



Northumberland Local Plan

Northumberland County Council

Core Strategy Sustainable Transport Addendum Report

June 2016



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1. Introduction

Jacobs has been commissioned by Northumberland County Council (NCC) to prepare an Addendum Report setting out the potential for sustainable transport in Northumberland. Additionally, this report will highlight the overarching matters impacting the uptake of sustainable travel and provide bespoke analysis of specific existing and future opportunities within individual settlements / Delivery Areas that could be supported and/or enhanced by future development associated with the Northumberland Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy, covering a plan period from 2011 to 2031, contains the strategic policies of the Northumberland Local Plan that will guide the location of future development up to 2031, set out the general scale and distribution of new development and allocate strategic allocations for housing and employment land.

Jacobs has also prepared a Transport Assessment Report (June 2016) setting out the transport impacts of the Core Strategy. Additionally, a Transport Assessment Mitigation Report (June 2016) outlining the resultant highway mitigation measures required to accommodate the Core Strategy development at the most sensitive junctions. Both reports have been updated to reflect major modifications to previous versions of the Core Strategy and supplement this Addendum Report.

This Addendum Report has been produced with consideration to guidance set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Planning Practise Guidance which sets out that:

“The transport evidence base should identify the opportunities for encouraging a shift to more sustainable transport usage, where reasonable to do so; and highlight the infrastructure requirements for inclusion in infrastructure spending plans linked to the Community Infrastructure Levy, section 106 provisions and other funding sources.”

Section 2 of this Addendum Report sets out the strategic sustainable transport interventions coming forward in Northumberland during the plan period that would benefit both existing areas and proposed development associated with the Core Strategy. Section 3 provides an overview of the more localised sustainable transport opportunities for the main settlements in Northumberland that were identified within the Transport Mitigation Report.

Sustainability represents a key theme in current national planning documents and represents a golden thread that runs through all national, regional and local guidance. Therefore, consideration of the main issues presented in this report is a vital step in NCC acknowledging the policies and guidelines contained within the NPPF.

2. Strategic Interventions

This section provides a summary of the committed and proposed strategic level transport interventions in Northumberland during the Core Strategy period. The interventions described in this section are considered to impact across the County and are therefore considered to offer a strategic countywide benefit.

2.1 East Coast Mainline

As part of the UK Government's Intercity Express Programme, all Virgin Trains East Coast rolling stock is due to be replaced by 2018. The new rolling stock will offer further seating capacity and reduced journey times for all journeys along the East Coast Mainline. The East Coast Mainline serves stations at Berwick, Alnmouth and Morpeth with the new rolling stock expected to provide further benefit for long distance rail travel to and from Northumberland.

The frequency of existing train services at each of the stations located on the East Coast Mainline in Northumberland is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 Train Frequencies on East Coast Mainline Stations in Northumberland

Station	Approximate Train Frequency		
	Weekday	Sat	Sun
Berwick	2 an hour	2 an hour	Once an hour
Alnmouth	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Morpeth	Once an hour	Once an hour	5 a day
Cramlington	Once an hour	Once an hour	5 a day

In addition to the new rolling stock, a new Train Operating Company, East Coast Trains, is also due to commence a new service between London King's Cross and Edinburgh from 2021 which will also call at Morpeth, thus offering an increased service frequency at the station for inter-city and inter-regional services. The actual services and proposed frequencies have yet to be confirmed.

2.2 Northern Rail Franchise

The Northern Rail franchise was taken over by Arriva in April 2016 with commitments to improve the service including additional services, more seating capacity and reduced journey times. The rolling stock used by the franchise will also be upgraded with 100mph capable units currently under construction that will result in the removal of all existing Pacer trains by Autumn 2018. Key features of the new or refurbished trains will be:

- Air-conditioning;
- Audio and visual on-board passenger information systems;
- Power sockets and tables;
- Cycle Racks;

- Toilets;
- Digital CCTV systems; and
- Free Wifi.

In Northumberland, the franchise serves the Tyne Valley and local railways stations along the East Coast Mainline including Morpeth, Cramlington and Alnmouth. The current service frequencies on the Tyne Valley line are shown in Table 2, which in combination with the frequencies identified in Table 1 on the East Coast Mainline highlight current rail service provision across Northumberland.

Table 2 Train Frequencies on Tyne Valley Line Stations in Northumberland

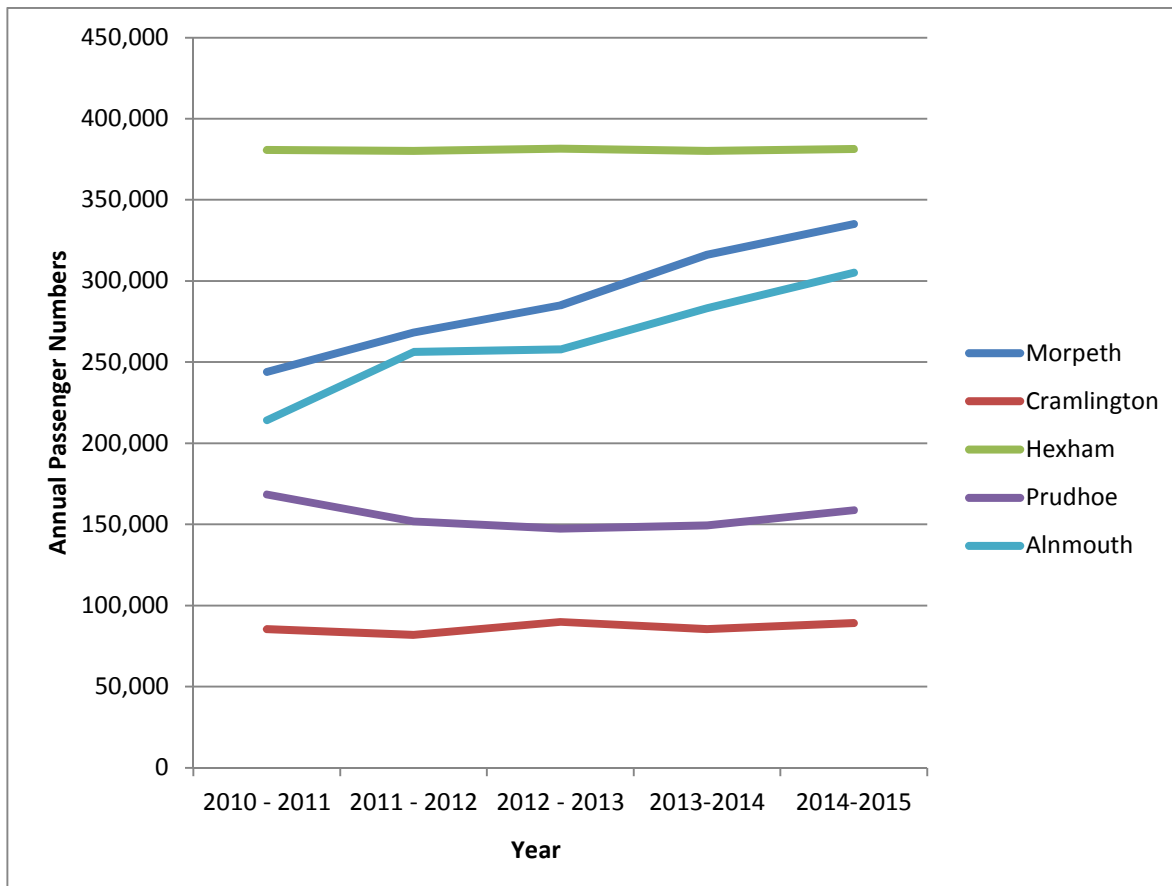
Station	Approximate Train Frequency		
	Weekday	Sat	Sun
Haltwhistle	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Bardon Mill	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Haydon Bridge	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Hexham	2 an hour	2 an hour	Once an hour
Corbridge	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Riding Mill	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Stocksfield	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Prudhoe	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour
Wylam	Once an hour	Once an hour	Once an hour

The new franchise also promises to provide longer trains and increased frequencies, resulting in an overall 12% increase in services and up to 37% increase in peak hour services on franchises running into Newcastle.

Additional benefits of the franchise include a proposal to introduce smart ticketing to the region, with the roll out of an oyster card style ticketing system that is flexible across modes. This could offer significant synergies with the Tyne and Wear Metro, for example, which would significantly improve passenger experience and integration.

The introduction of the new franchise and benefits associated with it represents a step change in rail services in Northumberland. Rail already represents a popular commuting mode between key settlements in Northumberland and Newcastle from areas such as Morpeth, Cramlington and Hexham. The Government Office of Rail and Road publish annual estimates of the total number of people entering or exiting each station on the national rail network. Jacobs has interrogated this data for the latest 5 year period for the main rail stations in Northumberland and is summarised in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Rail Passenger Analysis



The data highlights that significant rail passenger growth has been observed at Morpeth and Alnmouth specifically over the latest 5 year period. Passenger numbers have increased by 37% and 42% respectively, equating to an average increase of 22,700 additional passengers per year. This represents a significant level of growth, even before new and improved services come online. Cramlington has observed a lower level of growth, albeit the same upward trend is observed.

Hexham has remained fairly static, with a marginal 0.2% increase in passenger numbers over the last 5 years, suggesting the station may already be operating at capacity and the release of new more frequent services with larger capacity will assist in growing passenger numbers from Hexham further.

Prudhoe witnessed a drop in passenger numbers initially, however this trend has been reversed in the last 3 years, with passenger numbers increasing and observing the same upward trend, albeit numbers remain slightly lower compared to 2010-11.

The improved services and frequencies that are planned will provide an enhanced level of service and reduced journey times for passengers which will support further growth in rail passenger numbers and add to growth that has already been observed since 2010 across Northumberland. This will act to encouraging modal shift and embed rail as a major transport choice for commuter and leisure users alike.

2.3 Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Railway

The reintroduction of passenger services on the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line (ABT line) is set out as a key aspiration in the Northumberland Core Strategy. The route would provide passenger services between Ashington, Bedlington, Blyth, Seaton Delaval and Newcastle. The key objective of the scheme aims to encourage more sustainable access to the Newcastle as the key regional economic centre and reduce the reliance on car for those wishing to commute into Tyne and Wear from South East Northumberland.

The ABT line represents a significant investment in South-East Northumberland and seeks to provide a major new link between Newcastle and South-East Northumberland. Although the proposals seek to implement the re-introduction of passenger services to this area, the existing line has not been operational for many years. Therefore, settlements such as Ashington, Bedlington, Blyth and Seaton Delaval, which combined represent the most densely and heavily populated area of Northumberland, are reliant on bus services or private car trips to access main employment in North Tyneside and Newcastle outside of the County.

NCC has committed around £5million for detailed development work to support the scheme development. Work undertaken to date (Scheme Business Case developed by AECOM) has highlighted that in order to make the scheme attractive to potential users and support regeneration, it will be necessary to:

- Operate trains seven days a week;
- Operate trains twice an hour at peak times; and
- Ensure journey times between Ashington and central Newcastle of just over 30 minutes.

To progress work on the line, NCC, in partnership with Network Rail, recently funded a detailed GRIP 2 Feasibility Study for the proposal, which is anticipated to be published in summer 2016. The report will set out a number of key details on the feasibility of the line including:

- Establishing route capacity for the extra services given the existing/planned freight operation on this stretch of line and the East Coast Main Line;
- Assessing the condition of the existing track and the work needed to upgrade the network for more frequent faster trains going in both directions;
- Assessing the condition of the existing signalling and control systems and any necessary changes;
- Assessing the suitability of proposed station locations and the infrastructure improvements needed on a station by station basis to meet passenger requirements; and
- Assessing the work and changes in operating procedures necessary to ensure the safe operation of level crossings on the route.

Whilst the reintroduction of passenger services along this route is not committed at present, NCC will continue to pursue the reintroduction of passenger rail services along this line and seek necessary funding to support this key sustainable infrastructure improvement from relevant local and national funding sources.

2.4 Bus Corridor Improvements

Inter-regional and local bus services in Northumberland are likely to benefit from bus improvement and prioritisation works that are currently being implemented / planned in Newcastle. Bus prioritisation measures are proposed or have recently been completed in addition to general works to improve safety and traffic flow on a number of key corridors linking Northumberland to Tyne and Wear, most notably through Gosforth and the Cowgate junction.

The removal of these pinch points will improve the reliability and reduce journey times for the numerous existing express and longer-distance bus services to and from key settlements in Northumberland. The benefits of these schemes include a more attractive level of service and a means of avoiding congestion encountered by the private car. NCC will also continue to work with neighbouring local authorities to support the promotion of sustainable transport measures along main travel corridors.

The introduction of a new oyster card style smart ticketing system through the new rail franchise could also act to increase bus patronage – particularly if interchange possibilities between bus and rail are maximised at existing and proposed rail stations.

2.5 Sustainable Development

The Core Strategy strongly supports sustainable development, particularly from a transport perspective. All developments will be required to provide a detailed Transport Assessment/Transport Statement to identify the impact of the development on the local road network. Additionally, all developments will also be required to provide a detailed Travel Plan, which will be required to detail a range of deliverable measures that could be introduced to minimise and mitigate the impact on the highway network. Specifically, Travel Plans are used as an on-going monitoring tool to measure modal shift targets, with the range of measures and incentives within the Plan used to achieve the targets set.

Policy 41A of the Core Strategy outlines that all developments affecting the transport network will be required to set out the following:

- Provide effective and safe access and egress to the existing transport network;
- Include appropriate measures to mitigate its adverse impacts on the transport network including its contribution to cumulative impacts;
- Minimise conflict between different modes, including measures for network, traffic and parking management;
- Facilitate the safe use of the network, including suitable crossing points, footways and dedicated provision for cyclists;
- Suitably accommodate the delivery of goods and supplies; and
- Minimise any adverse impact on communities and the environment, including noise and air quality.

The implementation of the above will ensure that future development coming forward in Northumberland maximises available sustainable travel opportunities. As a result of sustainable transport and access issues being embedded within the appropriate planning policies, these themes will therefore represent a major consideration of future site design and layout as they come forward.

3. Local Interventions

The previous section set out a number of the over-arching strategic sustainable transport interventions that are likely to benefit the County as a whole. This section provides a summary of the main travel patterns, potential local sustainable transport interventions and further sustainable transport options that could be implemented in the main settlements in Northumberland.

3.1 Central Delivery Area

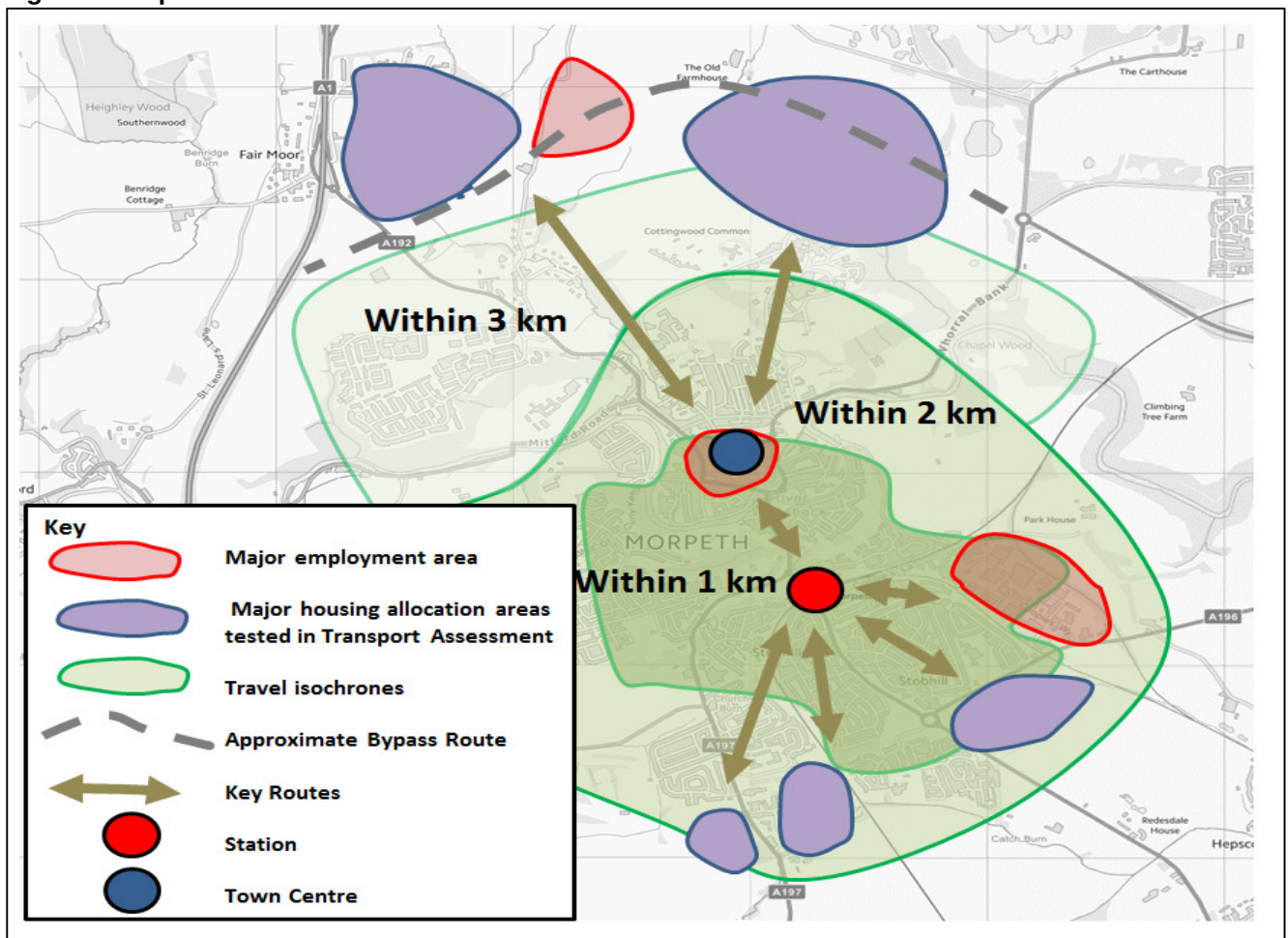
3.1.1 Morpeth

A review of the travel to work statistics for Morpeth from the 2011 Census highlights that 33% of residents live and work within the town, with a further 20% of Morpeth residents working in Newcastle and 13% working in other areas of Tyne and Wear.

Morpeth is served by a railway station on the East Coast service with a service calling at the station approximately every hour. The town is also served by a number of express bus services linking the town to Tyne and Wear and other areas in South East Northumberland from a new bus station that has been constructed in the town centre.

The location of the largest development sites assessed as part of the Transport Assessment is shown in Figure 2 below with travel isochrones displayed showing the distance of new development from Morpeth Railway Station.

Figure 2 Morpeth Travel Isochrones



As can be seen from Figure 2, the large development sites considered in the Transport Assessment are located to the north of the town around the Morpeth Northern Distributor Road that is currently under construction. Additionally, a number of development sites are also located towards the southern edge of the town. To maximise the sustainable travel opportunities at these sites the developments will require integration with the local bus services accessing the town centre and employment sites within Morpeth. Given the distance between the railway station and the development areas at the northern extent of the town; it would be prudent to consider a town centre bus service that would encompass the main areas of Morpeth and the rail station to coincide with peak hour rail services in addition to a larger car park capacity to facilitate journeys further afield.

It should be noted that rail services provide considerable additional potential for sustainable travel opportunities in Morpeth. It has been highlighted that rail already represents an increasingly important mode for travel to/from Morpeth with a considerable increase in rail passenger numbers in recent years. The additional services that are proposed as part of the new East Coast Mainline rail franchise and improved trains / frequencies associated with the new Northern Rail franchise provide excellent opportunities to further embed rail as a key transport mode in Morpeth.

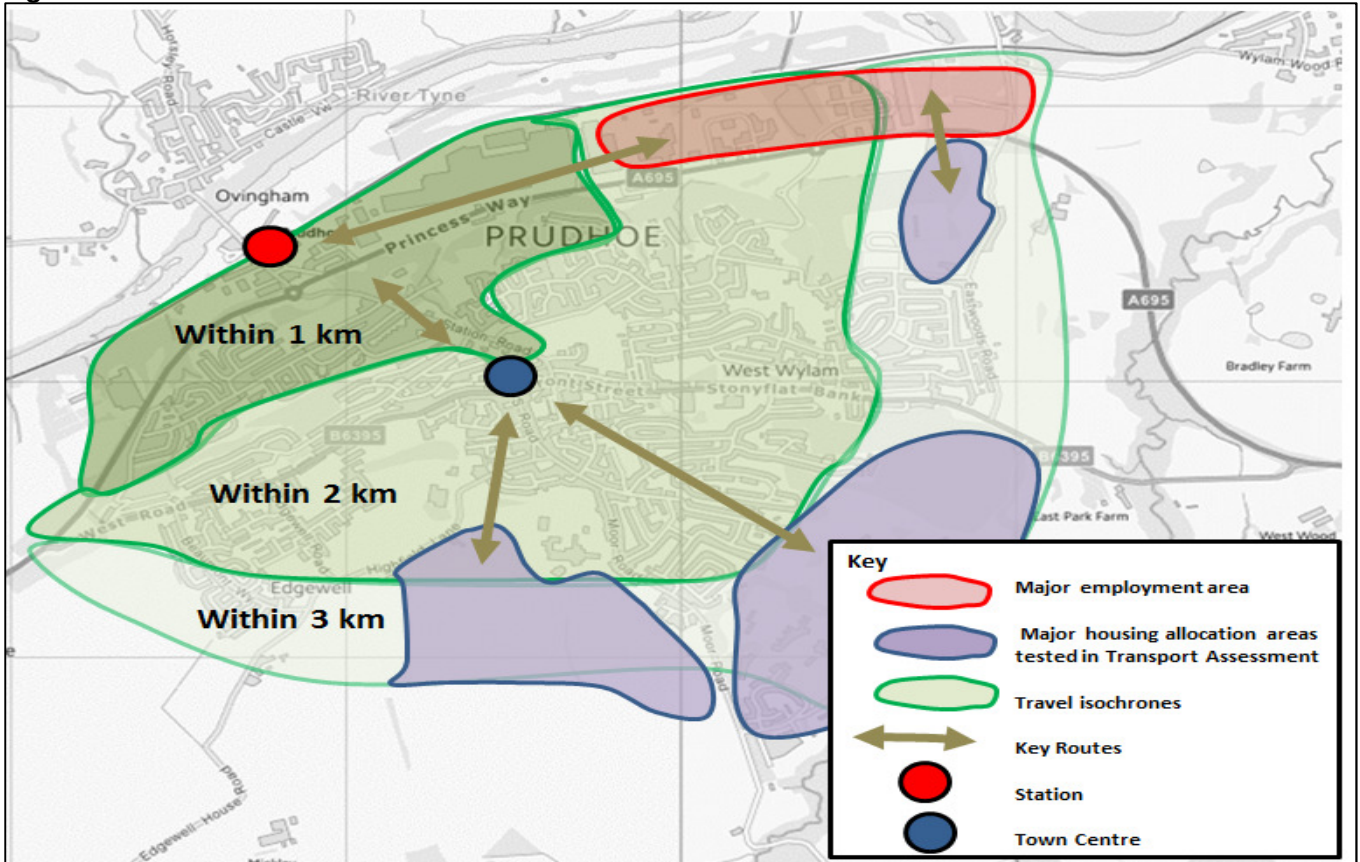
3.1.2 Prudhoe

The travel to work statistics from the 2011 Census highlight that 26% of residents also work within Prudhoe, with a further 20% working in Newcastle and a further 19% working in the remainder of the Tyne and Wear region. These proportions thus demonstrate that in order to ensure sustainable development coming forward in the area, linkages both within the town and to the wider Tyne and Wear region need to be considered.

Prudhoe currently benefits from a railway station, and as can be seen from Table 2, the station is served by hourly services which route into Newcastle. A half hourly express bus service linking into the rail interchange also enhances the sustainable connectivity with Tyne and Wear whilst within the town, the local Prudhoe shuttle bus services operates at a half hourly frequency.

The main locations for development assessed in the Transport Assessment are shown in Figure 3 with travel isochrones from the Low Prudhoe Industrial Estate also shown.

Figure 3 Prudhoe Travel Isochrones



As can be seen from Figure 3, the Low Prudhoe Industrial Estate and the railway station are both approximately 3 km from the main development sites located to the south east of the town. Given that the topography of the town is not particularly conducive to promoting walking and cycling linkages to these areas, future development in this area will need to include integration into the local bus network.

Given the close proximity, the residential site to the north of the town and further development of the Low Prudhoe Industrial Estate would benefit from good quality walking and cycling infrastructure between the town centre and key infrastructure such as the railway station, ensuring the sites are easily accessible and maximising the sustainable travel opportunities.

3.1.3 Hexham

Travel to work data from the 2011 Census highlights that over 40% of residents in Hexham work within the town. Over 20% of residents work in Tyne and Wear and approximately 10% work in Corbridge and the surrounding area. These proportions highlight the importance of maintaining and improving sustainable travel linkages within Hexham itself given the town is highlighted to be relatively self-contained. However, it is also important to ensure strategic links to destinations in the wider region are improved (such as Tyne and Wear) which can be facilitated by improved rail services described in Section 2.2 above.

In relation to transport facilities in Hexham, a new £2million bus station is currently under construction. This will provide a brand new facility (due to open in summer 2016) located on the existing Loosing Hill car park in the town, replacing the existing bus station. It will feature upgraded waiting facilities, travel information for passengers as well as new public space and pedestrian crossing and footways. As well as improving the experience for passengers, the upgrade is likely to bring significant benefits to Hexham and the wider Northumberland economy.

The existing public transport linkages to Tyne and Wear and Corbridge include an hourly rail service running from approximately 06:00 to 23:00 and express bus services to Corbridge and Newcastle. Hexham also hosts a Co-wheels car club.

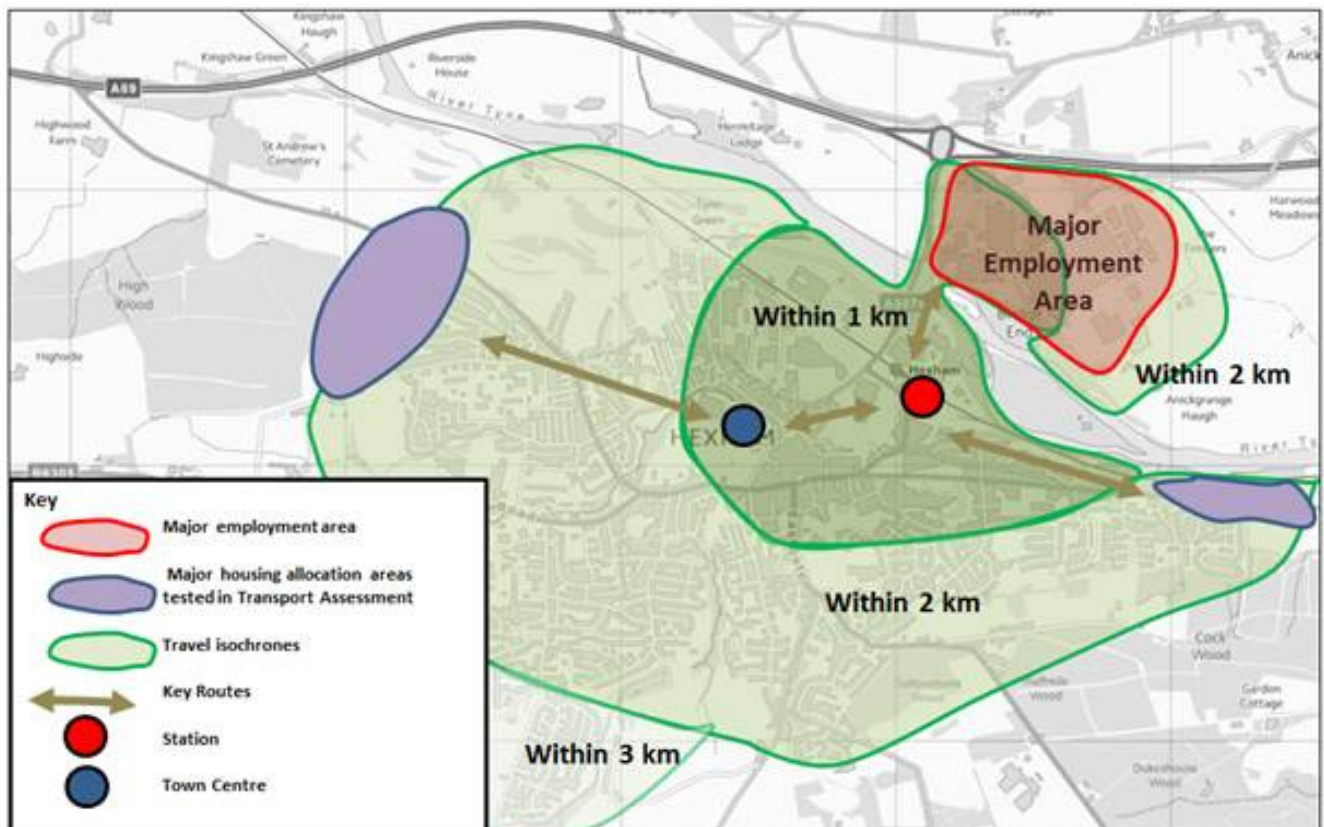
A large proportion of existing employment within Hexham is located on the Ferry Road Industrial Estate on the northern side of the River Tyne to the north of the town centre. This employment area is currently served by the 687 bus service which only operates twice a day and only outside of peak hours. The Ferry Road Industrial Estate also represents a major employment growth area for Hexham in the Core Strategy and as such, an improvement to bus services to this area is considered an important strategy for reducing traffic impacts. The provision of a new bus station also provides added value in delivering improved bus services in the town, which would help facilitate modal shift.

The enhancement of public transport linkages between new and existing residential and employment areas in Hexham would thus assist in achieving modal shift for trips within Hexham together with more cohesive walking and cycling links. This could have a significant impact on traffic volumes in the town, given the high proportion of residents who work and live within Hexham.

Figure 4 below highlights indicative travel isochrones from the railway station in Hexham town centre and the main employment area / proposed housing development areas in Hexham. The main employment area is located within an accessible 1-2km journey from the railway station; highlighting that the station has an important role facilitating cross-boundary commuter trips to areas such as Newcastle but also catering for inbound commuting trips into Hexham from the surrounding area. The improvements being proposed as part of the new Northern rail franchise will significantly improve rail services calling at Hexham.

The main housing sites assessed in the Transport Assessment Report in Hexham are located to the east and west of the town, approximately 3km from the Ferry Road employment area and around 2km from the town centre. A combination of walking, cycling and public transport upgrades would be required to assist the sustainability of these developments and ensure they are fully connecting to existing amenities given their edge of town locations. Any measures introduced would also improve connectivity of existing residential areas and could make a significant impact on road conditions in the town.

Figure 4 Hexham Travel Isochrones



It should also be noted that as part of any major development at Shaws Lane to the west of Hexham; the A69 / B6531 junction to the north-west of Hexham would require upgrading to provide a safe means of access and

accommodate the higher volumes of vehicle traffic. As set out in the Mitigation Report, the upgrading of the western A69 junction would provide the opportunity for the re-routing of traffic from the west of the town, reducing the number of vehicles passing through the centre of Hexham. The re-routing of vehicle movements could be encouraged by the implementation of traffic calming along Eilansgate, which could incorporate enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, creating more cohesive linkages within the town and facilitating improved connections between the town centre / main employment area and housing growth area located to the west of the town.

3.1.4 Ponteland

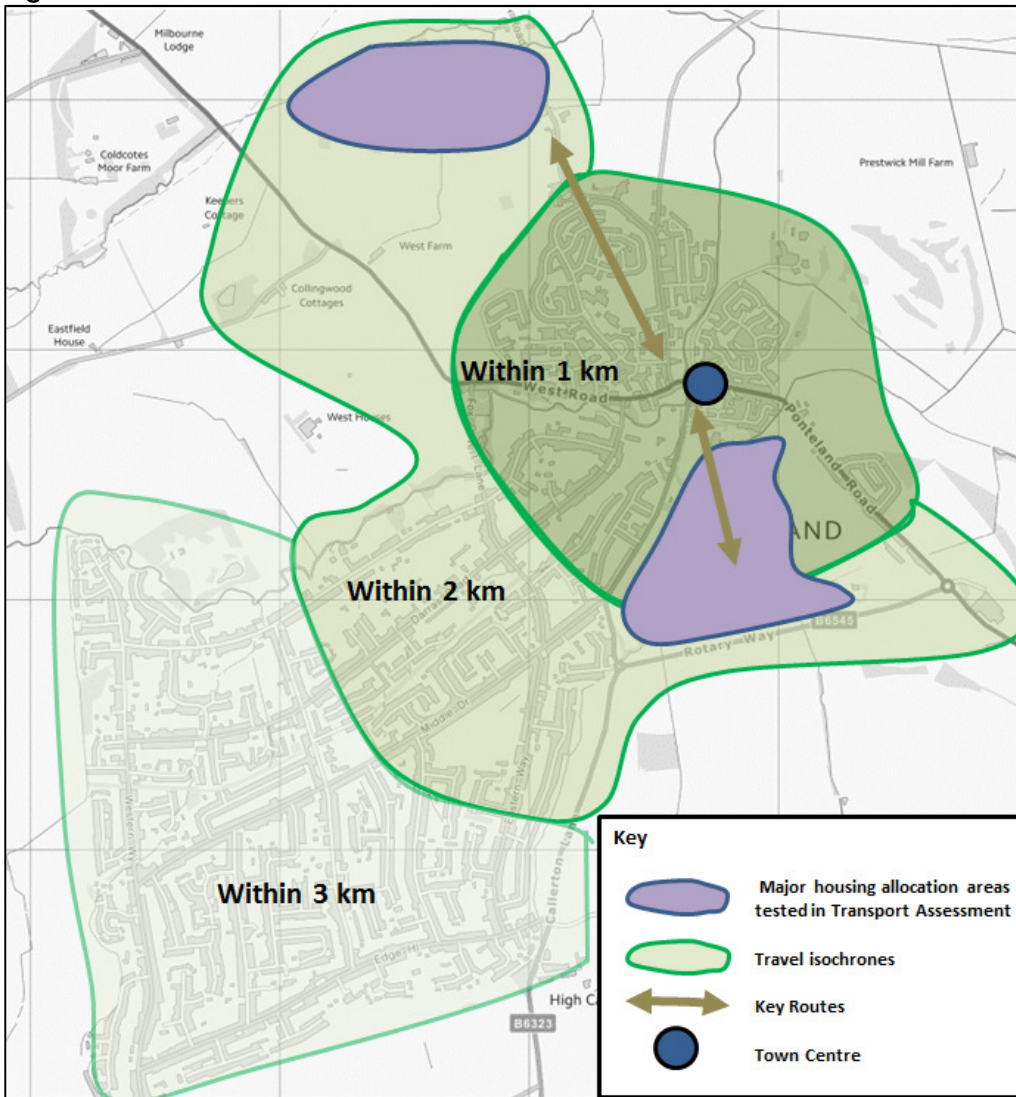
The travel to work data from the 2011 Census shows that a large proportion of Ponteland residents (35%) work in Newcastle, 20% live and work within Ponteland and approximately 20% work elsewhere in Northumberland. The relatively low proportion of Ponteland residents who work in the town demonstrates the importance of providing good quality sustainable transport links with other areas of Northumberland and Newcastle in particular.

Existing public transport linkages between Ponteland and Newcastle upon Tyne currently include a bus service which runs approximately every 20 minutes during peak periods and passes along the A696 into the town centre and into Darras Hall. Links by bus to other areas of Northumberland and Ponteland are currently relatively limited.

It is understood that large greenfield land releases are proposed on land to the west of Newcastle, as identified in the adopted Newcastle Local Plan. This includes areas around Callerton and Kenton. It is also understood that new bus connections and bus priority measures form a major element of the transport strategy for connecting these areas with Newcastle city centre. There is merit therefore, in exploring the potential to extend / route the potential new bus service(s) serving the developments to the west of Newcastle to Ponteland, which would further enhance services and diversity locations served.

The location of development assessed in the Transport Assessment and travel isochrones from the town centre are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5 – Ponteland Travel Isochrones



Masterplanning of the development site to the north of Rotary Way in Ponteland could also provide a route for public transport to avoid congestion at the A696 / North Road / Callerton Lane junction by providing a route for bus services to navigate through the development site on the approach to Ponteland. This could be facilitated by appropriate design and deployment of 'bus plugs' as necessary to prevent through traffic from utilising the same route. Strategic considerations and planning/design such as this is important in ensuring that new development is well linked with the existing built environment, whilst also providing enhancements to existing routes and services.

Nexus has also identified their interest in exploring with NCC the potential for extending the Tyne and Wear Metro from Newcastle Airport to Ponteland. This would be expected to provide significant benefits in achieving modal shift away from the car given the high proportion of Ponteland residents who work in Newcastle, as identified in the 2011 Census Travel to Work statistics. NCC will continue to engage with Nexus to shape future dialogue and plans regarding the Tyne and Wear Metro extension potential.

A Travel Plan has also been submitted as the planning application for the former police HQ site to the north of Ponteland and will be implemented upon the development becoming occupied.

The effects of improved bus connectivity in Ponteland, which has historically had relatively modest public transport connections, will play a potentially significant role in alleviating additional traffic impacts associated with new development in Ponteland. The general location of proposed future development on the south-eastern periphery of the existing settlement will also potentially serve to reduce traffic routing through the centre of

Ponteland. Additionally, this spatial development pattern will also maximise potential links to any extension of the Tyne and Wear Metro from Newcastle Airport, which would represent a significant transport investment in the area.

A combination of the measures referenced would potentially provide significant extra capacity for accommodating future development trips and therefore impact on the future operation of the highway network in Ponteland, particularly key junctions such as the A696 / North Road / Callerton Lane in the centre of Ponteland.

3.2 South East Delivery Area

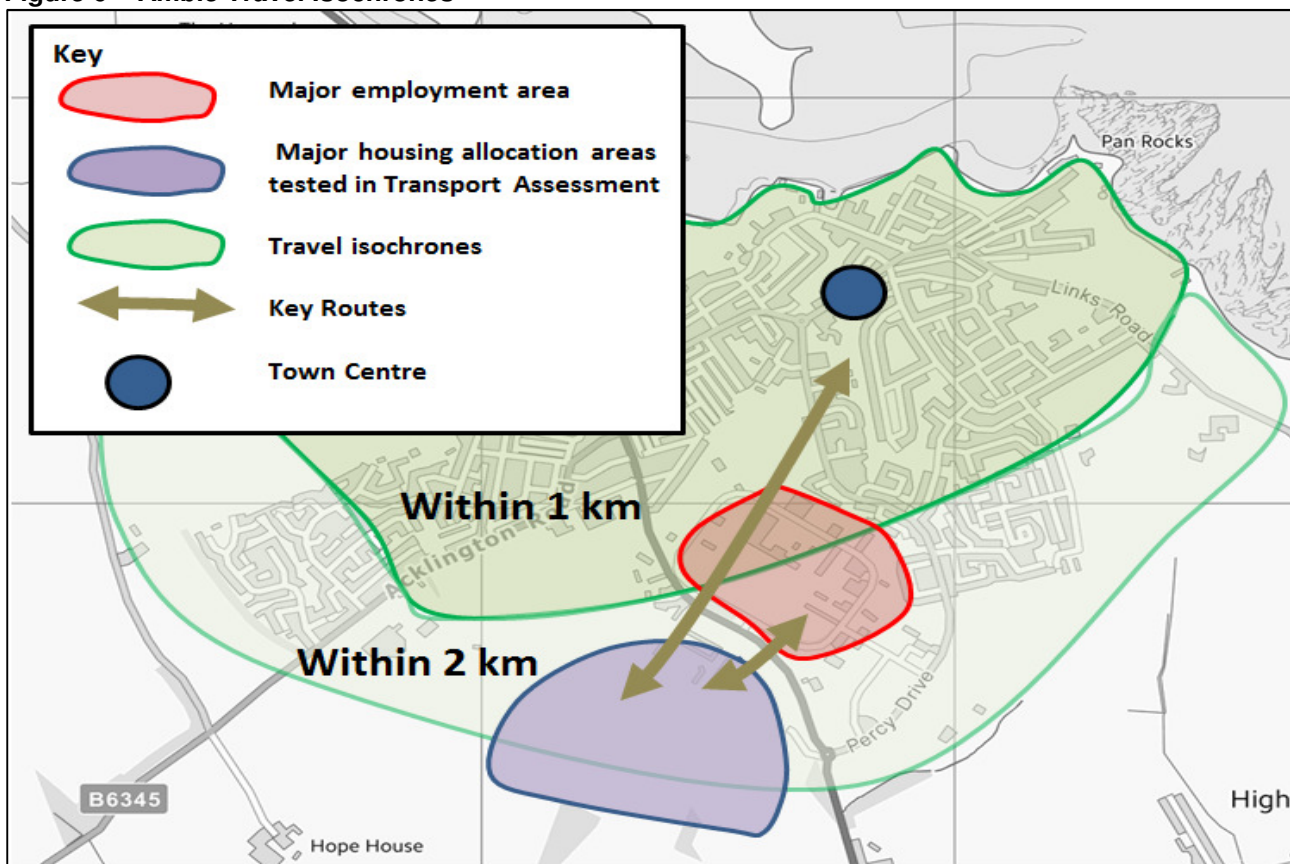
3.2.1 Amble

The travel to work statistics for Amble from the 2011 Census highlight that 22% of residents also work within the town. Additionally, a further 14% work in Alnwick, 17% work in Tyne and Wear and 40% work in other areas of Northumberland. Given the spatial distribution of the residents working in the other parts of Northumberland, improving the sustainability of development in Amble would need to focus on the linkages within the town and to Alnwick and Tyne and Wear.

Amble currently benefits from the hourly express X18 and X20 bus services to Newcastle and Alnwick. The mainly on-road North Sea Cycle Route also passes along the coastline and through the town centre but does not penetrate into the main residential areas.

A plan of Amble travel isochrones showing the key developments assessed in the Transport Assessment and the distance from the town centre, can be found in Figure 6.

Figure 6 – Amble Travel Isochrones



As can be seen from Figure 6, the major development site assessed in the Transport Assessment is located on the southern side of the town, adjacent to the Coquet Business Park. Sustainable travel options at the site can be maximised by ensuring good quality walking and cycling linkages into the town centre and the neighbouring Coquet Business Park, measures which would also benefit existing residential areas.

Given the close proximity of the X18 and X20 bus routes passing along the A1068 to the north, the sustainability of this development will also be improved by upgraded waiting facilities and appropriate marketing as part of the site Travel Plan.

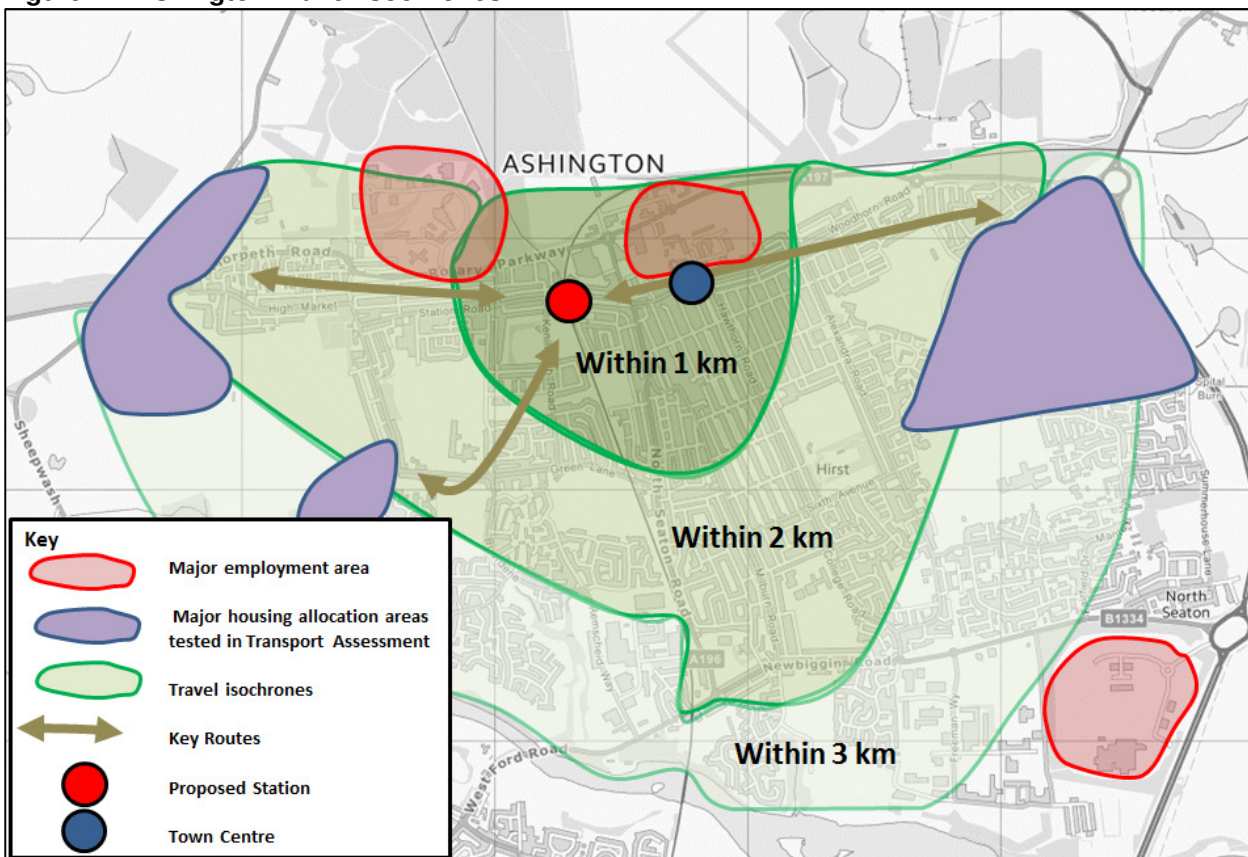
3.2.2 Ashington

Travel to work data from the 2011 Census highlights that over 36% of residents in Ashington work within the town with approximately a further 40% working within Northumberland mainly in nearby towns such as Blyth, Bedlington and Morpeth that 10% of Ashington residents work at locations in Tyne and Wear.

Ashington currently benefits from a number of existing regional and express bus services which link to other key towns in the South East Delivery Area (Bedlington, Blyth and Morpeth) and Newcastle. As set out previously, NCC is seeking to reinstate the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne Railway line, with a station in Ashington likely to be situated on Kilinworth Road to the north of the town centre, as highlighted in Figure 7 below. Figure 7 highlights indicative travel isochrones from the proposed ABT line station in Ashington.

The provision of the railway is expected to assist in improving the sustainability of development coming forward in the area as well as providing additional connections to key destinations located along the A189 corridor including Cramlington, Blyth and Newcastle.

Figure 7 – Ashington Travel Isochrones



In Ashington, the main areas of residential development assessed in the Transport Assessment are located to the west of the town to the east of Sheepwash Road and also to the east of the town, to the west of the A189. These areas already benefit from good public transport linkages to the main employment areas in Ashington such as Wansbeck Business Park and Ashwood Business Park and the town centre, with bus services running every 20 minutes in the peak hours. Additionally, as shown in Figure 7, the town centre and employment areas to the north of the A197 are all located within a 1km walk of the proposed new station.

As can be seen in Figure 7, the main housing areas assessed in the Transport Assessment report are approximately 2km from the railway station and town centre. High quality, pedestrian, cycle and integration of existing local bus services would thus be required to maximise the sustainability of these sites coming forward.

The proposed new rail station in Ashington therefore has significant potential to cater for people who travel from elsewhere to work in some of Ashington's main employment zones, whilst good design and appropriate multi-modal linkages along the A197 corridor would also ensure existing and proposed residential areas could also readily access the station to facilitate trips further afield. These public transport linkages as well as the reinstatement of the railway line will assist in achieving modal shift in Ashington together with more cohesive walking and cycling links.

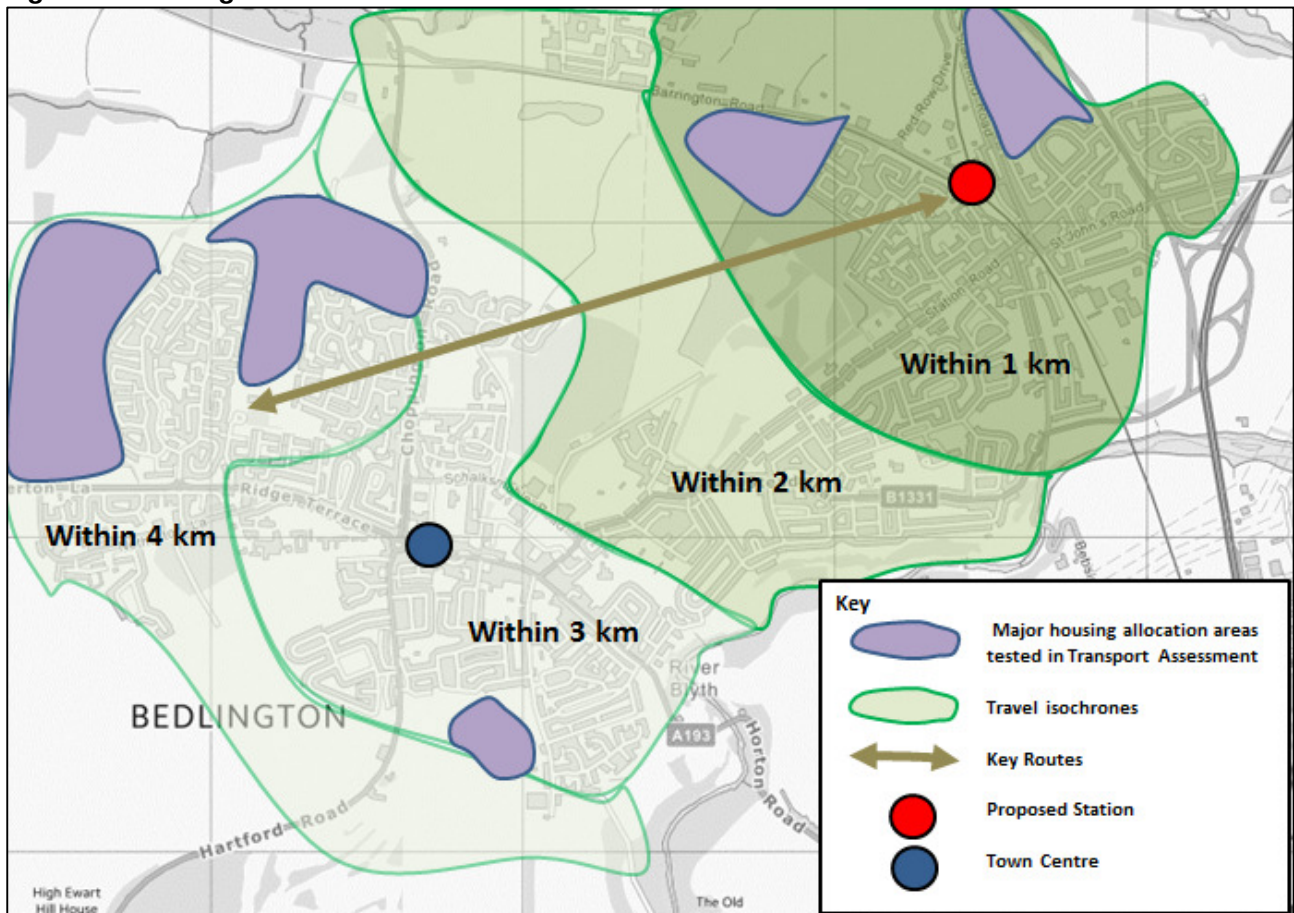
3.2.3 Bedlington

Travel to work data from the 2011 Census highlights that approximately 20% of Bedlington residents work within the town, with a further 9% working in Ashington, 6% in Blyth and 17% working in Newcastle.

Bedlington currently benefits from a number of regional and express bus services which link to other key towns in the South East delivery area and Tyne and Wear. A station on the proposed Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line would be likely to use the former station site located in Bedlington Station to the north-east of the town, as highlighted in Figure 8. Figure 8 provides indicative travel isochrones from the proposed ABT line station in Bedlington.

The station site is located in an area that also includes a number of the development sites which were assessed in the Transport Assessment identified to forward in Bedlington. This will assist in ensuring sustainable development can come forward in these areas with appropriate pedestrian and cycling linkages in place to key proposed transport infrastructure.

Figure 8 – Bedlington Travel Isochrones



The other large area of development assessed in the Transport Assessment is located to the west and north-west of Bedlington. As well as an existing off-road cycle link that currently routes between this area and to the area of the proposed ABT line Bedlington station, the B1331 also benefits from an express bus service to Newcastle every 20 minutes. The integration of these linkages into the masterplanning of development coming forward in this area will assist in improving the sustainability of future development. Additionally however, provision of facilities to improve access or travel options east-west across Bedlington between the proposed rail station and growth areas located to the west of the town would be advantageous to maximise sustainable travel opportunities.

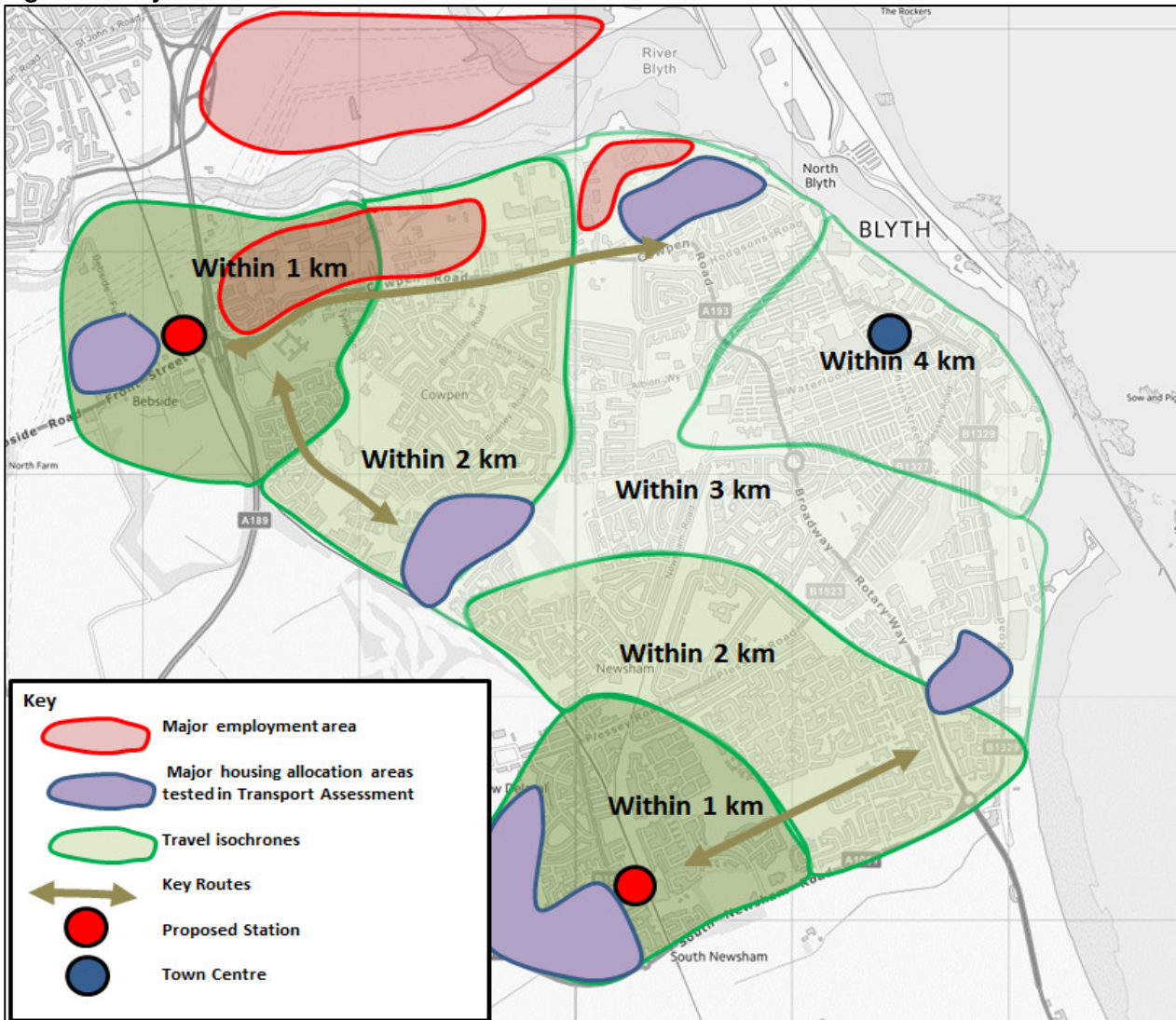
This could be in the form of re-routing or additional bus services that better link up areas of Bedlington and Bedlington Station, incorporating the town centre. It may also seek to ensure that sufficient parking is available at or in the vicinity of the station to ensure that if necessary, short local trips to the station are made by car but longer term trips can be made by train rather than car therefore reducing the overall number of journeys and distances travelled.

3.2.4 Blyth

Travel to work data from the 2011 Census highlights that 34% of the working population of Blyth work within the town, with a large proportion of residents also travelling to Newcastle (15.0%) and North Tyneside (14.5%) for work. Blyth presently benefits from a number of regional and express bus services which link to other key towns in the South East Delivery Area and Tyne and Wear.

As set out previously, NCC is currently working with key stakeholders to prepare a case for the reinstatement of passenger services on the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line. As part of this scheme, Blyth is expected to benefit from two new stations – one located at Bebside to the north west of Blyth and another located at South Newsham to the south of the town, as shown in Figure 9 below. Figure 9 highlights indicative travel isochrones from the two proposed ABT line stations in Blyth.

Figure 9 – Blyth Travel Isochrones



A significant proportion of the residential development that was assessed as part of the Transport Assessment Report in Blyth is located around the proposed ABT line South Newsham station to the south of Blyth. This presents the opportunity for the provision of direct, good quality pedestrian linkages between the new development site and future transport infrastructure as well as between the proposed and existing residential areas. This will assist in maximising the sustainable travel opportunities in this area and ensure local areas of Blyth are suitably linked by a variety of modes as well as destinations further afield.

As can be seen in Figure 9, relatively little development has been assessed in the Transport Assessment in the vicinity of the proposed ABT line Bebside station to the north-west of Blyth. The Bebside station forms an important potential transport option for people accessing the various employment opportunities located in the Riverside Business Park to the north of Cowpen Road as well as the retail facilities located to the east of the A189.

The A189 currently forms a major barrier to pedestrian and cycle routes between land to the west of the A189 and destinations to the east. This is exacerbated by regular traffic congestion that currently occurs on the A193 Cowpen Road corridor during peak periods, often extending back to the A189/A193 interchange. The provision of good quality enhanced linkages between the station and locations to the east could assist in reducing the volume of trips being undertaken the area by car and thus assist in reducing this already congestion corridor.

The integration of bus services with the proposed ABT line stations in Blyth presents an opportunity to create transport interchanges and extend the connectivity enhancements realised by the line to other areas of the

County. A number of existing local bus services currently route along the A193 Cowpen Road as well as express services to Newcastle that route along the A1061 South Newsham Road. This presents the opportunity to embed the new line within new/existing communities through enhanced pedestrian and cycle links and will assist in delivering the benefits of the new stations to existing and future development sites in other areas of Blyth and beyond.

3.2.5 Cramlington

Travel to work data from the 2011 Census highlights that almost 30% of residents of Cramlington also work within the town. The data suggests 10% work in Blyth and the surrounding areas as well as 25% who work in Newcastle upon Tyne and 15% who work in North Tyneside. The high proportion of residents working outside of Cramlington emphasises the importance of strong public transport linkages between new development sites coming forward and the key destinations locally.

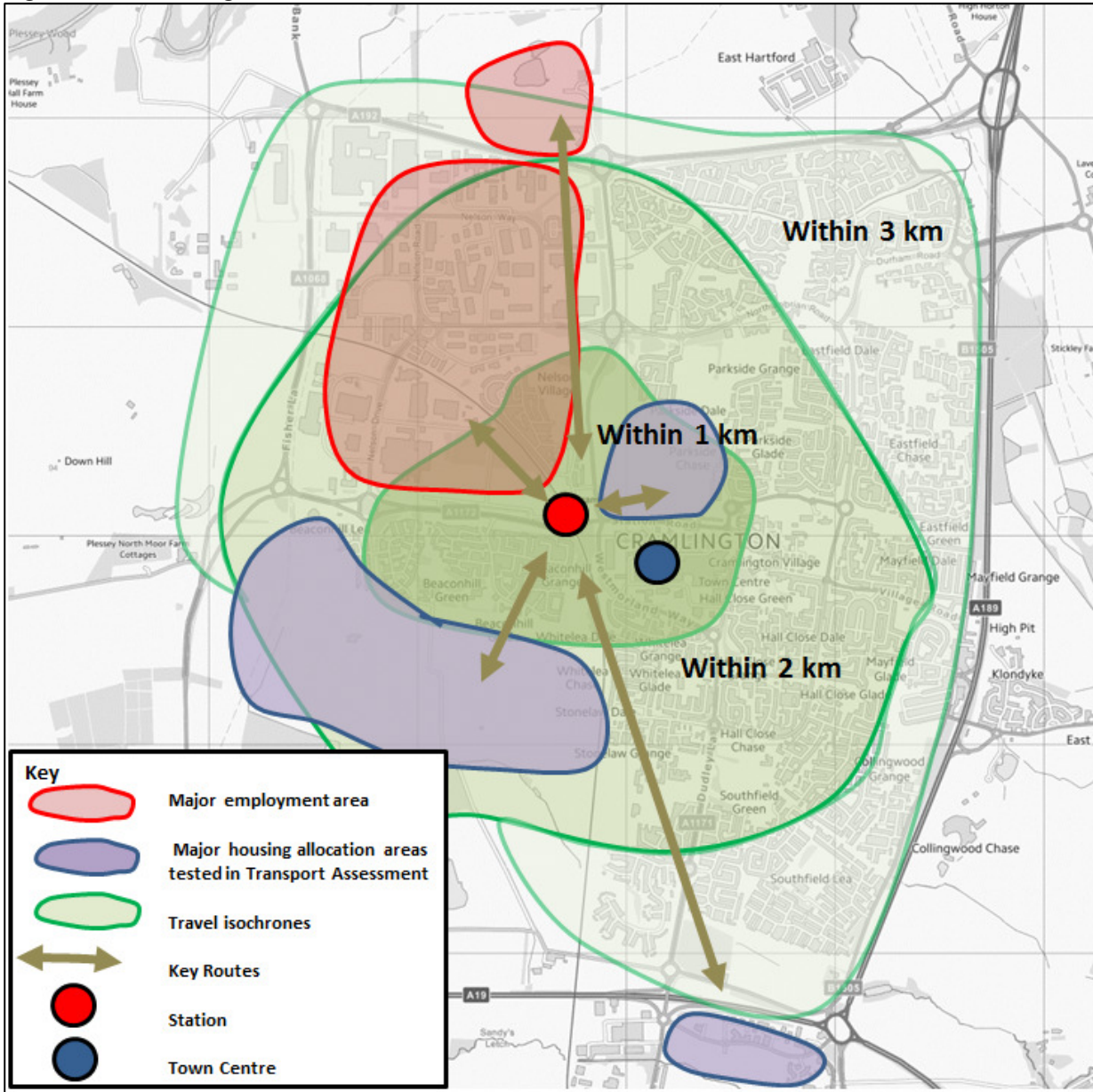
Cramlington currently benefits from a number of regional and express bus services which pass through the town centre and link to other key towns (Blyth) in the South East delivery area as well as Newcastle.

It has already been highlighted that rail represents a popular mode choice for residents of Cramlington, which has witnessed a 4.7% increase in passenger numbers since 2010. Cramlington is currently served by regular hourly train services to Newcastle and the Metro Centre.

Section 2.2 above highlights that significant improvements are planned on the Northern rail franchise serving Cramlington, that has now been taken over by Arriva. The provision of new and improved trains, extra seating capacity and more frequent services will provide the platform to considerably boost rail travel as a proportion of the overall mode share for journeys to and from Cramlington moving forward.

The locations of the largest development sites assessed in the Transport Assessment in Cramlington are shown in Figure 10.

Figure 10 – Cramlington Travel Isochrones



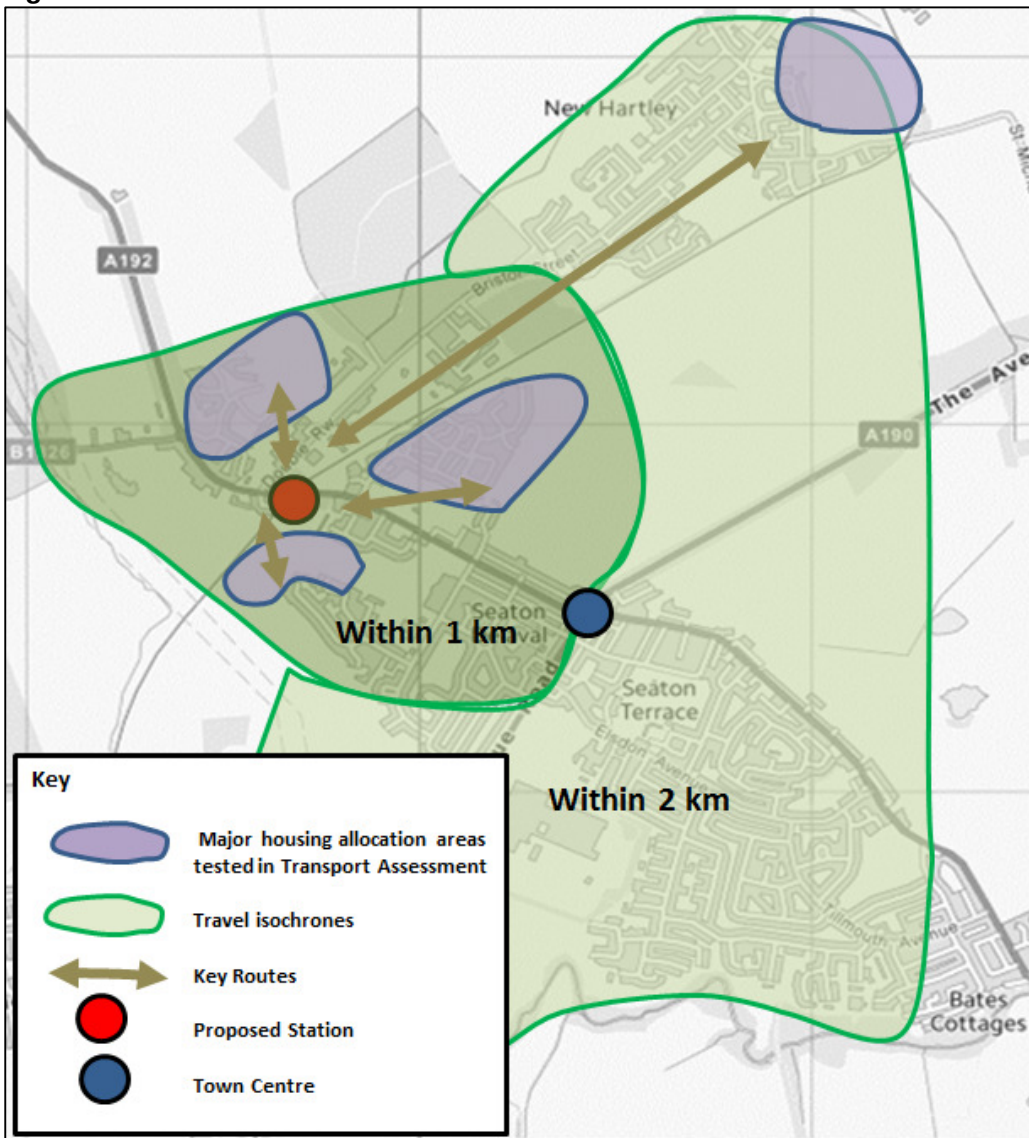
A significant proportion of the residential development coming forward in Cramlington is likely to be located in the south-west sector. The planning application for 1,600 residential dwellings at the site sets out a package of Travel Plan measures to benefit this area including improved walking and cycling linkages, provision of travel information and a car club. It is understood this includes improvements to existing footway links between the site and Cramlington town centre and the railway station. Additionally, there are commitments to enter into dialogue with local bus operators to seek to divert the existing bus services that currently by-pass the site.

The other large housing site assessed in Cramlington as part of the Transport Assessment is located at Centre Point, within the town centre. The planning application also includes a detailed Travel Plan setting out a package of measures including public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure improvements which are expected to benefit the development site and wider Cramlington area. Additionally, the Centre Point development is located opposite the railway station and is ideally located to maximise the benefits that will result from the introduction of the new rail franchise discussed in Section 2.2.

3.2.6 Seaton Delaval

A review of the travel to work statistics for Seaton Delaval from the 2011 Census highlights that 12% of residents also work within the town, with a further 29% working in North Tyneside and 22% working in Newcastle. The town currently benefits from half hourly bus services into both Newcastle and North Tyneside and as set out previously, NCC is currently working with key stakeholders to prepare a case for the reinstatement of passenger services on the Ashington, Blyth and Tyne railway line. As part of this scheme, a railway station would be reinstated in the town which would benefit commuters travelling into Newcastle. The approximate location of the new station can be seen in Figure 11 with travel distance isochrones also shown in the plan.

Figure 11 – Seaton Delaval Travel Isochrones



As can also be seen from Figure 11, a large proportion of the housing assessed in the Transport Assessment is located around the likely railway station site. These sites are already extremely sustainable in respect to their close proximity to the proposed station site. However, the sustainable travel opportunities at these sites can be maximised by ensuring the integration of these development sites with the existing bus routes passing along the A192 and the future reinstatement of the railway station.

3.3 Northern Delivery Area

3.3.1 Berwick

Travel to work data from the 2011 Census highlights that the majority of the residents of Berwick also work within the town, with 60% living and working within Berwick. Additionally, 15% of Berwick residents work in the surrounding area.

Given the high proportion of the population who work within the town and the self-contained nature of the local economy, sustainable travel linkages within Berwick itself will be vital in achieving modal shift and ensuring that development coming forward in the town is sustainable.

As a result of the number of different sites identified in Berwick likely to come forward in the next few years, a more appropriate strategy may involve the pooling of any planning contributions from developments to generate greater benefit within the town as a whole.

Figure 12 below highlights indicative travel isochrones from Berwick railway station to the large employment area located to the north of Berwick in Ramparts Business Park. There are a number of key desire lines highlighted in Figure 12 that will become increasingly important and represent a larger number of trips within Berwick as the new developments come on board. With the high proportion of residents working within the town, the opportunity exists to encourage a shift from the private car to walking and bicycle which would be likely to lessen existing traffic issues that are known to occur in the town centre and on main routes into the town at peak times.

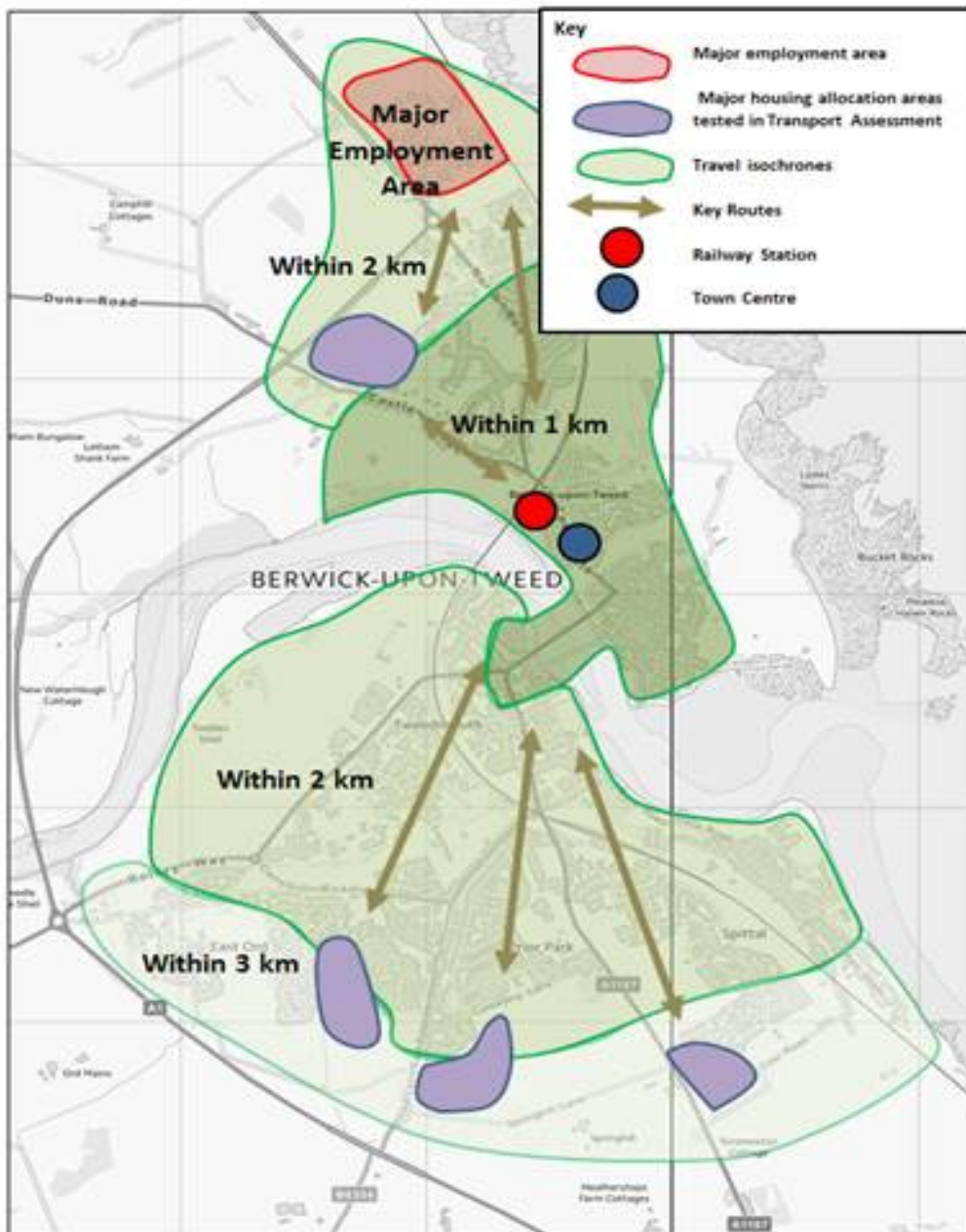
The North Sea Cycle Route passes through Berwick, however virtually all sections are on road with no other cycle linkages penetrating other parts of the town. Therefore, it is vital to consider strategically how resources can be used to provide clear and upgraded walking and cycling links to the town centre and beyond.

Additionally, the River Tweed represents the major barrier to north-south travel in Berwick and as such, there would be merit in exploring options for delivery bus prioritisation measures on key links such as the Royal Tweed Bridge to provide incentives for internal trips within the town to be undertaken by bus.

As can be seen in Figure 12 below, the housing developments assessed as part of the Transport Assessment are mainly located to the south and west of the town with the majority of future employment land generally located at Ramparts Business Park to the north. The housing to the west is mainly located at the West Hope development site and ensuring good quality pedestrian and cycling linkages to the town centre and Ramparts Business Park, with a robust Travel Plan in place, will assist in delivering more sustainable development.

The housing developments assessed to the south of the town are located on the urban fringes of the existing settlement and similarly, good quality pedestrian and cycling linkages which involves upgrading existing infrastructure will assist in improving the sustainability of development. Integration of local bus services would also be advantageous, particularly given that walking and cycling is unlikely to be a feasible option for all due to the distance from the main employment area and the town centre.

Figure 12 – Berwick Travel Isochrones



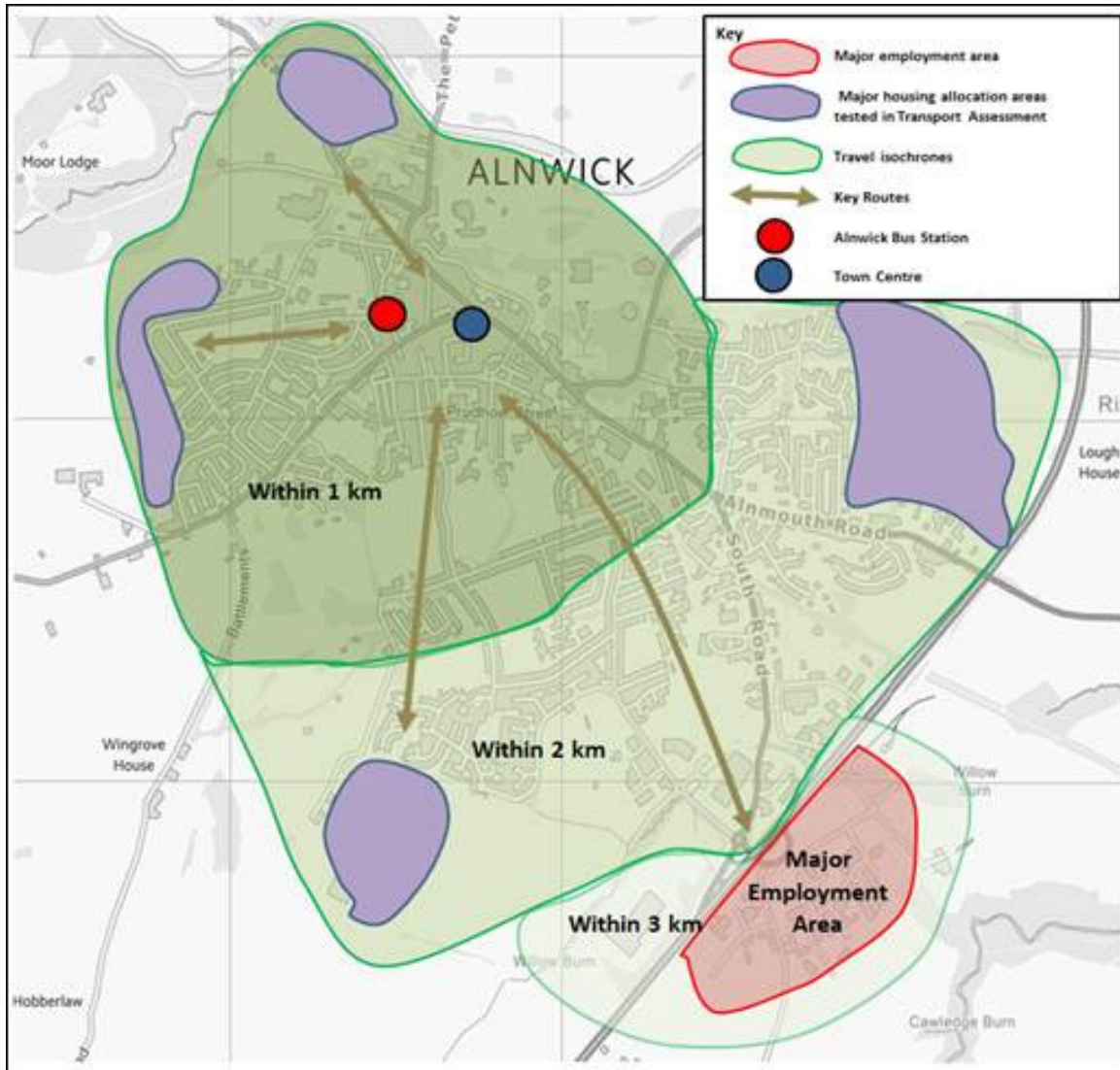
3.3.2 Alnwick

Travel to work data from the 2011 Census highlights that 46% of the residents of Alnwick also work within the town with a further 41% of residents work in other parts of Northumberland, generally travelling to nearby towns such as Morpeth. This demonstrates the importance of sustainable travel linkages within Alnwick and other main destinations in Northumberland alike.

Within the town, there are currently no dedicated cycle routes and the main employment area, located to the east of the A1 and town centre at the Lionheart Enterprise Park, is severed from the town by the A1. The enhancement of walking and cycling linkages to the Lionheart Business Park is an important consideration, which represents a large employment area outside of the town centre. It will be particularly important to ensure good connectivity to proposed development to the south of the town, which will likely assist in improving the sustainability of future development.

Figure 13 below highlights indicative travel isochrones from the main transport interchange in Alnwick town centre, represented by Alnwick bus station and the main employment area of Lionheart Enterprise Park / future development areas identified.

Figure 13 – Alnwick Travel Isochrones



The town currently benefits from the hourly X15, X18 and X20 regional bus services which extend to Berwick to the north and Morpeth / Newcastle to the south. The X15 service also routes via the Lionheart Enterprise Park to provide an opportunity for commuters from more distant locations to access this employment area. Services within the town are limited with the 472 town service providing an hourly service throughout the day.

As highlighted in Figure 13, a large proportion of the development assessed as part of the Transport Assessment Report is located on the urban fringes to the west and north of the town. Movements from these development sites would need to pass through the centre of Alnwick to reach the A1 or the Lionheart Enterprise Park, thus increasing the overall traffic impacts. Ensuring good quality connections from these sites into the local walking and cycling infrastructure and linking into integrated local public transport services is vital to realising the sustainability of future development in these areas.

It should be noted that whilst Alnwick is not served by a railway station within the town itself, Alnmouth station is located to the south-east of Alnwick and the A1. The station is a 3.8 mile / 10 minute journey from Alnwick town centre.

Alnmouth station is located on the East Coast Mainline and is served by a number of local Northern rail services as well as occasional inter-city services to Edinburgh and London. Alnmouth station will also benefit from the rail service improvements described in Section 2.2 which will likely demonstrate an increasingly important role in supporting commuting trips to/from Alnwick elsewhere in Northumberland and beyond.

It is therefore vital to consider routes between the station and Alnwick, including the potential to capture the station within a town centre bus service and also ensure sufficient parking is located at the station to alleviate longer distance trips that may otherwise be undertaken by car.

4. Summary

This Addendum Report has been prepared to set out the sustainable transport opportunities that exist to support new development coming forward in Northumberland as part of the Core Strategy.

The report has provided an overview of the strategic committed and aspirational sustainable transport interventions that are likely to provide countywide benefits. In addition, the report has provided bespoke analysis of the main settlements in Northumberland in consideration of the spatial development proposals and how existing / proposed sustainable travel can be maximised. The review sets out a summary of existing journey to work travel trends to assist in determining whether the focus for future interventions should be on trips within a settlement or to destinations further afield, with appropriate recommendations provided.

As set out in this report, there are opportunities to improve the sustainability of development coming forward in Northumberland as part of the Core Strategy. This includes both maximising strategic improvements, such as improvements to rail infrastructure and services that would benefit a number of settlements already served and those proposed to be served by future rail services. Additionally, the report has highlighted a number of specific considerations for individual settlements that should be considered to maximise linkages and sustainable travel opportunities between new and existing development areas within settlements to improve sustainable travel opportunities. The proposals would also be likely to benefit existing residents within the towns and improve accessibility of jobs and key services for existing and new residents alike.

The existing Travel to Work Modal Splits from the 2011 Census have been summarised in Table 3 below. To assist in the review of the table, the results have been conditionally formatted compared to the average statistics for Northumberland as a whole. For all modes except car drivers, green results indicate a higher proportion of residents travelling to work by a sustainable mode with lower proportions shown in red. For car drivers the formatting has been reversed with higher proportions shown in red and lower proportions in green.

Table 3 Travel to Work Modal Splits in Northumberland

Resident Area	On foot	Bicycle	Bus	Train	Other	Car Passenger	Car Driver
Hexham	25.3%	1.3%	2.9%	2.7%	0.8%	5.8%	61.2%
Ponteland	8.6%	1.4%	3.1%	0.7%	3.3%	5.0%	77.9%
Blyth	10.8%	2.5%	8.4%	0.4%	1.6%	8.3%	68.0%
Ashington	14.0%	2.1%	7.2%	0.3%	0.9%	9.0%	66.4%
Bedlington	7.9%	1.4%	8.4%	0.4%	0.7%	7.2%	74.0%
Cramlington	8.6%	2.2%	9.0%	0.9%	1.1%	8.1%	70.1%
Berwick	29.3%	2.2%	5.9%	1.8%	1.0%	8.9%	51.0%
Alnwick	34.6%	1.6%	2.4%	0.8%	1.2%	4.5%	54.9%
Prudhoe	12.4%	1.0%	6.5%	2.7%	1.1%	7.0%	69.3%
Morpeth	9.9%	1.0%	5.5%	2.3%	1.0%	5.5%	74.8%
Amble	12.3%	2.0%	5.2%	1.5%	0.7%	6.9%	71.4%
Seaton Deval	6.0%	1.9%	7.1%	0.7%	3.6%	7.3%	73.5%
Northumberland Average	11.9%	1.7%	6.2%	1.3%	1.3%	7.2%	70.5%

The statistics highlight there is a reasonable degree of variation in travel habits across the main settlements of Northumberland, reflecting the wide diversity both demographically and geographically. As would be expected, towns with a higher proportion of the population living and working within the town generally have a higher proportion of people travelling on foot, particularly Alnwick and Berwick where these trips account for approximately a third of all trips. Although it should be noted that in all towns, the majority of commuting trips are undertaken by car, the proportion in South East Northumberland is higher than elsewhere in the County. This reflects the large proportions commuting into Tyne and Wear and the relative lack of alternatives to the car. However, it should also be noted that the proposed ABT line provides a significant opportunity to alter these statistics, in addition to improved rail services on the East Coast Mainline and Tyne Valley line.