the town centre road network, including the need to maintain traffic circulation and minimise congestion with opportunities to give greater priority to pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and people with disabilities
- Continue to reduce vehicle access, where feasible, within the Motor Vehicle Restricted Area (Plan 11 and Proposals Map) and implement pedestrian and cycle priority schemes to improve the environmental quality of the streets
- Seek to ensure that servicing and delivery arrangements meet the reasonable needs of business through improved off-street servicing and loading facilities. Where possible, these should be underground or through rear servicing and should also provide for adjacent properties
- Review signing and implement an integrated signing strategy for vehicles, buses, freight, pedestrians and cyclists

K15 replaces UDP Policy KTC25 Servicing Facilities in the Pedestrian Priority Area





9.5 The relief road system, which is part of the Mayor of London’s strategic road network caters for through and local traffic and carries around 64,000 vehicles daily 7am-7pm, including 18,000 each way across Kingston Bridge. Although the weekday morning and evening peaks are very busy, traffic does continue to flow. Congestion occurs during the middle of the day at weekends and over the Christmas period due to queuing for already full car parks. The road system is also vulnerable to congestion if an incident reduces normal road capacity and this results in Kingston having an undeserved reputation for congestion, which can deter visitors and affect businesses.

9.6 Whilst there are not considered to be any feasible major alterations to the relief road system which would be beneficial, through new development and partnership working, there are opportunities for some alterations to be made to the road system and traffic management to benefit pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport (see also policies K16, K17 and K18), whilst maintaining traffic capacity and dealing with local safety and capacity constraints. Clearer signing can also improve traffic circulation and reinforce the interceptor parking strategy (K20), by directing people to their destinations.

9.7 Suitable servicing arrangements need to be made for businesses, which minimise the need for on-street servicing, improve road safety and the street environment, optimise traffic capacity and extend pedestrian priority. Significant parts of the main retail area already have basement service areas and new development should be similarly served to minimise impact on shoppers and shopping streets. Where this is not possible, for example in the historic core, the Council will minimise conflict and adverse effects on pedestrians and cyclists by controlling delivery and servicing hours through planning conditions, agreements or Traffic Management Orders.

POLICY K16: PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Council will work with partners including TfL, London Rail, Network Rail, the Department for Transport, transport providers, including London Buses and South West Trains, SWELTRAC, landowners and developers and seek to ensure that the following improvements to public transport infrastructure and services are implemented:

- More frequent and reliable rail services, including more late night rail services on the Richmond to Kingston loop line
- Significant improvements to Kingston Station including: a new entrance and ticketing hall, better interchange facilities, lifts, secure cycle parking, later opening, better security, staffing and information and in the longer term a new station with development above (Proposal Site P10)
- Improved bus services to the town centre including:
 - Better late night/24 hour services
 - Additional bus priority measures
 - Better cross GLA/Surrey boundary bus services
 - Provision of an express bus link between Kingston and Surbiton to improve public transport access from Surrey districts to Kingston town centre by rail + bus via Surbiton Station
- A new bus station on Proposal Site P3, associated bus priority measures on the relief road and the removal of buses from Eden Street
- Improvements to the Fairfield bus station (Proposal Site P5)
- Improved safety and security on public transport
- Better service information and promotion of public transport

K16 replaces UDP KTC23 Public Transport Interchange.

9.8 Improvements to public transport infrastructure and services will improve accessibility to the town centre and encourage increased use of public transport. This will help reduce reliance on car use, achieve mode shift and contribute to sustainability objectives. The Council will work with the operators and other partners to promote and lobby for the wide range of improvements identified. As well as service improvements, safety and security measures to reduce crime or fear of crime and the provision of good public transport information and marketing can increase patronage of public transport.

9.9 Improving the quality and frequency of rail services would encourage more people, particularly shoppers living to the west and northwest, where there are only two trains per hour, to use the train and increase the low 7% share that rail has of overall travel to Kingston. The provision of new rail services will need to be developed in conjunction with the sub-regional partnership group – SWELTRAC (The South and West London Transport Conference).

- 9.10 The quality of Kingston Station, which is owned by Network Rail and operated by South West Trains, is the least satisfactory of the borough's ten stations relative to its usage and the status of the town centre. Access to and within the station fails to meet Disability Discrimination Act requirements and its appearance, layout and functioning is unsatisfactory and requires improvement. Later opening of the main entrance after 10pm is essential to make access to late night train services easier and safer.
- 9.11 Improved affordability, frequency and reliability of Kingston's extensive system of bus routes (19 day and 5 all night services) has led to a significant increase in bus use. The Mayor's Transport Strategy seeks a further increase in bus services and bus use. The provision of a new bus station on Site P3 would cater for such an increase, provide better facilities for bus passengers and enable the removal of buses from Eden Street, where the waiting environment for bus passengers is poor and there is an unacceptably high accident rate. Improvements to the Fairfield bus station are required to create additional space for terminating buses to stop and stand. Further improvements to night services will improve transport home from nightclubs in the early morning to areas of high demand. Bus priority measures such as contra-flow bus lanes can assist in improving journey times and bus reliability.
- 9.12 There is no direct rail service to Kingston from parts of its catchment area which are within the Surrey districts of Epsom and Ewell, Elmbridge, Spelthorne and Runnymede and there is a significant deficiency in bus services from these areas, which results in high car use. Improving cross border bus services and fares and promoting rail plus bus services via Surbiton Station would improve public transport accessibility to Kingston, offer a viable alternative to the car and help reduce car use.



POLICY K17: PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT

The Council will improve the walking environment by continuing the programme of pedestrian priority schemes and improvements to pedestrian routes including: crossings on the relief road; from points of arrival (bus stations, Kingston station and car parks) to the core of the centre and the riverside; the riverside walk, the Thames Path and the Hogsmill Walk.

*K17 replaces UDP Policy KTC24
Pedestrian Networks*

- 9.13 Improving the pedestrian environment, routes and crossings will encourage more people to walk and aid sustainability. Kingston is fortunate to have a large area of the centre, which is free from through motor traffic, where the implementation of further pedestrian and cycle priority schemes, will further improve the pedestrian environment. Schemes in Memorial Square, Harrow Passage, Castle Street and Skerne Walk (outside the core) were completed in 2006.



- 9.14 Community engagement in the early stages of AAP preparation identified the relief road as a barrier, due to its width and heavy traffic. Most people walking to the centre from residential areas, Kingston Station, bus stations and some car parks need to cross the relief road. Whilst there are no realistic options to radically alter the relief road, improving the environment of the crossings will reduce its impact and assist pedestrians (see also Policy K10 Public Realm).
- 9.15 Providing attractive leisure routes, including the Thames Path national trail, the rest of the riverside walk and the Hogsmill Walk (see Policy K14) is important as they attract visitors, encourage walking and contribute to health and well-being.



POLICY K18: CYCLING (Plan 12)

The Council will:

- Maintain and extend cycle routes
- Improve secure cycle parking, requiring development proposals to provide secure cycle parking commensurate with user needs in accordance with relevant standards (Appendix 4) and the provision of secure off-street public cycle parking centres on Proposal Sites P10 Kingston Station, P3 Eden Quarter and P13 Bishops Palace House
- Work with businesses and other organisations through travel planning initiatives, to secure improved cycle parking provision and changing facilities for employees at the workplace, shops, transport interchanges and other trip generators

9.16 Promoting sustainable travel, including cycling, will help reduce reliance on car use. The town centre and the borough generally have above average levels of cycling. The Cycling Strategy aims to double the mode share of cycling from 3% in 2001 to 6% by 2011. This will require further enhancements to: the comprehensive network of routes within and around the town centre catering for through journeys and town centre trips, including dedicated cycle crossing points to improve convenience and safety; the provision of secure cycle parking for residents, visitors and employees and the promotion of cycling. Increasing cycling will also help to reduce congestion, air and noise pollution, improve social inclusion and achieve health and well-being objectives.

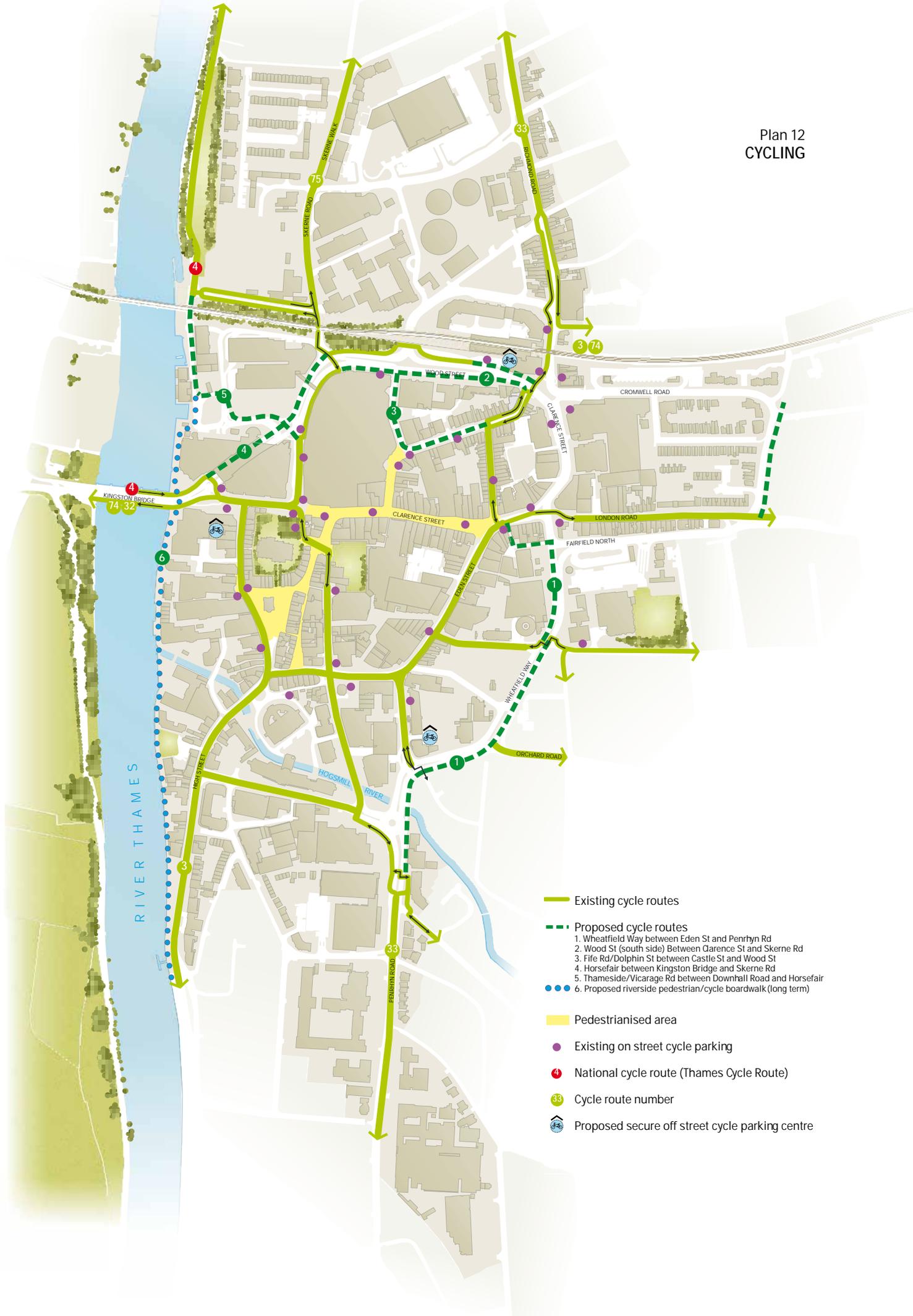
9.17 Improved off-street and on-street cycle parking is required to address the issue of cycle theft in the town centre which deters cycling. There are approximately 600 on-street secure cycle parking spaces in Kingston Town Centre and on busy weekend summer afternoons these can be full to capacity. There is limited space on the highway to accommodate substantially more parked cycles. The Secure Cycle Parking Strategy, which adopted the recommendations of the Secure Cycle Parking Study, proposed increased on-street secure cycle parking and identified three main cycle gateways to the town centre (Northern, Southern and Western) where off-street cycle parking facilities should be provided in a secure compound or centre.



9.18 The provision of secure cycle parking centres on the three Proposal Sites (P3, P10 and P13) in conjunction with proposed improvements and comprehensive mixed-use development will meet the identified need. They should include some or all of the following: supervised and secure off-street cycle parking; showers and changing facilities; lockers for clothing and accessories; bicycle hire; services of a retail shop and repair facility; information about cycling and other sustainable travel facilities.

9.19 The Council will implement this Policy through Proposal Site policies (Part C of this AAP), the determination of planning applications and bids for funding from Transport for London through the London Cycle Network and Borough Spending Plan process.





- Existing cycle routes
- - - Proposed cycle routes
 1. Wheatfield Way between Eden St and Penrhyn Rd
 2. Wood St (south side) Between Clarence St and Skerne Rd
 3. Fife Rd/Dolphin St between Castle St and Wood St
 4. Horsefair between Kingston Bridge and Skerne Rd
 5. Thameside/Vicarage Rd between Downhall Road and Horsefair
 6. Proposed riverside pedestrian/cycle boardwalk (long term)
- Pedestrianised area
- Existing on street cycle parking
- 4 National cycle route (Thames Cycle Route)
- 33 Cycle route number
- 🚲 Proposed secure off street cycle parking centre

POLICY K19: OTHER MEASURES TO IMPROVE ACCESSIBILITY TO KINGSTON TOWN CENTRE

The Council will work with relevant partners including:

- TfL London Buses and neighbouring local authorities to promote the provision of permanent park and ride facilities to the town centre
- The voluntary sector to increase the direct provision and capacity of community transport to the town centre
- Service providers to maintain and improve the Shopmobility Scheme, including the relocation and expansion of the scheme to more accessible ground level sites
- TfL (Public Carriage Office), the Police, Kingston Town Centre Management and cab operators:
 - To provide appropriate taxi ranks, including at Kingston Station
 - To maintain and improve provision for taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) late at night to serve the evening and late night economy
- Local organisations and developers to improve travel planning, including the Kingston Travel Plan Network

9.20 The seasonal (November to January) Park and Ride service from Chessington World of Adventures to the town centre removes about 30,000 cars from the A243 and other local roads. Its success justifies this policy to provide permanent park and ride schemes to improve access to the town centre. Potential sites were identified by the Park and Ride Study and a Strategy was adopted in 2003. Kempton Park racecourse is viewed as a suitable site by the Council utilising the existing rail station on the Shepperton to Kingston line. However the project relies on co-operation from other partners, including Surrey County Council, Spelthorne District Council and United Racecourses.

9.21 Community Transport helps those unable to drive or use conventional public transport and makes a vital contribution to improving social inclusion. The Council assists by funding and running the Taxi Voucher Scheme and contributing to Dial a Ride and voluntary care schemes. Shopmobility provides improved mobility and access for older people and people with disabilities and it currently operates from the first floor of the Eden Walk car park. Improving the scheme through expansion and relocation to one or more easily accessible ground level sites within or adjacent to the core pedestrian priority area would improve 'access for all' and promote social inclusion.

9.22 Taxis and PHV's (mainly mini-cabs) serve a variety of journey purposes, some of which help achieve environmental and mode shift objectives, such as travelling to or from train and bus stations. They are used by all social groups, are socially inclusive, help households without a car and are very important late at night to take people home from night-time attractions. There are 7 taxi ranks in the town centre (see Plan 11). The December 2003 pilot scheme funded and operated by TfL Public Carriage Office, which involved marshalling for the taxi rank outside the Oceana nightclub in Clarence Street was a great success and led to another pilot scheme for both taxis and PHV's and the introduction of a permanent scheme. This involves the provision of kiosks by KTCM to act as designated pick-up points and facilitate the pre-booking of mini-cabs, which has improved late night transport, as well as safety and security and has reduced public disorder offences.

9.23 Travel planning can provide information on alternative ways of accessing the town centre, encourage the use of sustainable means of travel and reduce car use. The Kingston Travel Plan Network is a forum of private and public sector organisations that focus on transport issues.

POLICY K20: TOWN CENTRE PARKING

The Council will work with partners, including businesses, car park operators, Kingston Town Centre Management, landowners and developers to implement the Parking Strategy which aims to make better use of parking capacity and will:

- Maintain public off-street parking at around 7,000 spaces
- Implement Proposal Site policies to provide high quality car parks outside the Motor Vehicle Restricted Area, including new and improved parking on Sites P3, P4, P 5 and P12 and the removal of public parking from Sites P2 and P13 (which are within the MVRA) associated with major development
- Publicise car parks, consider optimum pricing arrangements and improve signing

Through the determination of planning applications, the Council will:

- Require parking provision for development sites within the MVRA (Plan 11 and Proposals Map) to be within the high quality interceptor car parks and/or contributions towards sustainable forms of transport, access, safety and environmental improvements
- Accept reduced parking provision for residential development i.e. less than the maximum of 1 parking space per flat
- Require the development of student accommodation to be car-free and provide S106 contributions towards town centre transport, access and environmental improvements
- Seek parking provision for other development/uses in accordance with relevant standards (Appendix 5) or S106 financial contributions towards sustainable forms of transport, access, safety and environmental improvements and improvements to car parks

Through its roles as a highway authority and car park operator the Council will:

- Ensure generous and convenient on and off street parking provision for blue badge holders in accordance with relevant standards
- Maintain and improve parking for 'powered two wheelers' (motor bikes and scooters)
- Keep under review the provision and need for coach parking

K20 replaces UDP Policies KTC26 Provision of Public Parking and KTC27 Inner Area of Parking Restriction

- 9.24 Parking is a significant local issue and parking strategy is a key element of overall transport strategy for this AAP. Sufficient parking is required to enable commercial, cultural and entertainment activity to flourish, whilst taking account of environmental objectives on air quality, noise, safety and ambience. The UDP target of 7,000 off street public parking spaces was achieved in 2003 with the completion of the Seven Kings car park. In 2008, with the Bentalls B car park closed for reconstruction (P12), there are 6,400 spaces. The aim has been to provide large public car parks around the edge of the town centre to intercept traffic on the approach roads and discourage cross-town traffic on the relief road system.
- 9.25 The 2003 Parking Study found that the overall capacity of the town centre's car parks (7000 spaces) was adequate to satisfy demand as a whole for most of the year. It recommended measures to make better use of parking capacity, including providing good quality, less fragmented parking, better signing and information and use of pricing. The aim is to address the issue of queuing for the most popular car parks (John Lewis and Bentalls) which are often full during peak shopping hours, whilst other car parks (Bittoms, Drapers and Cattle Market) have spaces. In the peak Christmas and New Year period it is accepted that demand for parking regularly exceeds supply and that queuing for car parks will cause some congestion.
- 9.26 Based on the findings and recommendations of the Parking Study, a Parking Strategy was adopted in 2005 to support this AAP. The Parking Strategy supports long term parking objectives, as set out in Local Implementation Plan Policy 29, which aim to achieve mode shift, which in turn support this Plan and the Community Plan's Vision of a thriving town centre with an attractive environment. The Parking Strategy will be kept under review through the monitoring of this AAP.
- 9.27 The provision of high quality car parks outside the MVRA on Sites P3 Eden Quarter, P4 St James and P5 Cattle Market associated with major development, replacing poor quality fragmented parking will address the current imbalance between major attractions and parking and make better use of parking capacity. The continued existence of car parks within the MVRA on Sites P2 Eden Walk and P13 Bishops Palace House, where traffic is gradually being excluded to allow pedestrian and cycle priority and improve the environment, is inappropriate and the AAP seeks their relocation in conjunction with development proposals.
- 9.28 The provision of convenient parking for disabled persons is important to improve 'access for all' and promote social inclusion. Current standards for designated provision in off-street car parks are set out in the London Plan and BS 8300:2001 incorporating Amendment No 1 June 2005. Disabled persons with a Blue Badge are entitled to free parking without time limit in on-street metered bays and to park for up to 3 hours on yellow lines without loading restrictions.
- 9.29 Reduced parking is appropriate for town centre housing as there is convenient access to facilities and public transport. For similar reasons, student accommodation should be car-free. S106 contributions towards sustainable forms of transport, access, safety and environmental improvements, plus restrictions on eligibility for on street residents' parking permits can all assist in reducing the need for parking and car use.