Essex County Council

Essex Transport Strategy

Implementation Plan: West Essex

July 2025

A Better Connected Essex

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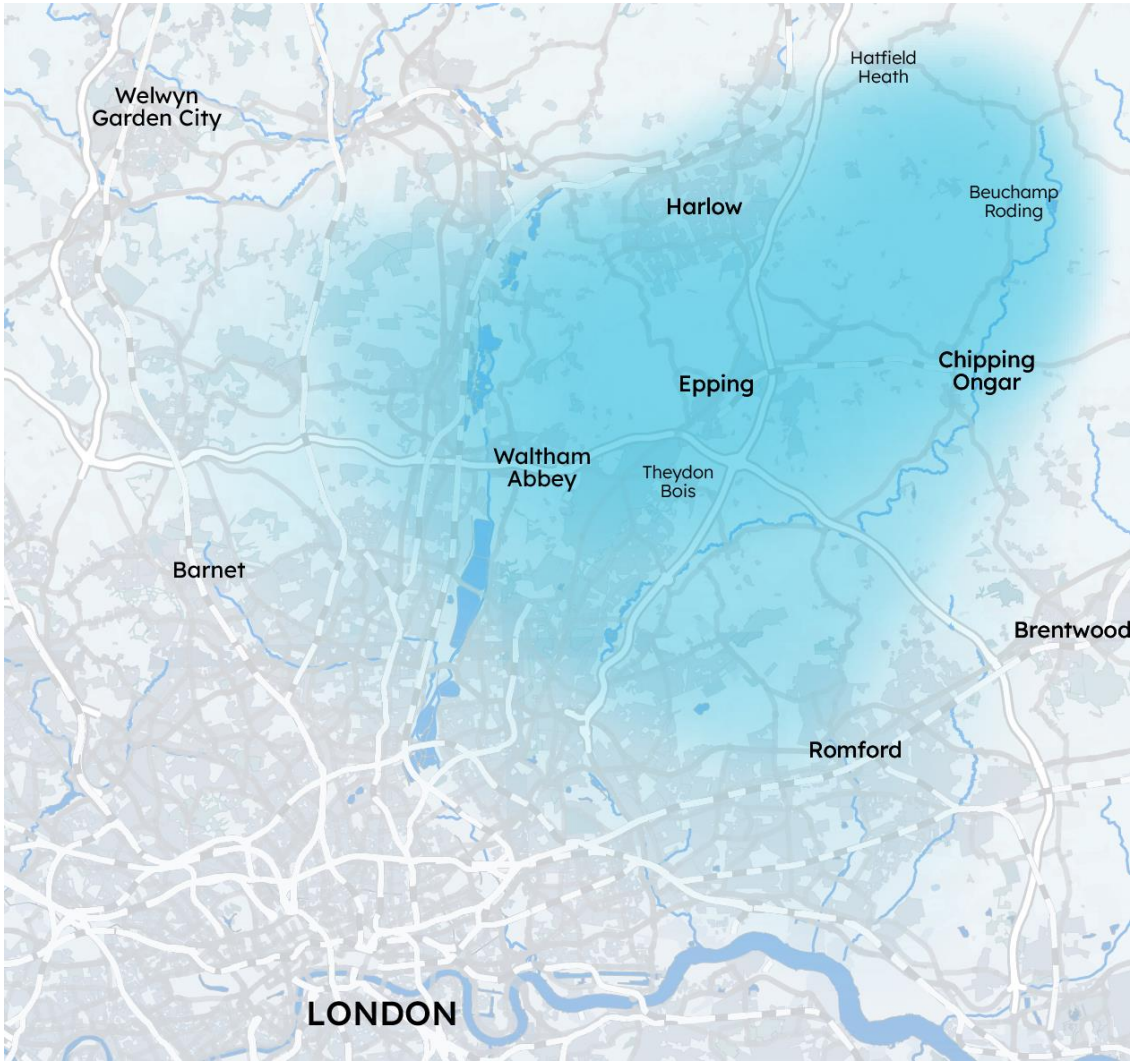
1. Introduction

1.1 West Essex

The West Essex area covers the majority of Epping Forest district except for Loughton, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell and Abridge, which fall into the Brentwood and Epping area. It also includes some of the Uttlesford district, such as The Rodings and other villages such as Hatfield Broad Oak. The area is mostly rural and includes the ancient Epping Forest woodland, which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation. Major settlements such as Waltham Abbey (population 23,600[1]), Epping (12,300), Chipping Ongar (7,196) and North Weald (4,773) are mostly focused on the south of Epping Forest district, lying close to the M25, M11 and London underground stations. The area is less deprived than other districts in Essex[2], especially when compared to the Harlow urban area. However, some areas in Epping Forest district near Theydon Bois are highly deprived, while areas to the north such as Hatfield Broad Oak, are amongst the least deprived in England. This reflects a significant disparity between wealthier and poorer residents.

The West Essex area has a high proportion of residents aged over 65, this along with a high life expectancy means that we will need to consider how we enable older people to continue to access the services they need.

Epping Forest has the lowest proportion of obese or overweight adults at 58%[3] which is lower than the Essex and England averages, and physical activity is generally high across the area.



The key transport ambitions for West Essex are:

- Transport investment in West Essex needs to improve road safety. This can be achieved by providing better crossing facilities, enhancing the provision of active travel infrastructure, and making road improvements for all, particularly at collision hotspots.
- Measures should also focus on improving noise and air quality through the introduction of Air Quality Management Areas and expanding the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure to encourage more sustainable and environmentally friendly travel.
- Improving access to healthcare facilities, such as hospitals and GP services, by creating a more connected, reliable, and frequent public transport network.

1.2 Local travel

West Essex has high car ownership levels, with only 12% of households not having a car or van[4]. This may be explained by the rural nature of the area, the low income deprivation levels and the lack of public transport options.

A high proportion of people in the area work from home or have the ability to work from home (36%)[5], which is higher than the Essex average of 32%. Frequent bus services run every 15-30 minutes through Debden, Epping and Theydon Bois, with connections to surrounding areas such as Chingford and Walthamstow. In Chipping Ongar there is a local interchange at Ongar Two Brewers near to schools, retail and healthcare providing services towards Harlow and Chelmsford, however these services are low frequency and provide poor access to employment. In North Weald, frequent services (every 15-30 minutes) mainly run on the High Road to Epping. In the Uttlesford areas however, there are limited bus routes covering Hatfield Heath with connections to Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Chelmsford.[6] There are a high proportion of commuters using the rail services, indicating people are travelling out of the area for work. Regular rail services are operated from Roydon Station on the West Anglia mainline, key destinations include London Liverpool Street and Cambridge, as well as Harlow Town and Bishops Stortford. There is Waltham Cross station just over the border from Waltham Abbey in Hertfordshire, also on the West Anglia Main Line, as well as Broxbourne station covering Lower Nazeing and Sawbridgeworth for Lower Sheering. The London Underground Central Line provides direct access to Epping Forest, with stations at Epping and Theydon Bois. The Central Line used to continue to North Weald and Ongar but closed in 1994. There is now a heritage railway along some of the route. While most people commute by car or train there 7% who walk or cycle to work7. There are currently very few Essex County Council cycleways in the area, existing off road provision is to the west and north of Waltham Abbey along the River Lee Country Park towards Lower Nazeing. Many leisure riders also travel through country lanes with some organised cycle events ('sportives') through villages like Moreton and Matching Green.

There are however off-road routes through Epping Forest with over 200km of shared use paths that can be used for leisure or travel through the forest via mountain bike with coaching and group rides also available.

West Essex in numbers

80,656 residents (2022)

74% economically active (of working population, as of 2021)

Life expectancy* is **84**

17% are aged under 15

22% are aged over 65

Average weekly earnings are **£666**, the second highest in Essex*

12% of households do not own a car/van (2021)

71% of residents **drive** to work

2% of residents **get the bus** to work

7% of residents **cycle or walk** to work

18% of residents get the **train or underground** to work

Top industries residents work in*

Construction

Education

Health

Business Administration and Support

Accommodation and food services

*Epping Forest figures

2. Outcomes we want to achieve

2.1 Supporting people, health, wellbeing and independence

2.1.1 People having inclusive and affordable access to key services

Good access to services enables everyone to maximise their potential and enjoy life. Our urban areas support a range of jobs, shops, services and leisure activities. However, long-term trends such as out of town retailing, the growth of the internet and centralisation of services have affected why people want to visit these towns and other places in Essex, limiting local opportunities.

Some areas of Epping Forest experience high levels of income deprivation[8], particularly the rural areas between Waltham Abbey and Loughton, and to the east of Epping. For many people, affordability is a barrier to appropriate transport options which then limits access to essential services and job opportunities.

Public transport journey times in parts of Epping can exceed an hour for key services such as hospitals and GP facilities. Improvements to bus services, such as new routes connecting Epping to Chelmsford, or increasing bus frequency along the A414, could enhance access.

Cycling is popular for leisure despite a relatively poorly connected cycle network with 5% of residents cycling for leisure once or twice in one week.[9] The rural nature of the area is attractive to cyclists for leisure purposes on the quieter roads, but the lack of a connected cycle network is not practical for journeys to work.

2.1.2 Improving physical and mental health and wellbeing

Improved health and wellbeing will help residents enjoy a better quality of life. Life satisfaction is high in Epping Forest[10] (69%), with Epping Forest's green spaces and low levels of physical inactivity likely contribute to residents' wellbeing. West Essex districts have the highest levels of happiness with 70% of residents rating their happiness levels as high or very high[11]. In Epping Forest, 36% of residents reported that they never experience anxiety. Promoting walking, cycling and physical activity could further improve health in the area.

With 22% of the population over 65[12], the ability to access healthcare by public transport is essential. Many rural areas struggle to reach hospitals and GPs by foot or public transport within 60 minutes, highlighting the need for better service connections.

Epping Forest has poor air quality, likely due to traffic on the M25, M11, and A414 contributing to high nitrogen dioxide levels. This is particularly a concern around local schools because of the negative impacts of poor air quality on vulnerable communities such as young children.

Similarly, the M25, M11 and other major roads such as the A414 generate high noise levels, particularly affecting areas in Epping Forest to the east of Epping and around Theydon Bois[13]. High environmental noise levels, in this case generated by high volumes of traffic, can have several negative implications when exposure is felt over a long period of time. Noise has been linked to certain preventable health conditions such as heart disease and high blood pressure. In Epping Forest, over one fifth (23%) of deaths for under 75s were considered preventable cardiovascular disease[14].

2.1.3 The transport network is safe, and feels safe for all users

Keeping people safe and well is essential to enable people to make the most of life's opportunities. Road safety is a priority in Epping Forest, which has the highest traffic collision rate in Essex. Between 2021 and 2023, there were 887 collisions, resulting in 27 deaths, and 225 seriously injured on local roads. This is potentially due to the presence of two motorways, the M25 and M11, and also the rural nature of the district as small, winding roads often lead to excessive speed and blind spots. Achieving Essex's ambition of zero road deaths and serious injuries by 2040 will require a joined-up plan, working with the police and other partners, such as National Highways, who have responsibility for the trunk roads and motorways (A120, M25 and M11).

Public transport improvements could enhance safety, reduce car dependency, and address theft concerns, the most common crime committed in both districts. Providing well connected and safer public transport could help improve use of buses and rail services, but also help reduce residents need to park cars in town car parks or on-street where they are at greater risk of being damaged or stolen. More secure cycle parking will help to encourage people to use their bicycles more for shorter journeys as they can trust that their bicycle will be safe and secure.

However, despite these thefts, in Epping Forest, 66% reported that they feel safe outdoors after dark, while only 21% reported feeling unsafe.

Encouragingly West Essex is above the Essex average for feeling safe (55%), and below the Essex average for feeling unsafe (28%). This is important because we must improve physical safety on the transport network for all modes, it is also important to improve the feeling of being safe and secure, for example, feeling safe at the bus stop after dark, or walking home in the evening.

2.2 Creating sustainable places and communities

2.2.1 All places support the transport needs of all residents

West Essex is a largely rural area but has the benefit of still being near to larger areas with employment opportunities like London, Harlow, Chelmsford, Brentwood and Bishop's Stortford.

There are challenges in rural areas to provide a comprehensive transport network due to the sparse nature of the population. This means they may not have good enough public transport or walking and cycling provision for people to go about their daily lives. While it's really important to preserve the character of our rural towns and villages, we need to provide a wider range of transport options in order to support a modern economy by encouraging businesses to set up in the area and supporting our residents to access opportunities. It's also essential to maximise and complement the use of existing buildings, streets, public spaces, and the natural environment, with each contributing to the unique character of West Essex.

2.3 Work with partners to design sustainable developments from the start

West Essex's population continues to grow, with people living longer and people moving to the area from other parts of the county and country predominantly due to good access to London.

To help accommodate more residents coming into the area greater numbers of homes are needed. The majority of this study area lies in Epping Forest and the adopted Epping Forest Local Plan provides for 11,400 homes for the plan period to 2033 with an annual requirement of 518 per year. As of April 2024, around 3,550 homes have been completed with a minimum of 7,850 homes still to build. A Local Plan Review has not yet started but it will need to be based upon the new government targets of 1,299[15] per year as set out in the new National Planning Policy Framework in 2024. All of this growth needs to be supported by appropriate transport infrastructure. As residents become wealthier, we want to ensure that active and sustainable travel choices are available as a first choice over buying a car. The Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) has plans to deliver 16,000 homes with transport links and employment opportunities, benefiting rural areas by reducing isolation and improving infrastructure.

Additional growth areas in West Essex include at North Weald Bassett, a development of over 1,000 homes, community and healthcare facilities, sports facilities and retail units. Also, an employment development at North Weald Airfield providing 10 hectares of employment space. We want all developments to be designed sustainably, and we will work with the local councils of West Essex to prioritise locations for jobs and homes with good sustainable transport access to a wide range of services.

This LTP is important to influence the process of Local Plan development and getting these plans right can bring in the right infrastructure. We will use the planning process, including funding from new development where possible, to improve transport options, benefiting both new and existing residents and businesses.

2.3.1 Transport has a reduced impact on the environment and adverse impacts on natural habitats are avoided

We want to protect the character of West Essex by minimising the environmental impacts of carbon, noise and air pollution. Reducing car dependency in West Essex and encouraging more walking and cycling would help contribute to improving air quality and reducing transport-related environmental noise.

Electric vehicle ownership levels are relatively high (4%)[16] in south Uttlesford and in areas in the east of Epping Forest and are rising throughout other areas in both districts. We plan to support this sustainable travel growth by providing a more extensive network of publicly available electric vehicle charging points.

We will work jointly with local councils to improve air quality as set out in our Air Quality Strategy[17]. Measures will include encouraging the use of less polluting modes of travel (see LTP Policy 10), reducing congestion in Air Quality Management Areas, like in Epping, through better traffic management (see LTP Policy 5) and better managing the movement of higher-polluting goods vehicles (see LTP Policy 6).

2.4 Connecting people, places and businesses

2.4.1 The business potential of Essex is maximised

Reliable transport connections are essential for residents, businesses, and visitors – while supporting job creation and boosting economic growth. However, delays are common on main roads, especially in town centres and along major roads such as the A414, A121, B1393 and B181[18].

As significant housing growth is planned for the area, the transport network needs to be robust enough to cater for the safe, efficient movement of people and goods and improvements to these routes may be necessary whether this involves improving capacity for private vehicles or more sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling.

The tourism sector is a growing economy in West Essex, with attractions like Epping Ongar Railway, Epping Forest and Lee Valley White Water centre just over the border. As a result, the transport network needs to support residents, businesses and tourists, in helping to sustain the rural communities in the area. A range of travel choices including active and sustainable travel will enable people to make the most of the area's attractions.

2.4.2 People have inclusive and affordable access to employment, education and training

Good access to schools, training and a range of work opportunities to suit their skills and experience is important to enable people to make the most of their potential throughout life. West Essex has poor access to employment areas by public transport due to a limited bus frequency. The rural nature of large parts of the district, along with the dispersed nature of the main settlement areas, makes it challenging to provide good connectivity by local bus services. West Essex however has good access to broadband[19] and good levels of working from home potential with the exception of areas surrounding Waltham Abbey in the southwest.

Access to secondary and further education facilities in West Essex is generally poor, with a journey time of over an hour by public transport, or in some cases completely inaccessible from rural areas. Better public transport connectivity is required for education facilities to allow young people to gain qualifications and explore employment opportunities. Young people face significant barriers to education and employment due to insufficient transport connections. Rural areas in Epping Forest and the of south Uttlesford district have a journey time of over an hour to further education or are considered inaccessible to them. We need to help young people in the area to access the services and education they need to fulfil their potential. Enhancing public transport could reduce car dependency, improve independence, and address social isolation.

2.4.3 The transport network has a secure and long-term future

We may see changes to our natural environment in the future that may pose significant risks to the transport infrastructure. we may see higher temperatures, more severe weather, and flooding, all of which will have an impact on the transport network.

Preparing and adapting to these challenges will be critical and it is vital that this strategy does not make this worse. This will have significant implications on our network and its ongoing maintenance. For example, flooding will reduce how long our network lasts, and severe weather will reduce the time available for repairs.

This is crucial – the network provides access to jobs, education and essential services and it is often the only way people can access their everyday needs, particularly in rural areas. It is vital that the network is maintained and fit for purpose, for all modes but we also need to look at ways to solve the problem such as improving the materials we use and reduce unnecessary travel. Improving bus services, walking and cycling routes will all help with this, reducing the pressure on our network and ensuring its long-term future.

3. Our plan for West Essex

Our plan for West Essex focuses on supporting people, creating sustainable places and connecting communities. To do this, we'll need to provide choice by considering all modes, and be bold by considering new approaches and solutions.

3.1 Area Wide

We will deliver West Essex's transport ambitions by providing transport choices to make it easier for residents to access services, particularly by public transport. Our Bus Service Improvement Plan will aim to improve both bus stops and the network in Harlow and West Essex to make using buses feel safer and easier, while supporting sustainable growth across the area. By collaborating with bus companies and health partners, we'll make it easier for residents without cars to access hospitals and healthcare. Improving public transport for larger places like Chipping Ongar and North Weald that currently don't have high frequency routes to access transport hubs and town centres like Epping, Harlow and Chelmsford could be considered.

The improvements needed to develop more sustainable transport options must also focus on making public transport more affordable. While the current £3 fare cap for buses provides cheaper bus travel for longer distance routes, we will continue to work with operators to seek more affordable bus and rail passes for those who find the cost a challenge to accessing work and other opportunities. Supporting Network Rail and Great British Railways implement a package of improvements along the West Anglia Mainline will help the resilience of the rail network and improve journey times. Both of these benefits may encourage more people to get the train for work and leisure. Additionally, supporting the development of Crossrail 2 that could link the West Anglia Mainline to South West London via central London will bring benefits to the area in terms of making it more attractive to businesses and also allowing our residents better access into London.

This plan will improve links to multifunctional green spaces, creating walking and cycling routes that connect parks and natural areas. Local policy and strategies should focus on improving access to green space and creating greener communities, especially in areas of deprivation or where there is poor or unequal access. Road transport is always going to be essential to connect people, places and communities, particularly for rural areas. This will require an effective maintenance programme, ensuring the network is fit for purpose now and in the future. For example, by using more durable materials and planning for more frequent floods, we can keep our infrastructure open whatever the season, or mode.

These improvements, typically funded by Central Government, will need to align with community and transport priorities, and include footway, cycleway, carriageway and drainage renewal. It should be noted that this implementation plan will need to be reviewed to reflect changes to Local Plans or other significant proposals.

3.2 Access to Harlow and Epping

Harlow is an important urban area for West Essex and is often where services are located. Implementing an Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor via North Weald and the Central Line station at Epping will improve journey times for buses and will help support growth in the area, particularly at Latton Priory to the south of Harlow and around North Weald. Additionally, bus lanes on Second Avenue in Harlow will aid the buses travelling to and from places in West Essex, encourage bus use, and alleviate parking problems around the Central Line station in Epping.

On the road network, the M11 is important locally for the movement of people and goods. Supporting National Highways with improvements to the M11 J7 will make journeys easier for everyone.

3.3 Epping and Waltham Abbey

Getting people more active may have a positive effect on their health. With poorer air quality in West Essex, encouraging more active forms of travel by delivering a walking and cycling network as identified in the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP) in Epping and Waltham Abbey may improve people's health by encouraging more trips to open spaces, making the most of West Essex's rural beauty. Improving active travel options not only has health benefits but allows people to travel to services, employment and education in a relatively low cost and low carbon way.

3.4 North Weald

There are growth sites planned for North Weald, including homes at North Weald Bassett and employment at the airfield. We will support the masterplans produced for these sites. For North Weald Bassett this includes ensuring each home has access to green space, with supporting pedestrian routes and integrated cycleways. Other measures include ensuring there are good bus services to access places like Epping, a new vehicle access onto the A414 and EV charge points. For the North Weald Airfield employment area, this will include ensuring there are bus routes serving the site, implementing walking and cycling facilities throughout.

Scheme Details can be found in Appendix A.

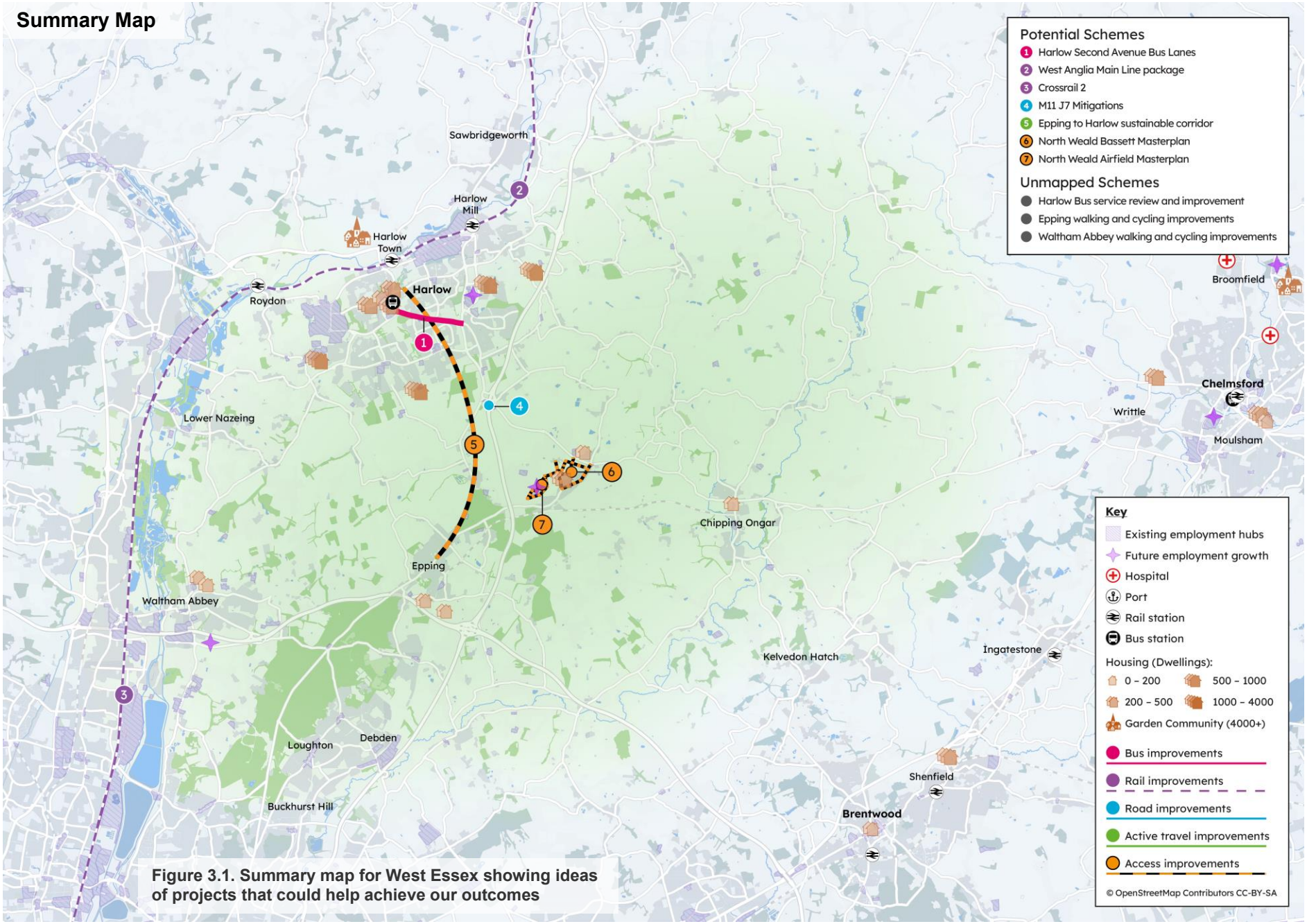
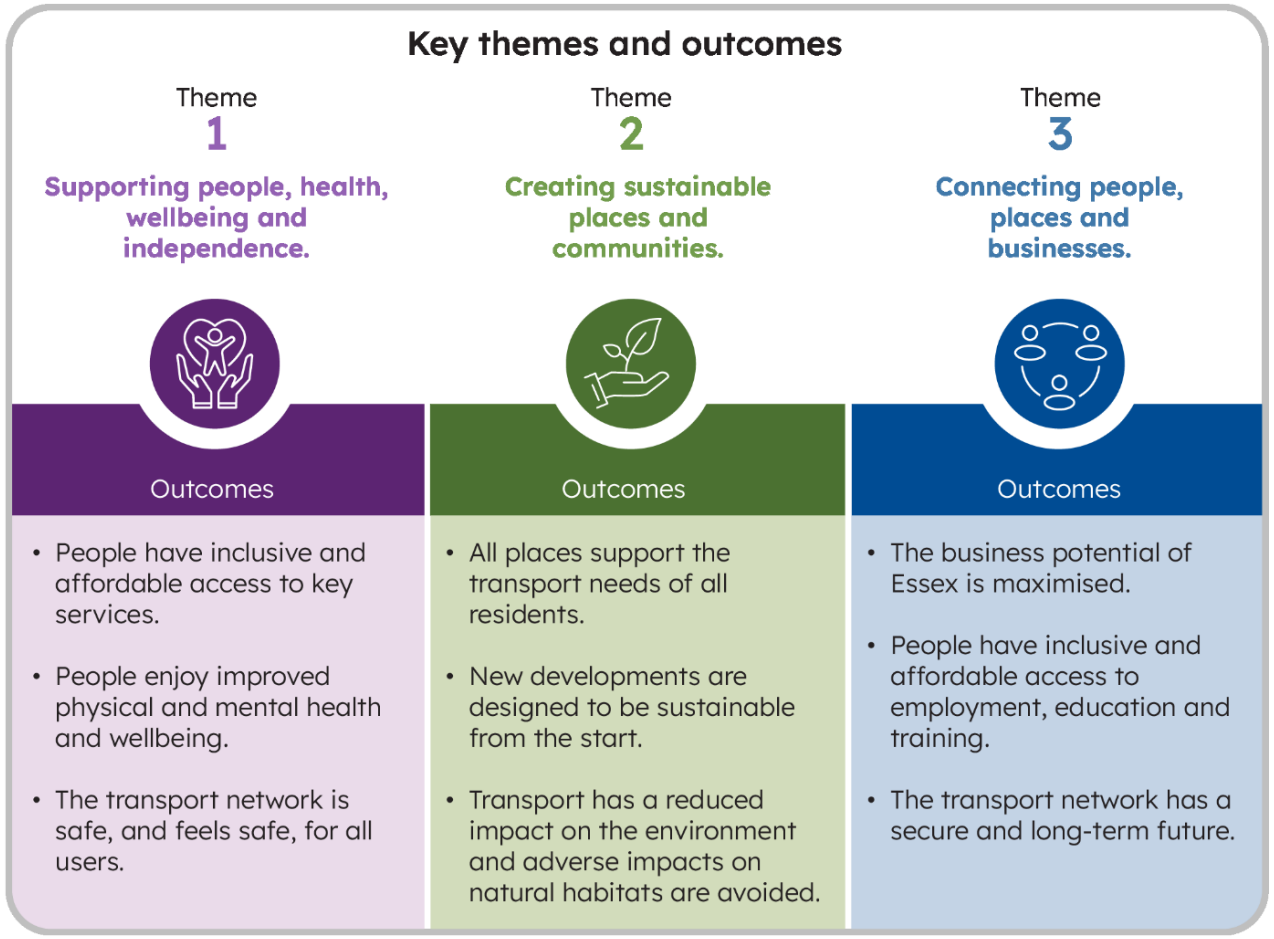


Figure 3.1. Summary map for West Essex showing ideas of projects that could help achieve our outcomes

Appendix A. Scheme list

The table below sets out some ideas of projects that could help achieve our outcomes and solve some problems identified in this Implementation Plan. These projects have emerged from a prioritisation exercise and represent ideas from a snapshot in time and are not guaranteed to be funded as part of LTP4. As funding and circumstances change so will our priorities for schemes.



*	Weak Alignment
**	Medium Alignment
***	Strong alignment

Project	Description	Impact	Supporting People			Sustainable Place			Connecting People		
			Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6	Outcome 7	Outcome 8	Outcome 9
Area wide											
Harlow Bus service review and improvement	Review of bus services in light of housing and employment growth, including a need for new/more feasible services such as DigiGo to connect people with services, amenities, jobs etc. Building on improvements that are already in motion.	Improved public transport options for Harlow and the surrounding area.	**	*	*	**	*	**	**	**	*
West Anglia main line package	Package of improvements along the WAML to deliver resilience and journey time improvements	Improved train journeys with quicker and more reliable journeys to services, employment and leisure further afield.	*	*		*	*	**	***	*	*
Crossrail 2	Transformational Cross London rail infrastructure to link WAML to SW London via central London	Improved public transport options into London improving links and journeys.	**	*		*	*	**	***	**	**
Access to Harlow											
Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor	Bus journey time improvements (Latton Priory to Epping corridors via Epping Green)	Supports growth in Harlow to Epping, including North Weald.	**	*	*	**	**	**	**	**	***

Project	Description	Impact	Supporting People			Sustainable Place			Connecting People		
			Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6	Outcome 7	Outcome 8	Outcome 9
Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes	Improve journey times for RTS to EFDC.	Improved public transport options for Harlow and the surrounding area. Improved cycling and walking options encouraging people to be more active.	*	*	*		**	**	*	**	*
M11 J7 Mitigations	Improvements to junction 7 of the M11	Keeps the road network moving and reduces congestion.		*	**	**	***	**	**		**
Epping and Waltham Abbey											
Epping walking and cycling improvements	Delivery of the prioritised strategic walking and cycling network identified.	Improved cycling and walking options encouraging people to be more active.	**	***	**	*	*	**	**	**	*
Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements	Delivery of the prioritised strategic walking and cycling network.	Improved cycling and walking options encouraging people to be more active.	**	***	**	*	*	**	**	**	*
North Weald											
North Weald Bassett Strategic Masterplan	The strategic masterplan for North Weald Bassett with minimum 1050 homes planned. Transport improvements include	Improved active and sustainable transport connections to support new development.	***	***	**	***	***	**	**	***	**

Project	Description	Impact	Supporting People			Sustainable Place			Connecting People		
			Outcome 1	Outcome 2	Outcome 3	Outcome 4	Outcome 5	Outcome 6	Outcome 7	Outcome 8	Outcome 9
	150m of green space corridors per home, EV charging points, 6km of pedestrian routes, integrated cycleways, bus links to Epping and a new access to the A414.										
North Weald Airfield Strategic Masterplan	The strategic masterplan for the North Weald Airfield employment area. Transport improvements include new bus route through the site, north/south pedestrian and cycle route and accesses, new heritage trail, pedestrian and cycling access to allow a more direct route to North Weald Station (on the heritage line).	Improved active and sustainable transport connections to support new development.	***	***	**	***	***	**	***	***	**

Appendix B. Addressing the Challenges

Appendix B outlines the challenges outlined in this implementation plan, identifies some high level activities that we could do to address these and the potential schemes we could do to address these challenges. For scheme descriptions, please see Appendix A and the core text to understand why these schemes can address the challenges.

Those schemes in bold with an asterisk are *Countywide Initiatives – they are not in the map above

B.1 People Theme

Outcome	Challenge	High Level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
People have inclusive and affordable access to key services	Poor connectivity and access by foot or public transport to key healthcare services such as hospitals and GP facilities	▪ Encourage digital innovation, such as new apps that enable the delivery of essential services, such as healthcare, in ways that are less dependent on travel ▪ Support the rollout of faster broadband and ongoing improvements to 5G mobile coverage in rural and deprived areas ▪ Implement our Bus Service Improvement Plan ▪ Provide attractive, safe, convenient, inclusive and high quality public transport routes and facilities, designed in line with latest design standards and guidance ▪ Explore opportunities to expand our Demand Responsive Transport network in rural areas ▪ Work with partners to promote more sustainable forms of car use, such as lift sharing and car clubs ▪ Design, build, operate and maintain transport infrastructure so that it is accessible, easy and safe to use for everyone ▪ Work with the bus and rail industries to secure further improvements to the accessibility of public transport and passenger assistance on buses, trains and at bus and rail stations ▪ Travel information will make use of new technology and be available in a range of formats for everyone to access	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes ▪ West Anglia Mainline Package ▪ Crossrail 2 ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements ▪ ***Use of autonomous self-driving (without passenger) vehicles to support elderly communities** ▪ ***Better access to rail stations**

Outcome	Challenge	High Level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
		▪ Support the introduction of multi operator and fully integrated smart ticketing for transport services in Essex	
	Young people face barriers to services due to the need for a more connected transport network	▪ Raise awareness of the impacts of individual travel choices and alternatives consistent with our 'Safer, Greener, Healthier' approach ▪ Encourage digital innovation, such as new apps that enable the delivery of essential services, such as healthcare, in ways that are less dependent on travel ▪ Support the rollout of faster broadband and ongoing improvements to 5G mobile coverage in rural and deprived areas ▪ Implement our Bus Service Improvement Plan ▪ Provide attractive, safe, convenient, inclusive and high quality public transport routes and facilities, designed in line with latest design standards and guidance ▪ Explore opportunities to expand our Demand Responsive Transport network in rural areas ▪ Develop and deliver long-term plans to improve our cycling and walking networks by considering our Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans ▪ Develop and deliver mobility hubs to facilitate convenient access to public transport services, shared mobility solutions, and active travel options. In rural locations, these could combine transport, retail and community services ▪ Travel information will make use of new technology and be available in a range of formats for everyone to access ▪ Support the introduction of multi operator and fully integrated smart ticketing for transport services in Essex ▪ Work with schools and employers to enhance connectivity, parking and other facilities for cyclists and scooters	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes ▪ ***Integrated Ticketing across modes**

Outcome	Challenge	High Level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
		▪ Provide training and promote free initiatives to increase people's confidence and participation in cycling ▪ Continue to evaluate the suitability of our towns and cities for new electric forms of transport, such as e-scooters while we await new national laws	
People enjoy improved physical and mental health and wellbeing	High health deprivation and with a relatively high proportion of residents over 65	▪ Support people and increase their confidence to travel by improving travel information, while making fares and ticketing easier and simpler to understand ▪ Promote the support we provide on mental health and wellbeing through our Essex Wellbeing Service ▪ Promote the work of the independent charity – Rural Community Council of Essex – in tackling hidden deprivation and social isolation in our villages and rural areas	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements ▪ ***Use of autonomous self-driving (without passenger) vehicles to support elderly communities**
The transport network is safe, and feels safe	There were 27 fatalities on the roads between 2021 and 2023	▪ Follow a safe systems approach in designing and maintaining our highway network ▪ Collaborate with partners, such as the police and Safer Essex Roads Partnership, to improve safety ▪ Work in partnership to create safe environments around schools ▪ Provide cycle training to develop or improve people's skills and confidence to cycle safely within Essex	▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ A414/A1025 junction upgrade link to new M11 J7A ▪ M11 J7 Mitigations ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements

B.2 Place

Outcome	Challenge	High level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
All places support the transport needs of all residents	The area has high leisure cycle rates but low commuter cycle rates potentially due to a poorly connected cycle network	▪ Introduce a 'Place and Movement' approach to help embed the principles of 'Healthy Streets' and manage the transport network effectively for both existing streets and new developments ▪ Implement 'well designed neighbourhood principles' in the redesign of existing neighbourhoods ▪ Continue to evaluate the suitability of our towns and cities for new electric forms of transport, such as e-scooters while we await new national requirements	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements ▪ ***Behavioural change programme** ▪ ***Countywide walking and cycling improvements**

Outcome	Challenge	High level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
New developments are designed to be sustainable from the start	Expected to deliver approximately 1,299 new homes per year under new Government targets	▪ Introduce a 'Place and Movement' approach for planning all new developments ▪ Adopt a vision-led approach to planning for new growth and its transport needs, including through all new Local Plans and the identification of monitoring measures ▪ Adopt an 'Avoid-Shift-Improve' approach to plan transport and development from the earliest stages of development planning ▪ Use connectivity planning to help locate new homes, jobs and essential services in sustainable places that align with our vision for transport ▪ Work with Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and other partners to allocate developments in Local Plans and deliver new Garden Communities to help meet the significant housing targets set for Essex by the Government ▪ Work with LPAs to ensure that measures proposed in large developments and Garden Communities to promote sustainable transport are deliverable and sufficient to meet the vision for active and sustainable mode share ▪ Set up Transport Review Groups for larger developments to help the ongoing management of transport impacts ▪ Require effective travel plans for all new homes, new and existing workplaces and schools, including Garden Communities and other large-scale developments in line with our travel plan guides for residential, workplace, school, and large-scale developments and garden communities ▪ Monitor the delivery of active and sustainable mode share targets through the Travel Plan with permission for latter phases of development linked to the achievement of modal split targets for early phases in	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes ▪ West Anglia Mainline Package ▪ Crossrail 2 ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements ▪ ***Residential Travel Planning** ▪ ***Behavioural change programme** ▪ ***You Smart Travel Planning Tool** ▪ ***Use of mobile apps and web information (supporting traditional information way finding) to encourage use of public transport** ▪ ***Provision of Cycling equipment in new development**

Outcome	Challenge	High level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
		line with our travel plan guide for large-scale developments and garden communities ▪ Work with LPAs to embed inclusive design principles into all new developments ▪ Promote tools, guidance and best practice documents, such as A New Street Types Model for Essex, EPOA 2024 Parking Guidance, Mobility Hubs as part of the Essex Design Guide and the Highways Technical Manual, to help plan all new developments sustainably ▪ Implement 'well designed neighbourhood principles' in the design of new communities ▪ Require planning applications to be supported by a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) considering the Essex Healthy Places Checklist	
Transport has a reduced impact on the environment and adverse impacts are on natural habitats are avoided	Air quality in Epping Forest is poor due to the presence of the M25, M11 and the A414 in the district. Epping Forest is a high priority area in our Air Quality Strategy as the district exceeds the annual mean for NO2.	▪ Adopt an 'Avoid-Shift-Improve' approach to plan transport and development from the earliest stages of development planning ▪ Implement the Essex Air Quality Strategy to reduce exposure to poor quality air ▪ Develop effective and deliverable Air Quality Action Plans with partners ▪ Implement our Green Infrastructure Strategy to deliver 'Healthy Streets' and more accessible green spaces and links that provide multiple benefits for people and the environment ▪ Avoid adverse effects from new transport projects on the integrity of internationally important habitat sites.	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ A414/A1025 junction upgrade link to new M11 J7A ▪ Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes ▪ M11 J7 Mitigations ▪ West Anglia Mainline Package ▪ Crossrail 2 ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements ▪ ***Business and School Travel Planning** ▪ ***Residential Travel Planning** ▪ ***Behavioural change programme** ▪ ***Better access to rail stations** ▪ ***Countywide walking and cycling Delivery**
	M11, M25 and other major roads such as the A414 generate high noise levels.	▪ Implement measures to reduce traffic noise where this impacts a significant number of people or noise important areas ▪ Reduce the noise impacts of our road maintenance and construction activities ▪ Avoid adverse effects from new transport projects on the integrity of internationally important habitat sites.	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ A414/A1025 junction upgrade link to new M11 J7A ▪ Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes ▪ M11 J7 Mitigations ▪ ***Better access to rail stations**

B.3 Connectivity

Outcome	Challenge	High Level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
The business potential of Essex is maximised	Delays are common on main roads, especially along major roads such as the A414.	▪ Introduce a 'Place and Movement' approach to help embed the principles of 'Healthy Streets' and manage the transport network effectively for both existing streets and new developments ▪ Adopt a vision-led approach to planning for new growth and its transport needs, including through all new Local Plans ▪ Prioritise journey time reliability for all modes of transport, including freight and passenger transport ▪ Work with partners to make the case for investment in our strategic road and rail links, including to the airports and ports to provide enhanced capacity for freight ▪ Work with the Government to explore how their plans for local government finance, devolution and wider policy objectives can enable Essex to play its full part in supporting national economic growth	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ A414/A1025 junction upgrade link to new M11 J7A ▪ Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes ▪ M11 J7 Mitigations ▪ ***Smart junctions** ▪ ***Better access to rail stations**
People have inclusive and affordable access to employment, education and training	Access to education facilities in West Essex is considered to be low, with a journey time of over 60 minutes by public transport, or completely inaccessible.	▪ Tackle barriers to travel, such as accessibility, complexity and security, to support greater use by everyone ▪ Work with organisations such as bus operators and active travel organisations and funders to make the case for new investment ▪ Work with partners to secure better facilities at stations for onward travel via all modes of transport, including step-free access ▪ Provide measures to enable more children to walk and cycle to school via safe, direct routes ▪ Work in partnership to provide attractive, safe, convenient, inclusive, and high quality walking, cycling and public transport routes and facilities ▪ Deliver high quality rapid transit networks where feasible ▪ Support the introduction of multi operator and fully integrated smart ticketing for transport services in Essex	▪ Epping to Harlow sustainable corridor ▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ Harlow Second Avenue bus lanes ▪ West Anglia Mainline Package ▪ Crossrail 2 ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements ▪ ***Business and School Travel Planning** ▪ ***Better access to rail stations** ▪ ***Countywide walking and cycling Delivery** ▪ ***Safer school Streets**

Outcome	Challenge	High Level Activity	Schemes to address these challenges
The transport network has a secure and long-term future	We may see changes to our natural environment in the future that may pose risks to the area. Heavier rainfall and hotter summers which will have an impact on the transport network. Transport networks need to be resilient to ensure the safe, efficient movement of people and goods.	▪ Implement our Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Plan and supporting plans and strategies to maintain our transport infrastructure to appropriate standards which offer value for money to the Essex taxpayer ▪ Proactively monitor the condition of our road, cycle and pedestrian networks and other pieces of infrastructure ▪ Manage, maintain and improve our network by considering our Climate Adaption Plan Framework, Decarbonisation Strategy and our Strategy for managing the Green Estate ▪ Develop our own ability as a Council to adapt to climate-related risk ▪ Deliver suitable actions that enable our transport network to adapt to change ▪ Deploy approaches such as Sustainable Drainage and Natural Flood Management to promote greater flood resilience on the highway network ▪ Play an active role in flood defence, coastal protection, and conservation to reduce the risks and impacts on our coastal communities and transport network ▪ Work with National Highways and neighbouring local transport authorities to provide a common approach to innovation ▪ Accurately digitise our highway networks and traffic regulation orders to support future use of our networks by autonomous vehicle systems ▪ Manage the introduction of appropriate alternative fuel infrastructure to encourage cleaner zero-emission travel ▪ Support the pilot and where appropriate the adoption of new technology which enables more sustainable travel	▪ Harlow Bus service review and improvement ▪ M11 J7 Mitigations ▪ West Anglia Mainline Package ▪ Crossrail 2 ▪ Epping walking and cycling improvements ▪ Waltham Abbey walking and cycling improvements

Appendix C. References

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