Calne Community

Neighbourhood Plan Review

Getting Around Topic Paper

Ver. R15 April 2024

Contents

1. Background

The term "Getting Around" is used to describe how people move about as part of their daily life whether by car, walking, cycling, bus, or any other form of transport.

Consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan has demonstrated that the impact of development on movement around the Calne and Calne Without remains a key concern. There is general concern within the local community that recent housing development has not been accompanied by the necessary improvements to associated cycle, walking and road infrastructure. Improvement to transport infrastructure is needed now, in order to encourage more people to use sustainable, low carbon and healthy modes of transport to get around the Neighbourhood Area. This is of increasing urgency as any further development comes forward. The emerging Wiltshire Local Plan consultation document 'Planning for Chippenham'[1] includes 'preferred development sites' to the south and east of Chippenham town for approximately 5,586 homes. This would significantly affect transport and movement in the Calne Community Neighbourhood Area. Required improvements to transport infrastructure across our Neighbourhood Area include things such as linking all parts of the town together with an integrated, traffic free and well signed network of footpaths and cycle paths. Redressing the imbalance between housing and employment by improving employment opportunities in Calne is essential.

The Calne Area Transport Strategy (Atkins, 2021) forms a key part of the evidence base for this chapter of the Neighbourhood Plan. It sets out a range of information on how people get around in the Neighbourhood Area, as well as identifies issues and opportunities for improvement across Calne and Calne Without. The Transport Strategy is detailed and covers a range of issues; some of these can be covered directly by planning policy (and so inform the policies in this section), some are less influenced by planning policy as they are covered by separate legislation, majority by highways legislation.

The A4 is the main route running east/west through Calne Town centre connecting Bath and Chippenham in the west and Marlborough, Newbury, and London in the East. The A3102 forms the main north/south route linking Royal Wootton Bassett and Swindon in the north to Melksham in the south. A partial bypass to the town centre was opened in 1999 giving some relief from through traffic on the north section of the A3102 which passed through residential areas and the heart of the town centre. A third main route, the A342, runs through the southern part of Calne Without, connecting Devizes, in the east, to the A4 at Pewsham and the A3102. The main traffic flows are to and from the north, west and south.

The Calne Neighbourhood Area has a higher than the Wiltshire-average level of car ownership and car dependency. The 2021 Census data shows that excluding those people who work from home only 16% of workers in Calne work in the local area (less than 5km from home) compared with 23% in Chippenham, 28% in Devizes. 25%

[1] https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/5632/Planning-For-Chippenham/pdf/WLP_Principal_Settlement_Planning_for_Chippenham_FINAL__11-01-2021_.pdf?m=637459650065370000

of workers in Calne travel between 5km and 20km to work, compared with 17% in Chippenham and Devizes. Excluding people who work from home, 23% of Calne workers travel sustainably compared to 28% in Chippenham and 30% in Devizes (in this context "sustainably" means using public transport, cycling, walking or being a passenger in a car or van).

Summary travel to work by grouped by sustainable methods and other (people in employment or aged 15 and younger)								
	Calne		Chippenham		Devizes		Wiltshire	
		Excluding Work from Home		Excluding Work from Home		Excluding Work from Home		Excluding Work from Home
Sustainable (work from home, public transport, cycle, walk or passenger in a car or van)	46%	23%	54%	28%	50%	30%	50%	24%
Car, Taxi or motorcycle	53%	76%	46%	71%	50%	69%	49%	75%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Summary of distance travelled to work (for those who work)				
Distance Travelled to Work	Calne	Chippenham	Devizes	Wiltshire
Work at home	31%	36%	28%	34%
Local area (< 5km)	16%	23%	28%	19%
Between 5km and 20km	25%	17%	17%	20%
Between 20km and 40km	9%	9%	10%	8%
40km or over	5%	4%	3%	5%
No fixed place or outside UK	16%	12%	15%	14%

Source – Census 2021 data.

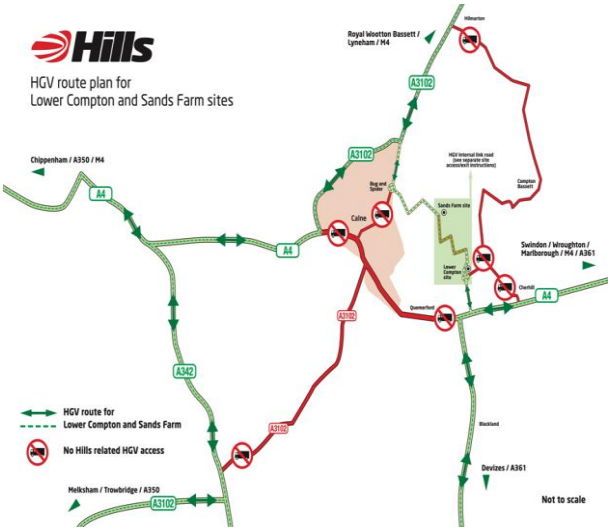
Calne is quoted as having 'one of (Wilshire's) lowest levels of self-containment due in part to proximity to the M4, Swindon and Chippenham' (Wiltshire Council 2021[2]). There is an imbalance between local housing and jobs, meaning that many people from both Calne and Calne Without commute long distances to work. In practice for these people, it is very difficult to use anything other than a car for travel to work. This is unlikely to change if housing growth continues to outstrip the growth in local employment. The Calne area also draws people into the area as it is a nice place to live with lower cost housing than many nearby towns (average price in Calne area £323k, Chippenham area £355k, Devizes £343k, Marlborough £526k and Melksham £305[3]
(source https://www.primelocation.com/heatmaps/ March 2023).

Traffic congestion and road safety is a key concern for local residents. During peak times there are high levels of traffic congestion on all main routes in Calne.
(Evidence as before – from initial survey)

[2] https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/5631/Planning-for-Calne/pdf/WLP_Market_Town_Planning_for_Calne_FINAL.pdf?m=637459644494200000

[3] Source: primelocation.com (March 2023) primelocation.com March 2023

The villages around Calne suffer from significant “rat running” at peak times, and when there are roadworks in Calne. This can make these lanes very hazardous. Evidence – speed Stockley & potentially Derry Hill. Sandy Lane.



Apart from the main east / west A4 going through the Neighbourhood Plan area, all of the other routes are narrow country lanes or minor A roads. As the population level in the area rises the pressure on these roads has grown significantly, leading to an increase in congestion, inappropriate uses of narrow lanes by HGVs avoiding other bottlenecks, and an increase in the number of accidents.

The issue of heavy goods vehicles going through Calne town centre has been mitigated to a large extent by Hills Waste Services, the largest destination for HGVs in the town, implementing an internal link road. There are now two access points to their site, one to the east in Lower Compton and one in the west on Spitfire Road. Unfortunately, another problem has been introduced as developments have been implemented, and are planned, off Oxford Road, Sandpit Road, and Spitfire Road meaning that there will be an undesirable mixture of HGV’s, local cars, pedestrians, cyclists, and children going to school. When planning these new developments, the developers made no appropriate provisions for traffic free access into this area. The rerouting of Hills HGVs has also significantly increased the number of HGVs on narrow sections of the A342 through Sandy Lane and Old Derry Hill, where parts of the road are not wide enough for two large vehicles to pass safely.

Calne is one of the Air Quality Management Areas in Wiltshire and the AQMA was declared for exceeding the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide in Feb 2013. The AQMA was declared in February 2013. Since then, the nitrogen dioxide concentrations have dropped significantly and the fixed AQMA monitoring points have been removed. This reduction may have been due to improvements in the control of emissions from vehicles, a reduction in HGV traffic due to the implementation of a link road within Hills Waste site, and possibly a temporary reduction in traffic due to Covid 19 restrictions. Wiltshire Council has recently produced an Air Quality Action Plan for Wiltshire[4] (adopted March 2024). This document sets out that Nitrogen dioxide concentrations in Calne have seen small fluctuations over the previous five years (2015 – 2019), they therefore suggest further measures are introduced to reduce nitrogen dioxide levels down to safe levels within the AQMA. One of the Air Action Plan’s recommendations is reopening the High Street in Calne to traffic as a way of reducing traffic emissions. This desirability of this proposal is being discussed between Calne Town Council and Wiltshire Council.

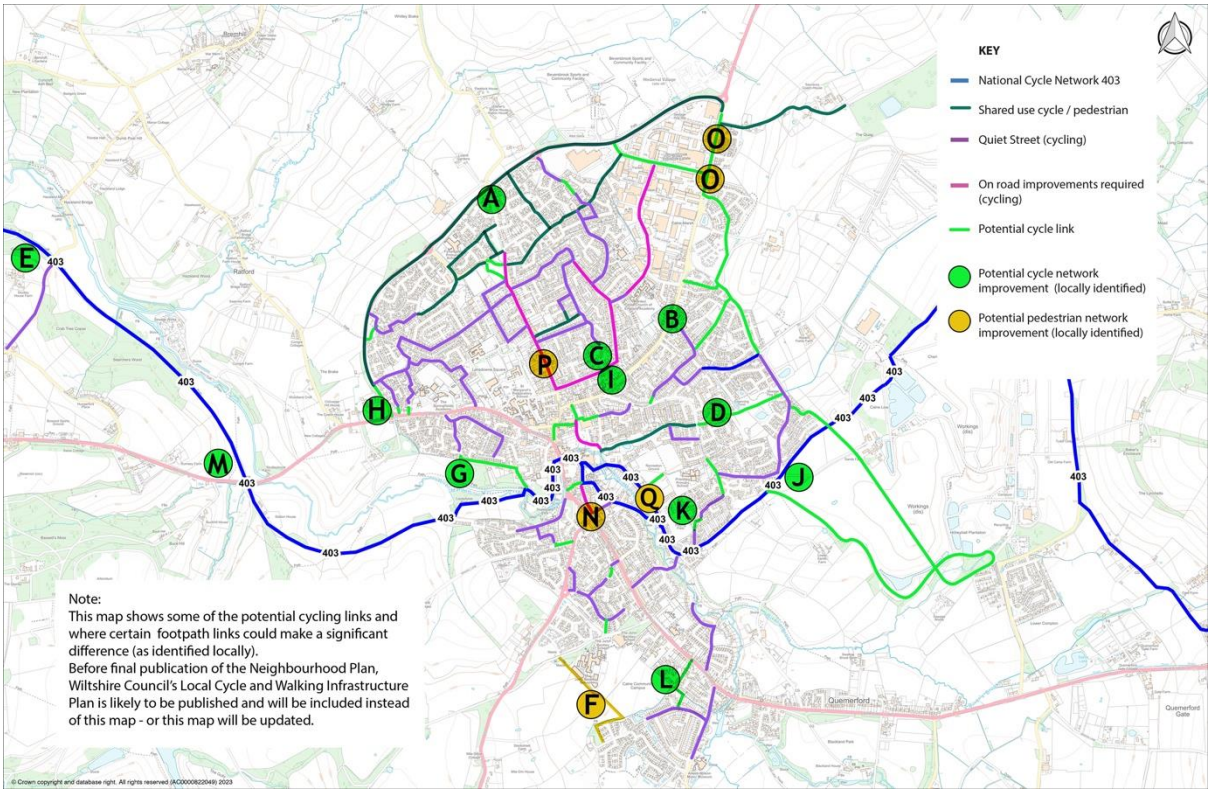
[4] https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/s223778/Appendix%201%20-%20Air%20Quality%20Action%20Plan.pdf

2. Sustainable Transport Network

The Calne Community Neighbourhood Area's sustainable transport network is illustrated on Calne and Calne Without Active Travel Network (Map 1 below). Map 1 is also included in the Neighbourhood Plan (as figure 10).

Please note, the Diagram and notes overleaf identify 'potential' links and opportunities; they are not detailed proposals. Relevant landowners have not been specifically consulted on these potential links / opportunities.

This map is for interim purposes only. This map shows some of the potential cycling links and where certain footpath links could make a significant difference (as identified locally). Before final publication of the Neighbourhood Plan, Wiltshire Council's Local Cycle and Walking Infrastructure Plan is likely to be published and will be included instead of this map - or this map will be updated.



Potential cycle link / improvement (locally identified) shown on the map

A. Lickhill Road cut through: This link is marked as pedestrians only. It needs lines added to make safer access onto by-pass to avoid potential collisions
B. Cut through is passable but potholed, muddy and rough. Currently pedestrian only.
C. Stokes Cross cut through - potential to make this officially dual use

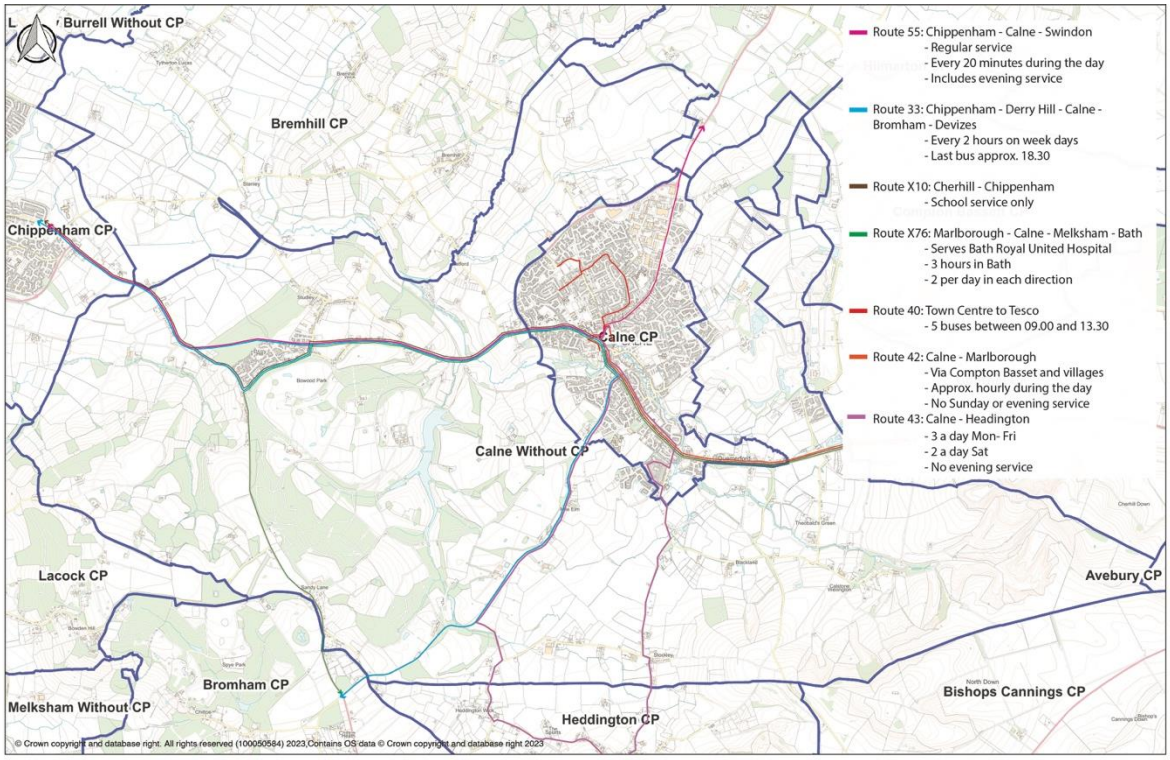
D. Abberd Brook paths - need to be made safe as dual use. Phase one of this is completed.
E. Derry Hill CALW65 cycle way

G. Castle Walk: Potential link and way to avoid the A4.
H. Extend shared route to join A3102 and A4.
I. Between Oxford Rd and Bryans Close Rd: Good cut through. Potential for it to be signed as a shared route.
J. Rural route NCN 403 from Low Lane out to Avebury and Lower Compton - very muddy and potholed and only rideable on a mountain bike. It is not practicable to stay clean whilst riding and requires a hard surface of some kind (similar to the section around the tip).
K. Link path between Priestly Grove and Westerham Walk is currently too narrow for safe cycling but is an excellent link path between the estates.
L. Connecting the Rise to the A4: potential to upgrade to dual use.
M. 403 cycle route to Chippenham: very well used in the summer but in wet weather becomes almost impassable other than on a mountain bike and it is impossible to stay clean. An all weather route here would allow cycle access to Chippenham rail station by bike and access to country lanes without having to climb steep hills. This is probably the number one priority in terms of impact on cycling activity.

Potential pedestrian link / improvement (locally identified)

F. There is currently a Right of Way from Cherhill View to Bentley Lane but it is impassable for much of the year. When the estate was built money was made available to up - grade to a dual use path - especially for students going to Kingsbury Green Academy - to avoid going to A4. It was not enough money and the project has never moved forward.
G. There is no safe crossing point along this section of road for pupils going to Kingsbury Green Academy.
H. There is currently no safe crossing from new housing estates to East of Oxford Road and pavement to town centre is incomplete so residents have to use cars or risk crossing busy road.
I. Lickhill Road: Main route for people and school students in particular walking into town. Inadequate pavements and crossing points.
J. Anchor Road: No pavements in places.

Bus Routes
Map 2: Calne Community Neighbourhood Area Bus Route



Walking Distances

Manual for Streets (DCLG and DfT 2007)
Although Manual for Streets (MfS) does not reference the 400m (5 minutes') walk isochrone, it is useful in justifying policies aimed at achieving walkable neighbourhoods. Although MfS sets out national technical guidance from a previous administration, it is still a key reference document in transport planning. It therefore carries significant weight as a material consideration. "Walkable neighbourhoods are typically characterised by having a range of facilities within 10 minutes' (up to about 800 m) walking distance of residential areas which residents may access comfortably on foot. MfS encourages a reduction in the need to travel by car through the creation of mixed-use neighbourhoods with interconnected street patterns, where daily needs are within walking distance of most residents." (Par 4.4.1, page 45)

Building Sustainable Transport into New Developments: A Menu of Options for Growth Points and Eco-towns (DfT, 2008)
Again, this is national policy guidance from a previous administration. This document carries less weight though, as Growth Points and Eco-towns went the way of the dinosaurs and the dodos. Traditional compact town layouts. Walking neighbourhoods are typically characterised as having a range of facilities within 10 minutes walking distance (around 800 metres). However, the propensity to walk

or cycle is not only influenced by distance but also the quality of the experience; people may be willing to walk or cycle further where their surroundings are more attractive, safe and stimulating. Developers should consider the safety of the routes (adequacy of surveillance, sight lines and appropriate lighting) as well as landscaping factors (indigenous planting).

Planning for Walking (CIHT 2015)
The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT) is a respected and competent body within the national discussion, and their guidelines on planning for walking therefore carry some weight as a material consideration. “The power of a destination determines how far people will walk to get to it. For bus stops in residential areas, 400 metres has traditionally been regarded as a cut-off point...” (6.4 Pedestrian catchments, page 30) habitat creation) in their design.” (Street design, page 8)

Buses in Urban Developments (CIHT 2018)
“In planning new developments, a balance must be struck between providing very short walks to stops and providing fast, direct services. The time involved in reaching a bus stop (and hence the catchment size) is not a stand-alone consideration. For example, closer spacing of bus stops along a route will result in shorter walk times to bus stops but will lengthen the time taken by the bus to complete the route. As Bus Services and New Residential Developments (Stagecoach, 2017) advises, there will be circumstances where achieving a 400-metre walking catchment ‘results in an inefficient and contrived layout, greatly undermining the potential effectiveness of the proposed bus route. Stagecoach will always prefer an efficient bus routing strategy, serving the great majority of dwellings well, than one that serves all homes poorly with a low-frequency or indirect service. Thus, we support policy approaches offering some degree of flexibility on walking distances to bus stops where this is appropriate’. (A.4.4 Spacing of bus routes and stops, page 14)

Sustainable Transport (TCPA 2020)
Again, the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) is a respected and competent body within the national discussion, and their guides carry some weight as a material consideration, albeit primarily aimed at Garden Cities. “A Garden City’s design must enable at least 50% of trips originating in the Garden City to be made by non-car means, with a goal to increase this over time to at least 60%; and the latest best practice in street and transport design should be used as a minimum standard. Public transport nodes and neighbourhood facilities should be a short walk (no more than 10 minutes) away from every home. Homes should be within 800 metres of schools for children under the age of 11.” (Box 3 Garden City standards for transport, page 11)

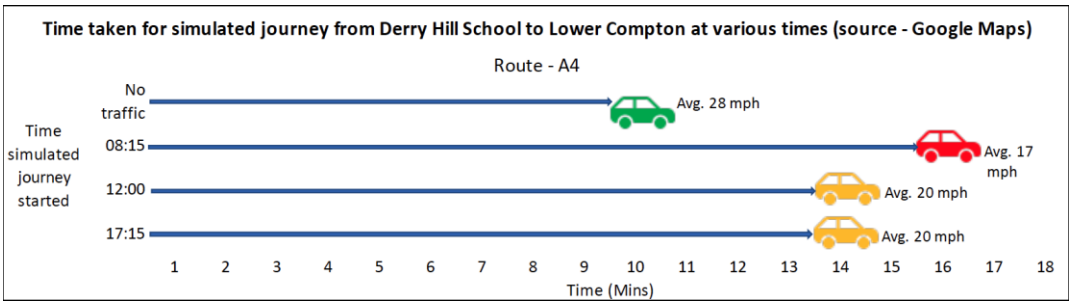
3. Highway Impact

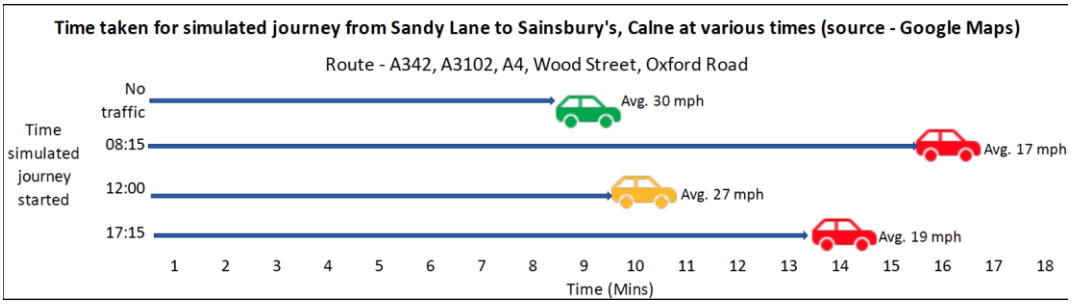
There is a range of information on highway impact, including traffic counts, traffic delay and air quality information, in the Calne Area Transport Strategy 2021.

As part of the review of the Calne Community Neighbourhood Plan, the Getting Around Working Group collected some further local information on these topics. This report is a summary of that work.

Congestion

Peak time traffic congestion already exists in the Neighbourhood Plan area, most noticeably in the area around Curzon Street and the Mile Elm / Silver Street / White Hart A4 area in Calne Town and at the Studley Cross Roads at rush hour. Standing traffic generates considerably more pollution than flowing traffic and this congestion needs to be minimised. It should be noted that the Mile Elm / Silver Street / White Hart A4 area is the only traffic access route from Calne to the secondary school. It also means that significant numbers of the town's young people are exposed to the pollution – whether in vehicles (worse) or travelling actively. The images below show average journey times for some key routes in the Neighbourhood Area at peak times (source: google maps):





Typical journey times from east to west and north to south are shown in the table below. The 2am times are the shortest possible journey time with no traffic. The average journey time typically increases by 4 to 6 minutes at peak times – this is a 40 to 60% increase in time. For a long journey 4 to 6 mins extra may not be

significant but for a short journey, from one side of Calne to the other, a 60% increase in journey time is significant.

Google Maps predicted journey times on a typical Monday (14th November):

Lower Compton to Derry Hill School (A4) 4.6 miles.				
Time	02:00	08:30	12:00	17:15
Journey duration	10 mins	up to 16 mins	Up to 14 mins	Up to 14 mins
% increase in journey time	0%	60%	40%	40%
Avg speed	28	17	20	20

Derry Hill School to Cherhill (A4) - 4.6 miles				
Time	02:00	08:30	12:00	17:15
Journey duration	10 mins	Up to 14 mins	Up to 14 mins	Up to 14 mins
% increase in journey time	0%	40%	40%	40%
Avg speed	28	20	20	20

Hilmarton to Mile Elm (A3102, Oxford Road, Wood Street, Curzon Street, A4, A3102) - 4.7 miles				
Time	02:00	08:30	12:00	17:15
Journey duration	12 mins	Up to 14 mins	Up to 14 mins	up to 16 mins
% increase in journey time	0%	17%	17%	33%
Avg speed	24	20	20	18

Mile Elm to Hilmarton (A3102, A4, Curzon Street, Wood Street, Oxford Road,A3102) - 4.7 miles				
Time	02:00	08:30	12:00	17:15
Journey duration	12 mins	up to 16 mins	Up to 14 mins	up to 16 mins
% increase in journey time	0%	33%	17%	33%
Avg speed	24	18	20	18

According to this data, slow traffic speeds at peak time in the morning are centred around the schools, which is to be expected, and in Calne at North Street / Lickhill Road, Oxford Road, Wood Street, Curzon Street, A4 / A3102 junction and the A4 into Calne from The Talbot into the town centre. In the afternoon at 5.15, when the work and school busy periods are separated, the slow speeds are also around Oxford Road, Wood Street, Curzon Street and from the town centre up to the A4 up to the A3102 junction. The only slow speeds flagged in Calne Without are around Derry Hill School at school pick-up and drop off time. According to Google's classification the only delay that went past the "minor" category into the two more severe ones was at the A3102 / A4 junction. Note: slow speeds are highlighted on

the A342 / A3102 junction in the morning and afternoon but this is currently outside the plan area (although it will be within it after 2025).

There are heavy traffic flows on the A4 ranging from around 13,000 vehicles a day at Studley, on the Western side of Calne rising to around 19,000 vehicles a day towards the centre of Calne and falling to about 14,000 on London Road on the eastern approach to Calne. The A3102 north of Calne carries around 8,000 vehicles per day. The southern part of the A3102, from Silver St to Mile Elm has traffic flows of around 5000 vehicles per day. Oxford Road, which until bypassed in 1999 formed part of the A3102, now carries about 5000 vehicles per day, which is only 1500 vehicles less than the flows before the Beversbrook By-pass opened in 1999.

These delays may not appear to be that long and may not match personal experience, but it should be noted that they represent the average delay of all vehicles using the various roads in the busiest 60 minutes. Some drivers will experience shorter delays and others longer delays; it is quite possible some of the worst delayed drivers might experience 3 times the average delay which could be close to 8 minutes. In the case of congestion tailing back from the narrow section of road leading to the Curzon St/New Road roundabout, many residents commented on very long queues stretching back to Wood St and Oxford Rd. Surveys show that whilst the average delays are just over 3 minutes, 5% of drivers suffer delays of more than 11 minutes to travel 800 meters which is an average speed of barely 2 mph.

For traffic to travel from one side to Calne to the other there is no option than to travel through the town centre, or “rat run” through the small villages. As the bulk of the traffic from the town travels north towards Swindon, west towards Chippenham or south towards Devizes and Melksham, a bypass in the only available land in the east would not help alleviate peak hour congestion in the town, it would probably make it worse as traffic would have to go back into Calne to travel south.

Accidents and Road Safety

The main traffic problem in the Calne area is perceived to be the significant increase in traffic generated by the new housing developments on the edges of the town. This leads to traffic radiating in all directions leading to an increase in peak hour congestion and in the number of accidents. See the table below:

Summary - Total injury accidents by road or road type from 2011 to 2020

Road or road type	Parish	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
A4	Calne Town	0	7	40	47
A3102	Calne Town	1	5	20	26
Town streets	Calne Town	0	17	54	71
Subtotal		**1**	**29**	**114**	**144**
A4	Calne Without	2	7	38	47
A3102	Calne Without	1	6	21	28
A342	Calne Without	0	5	34	39
Devizes road	Calne Without	0	2	7	9
Village lanes	Calne Without	0	1	8	9
Subtotal		**3**	**21**	**108**	**132**

(Source Department for Transport data via Parish Online)

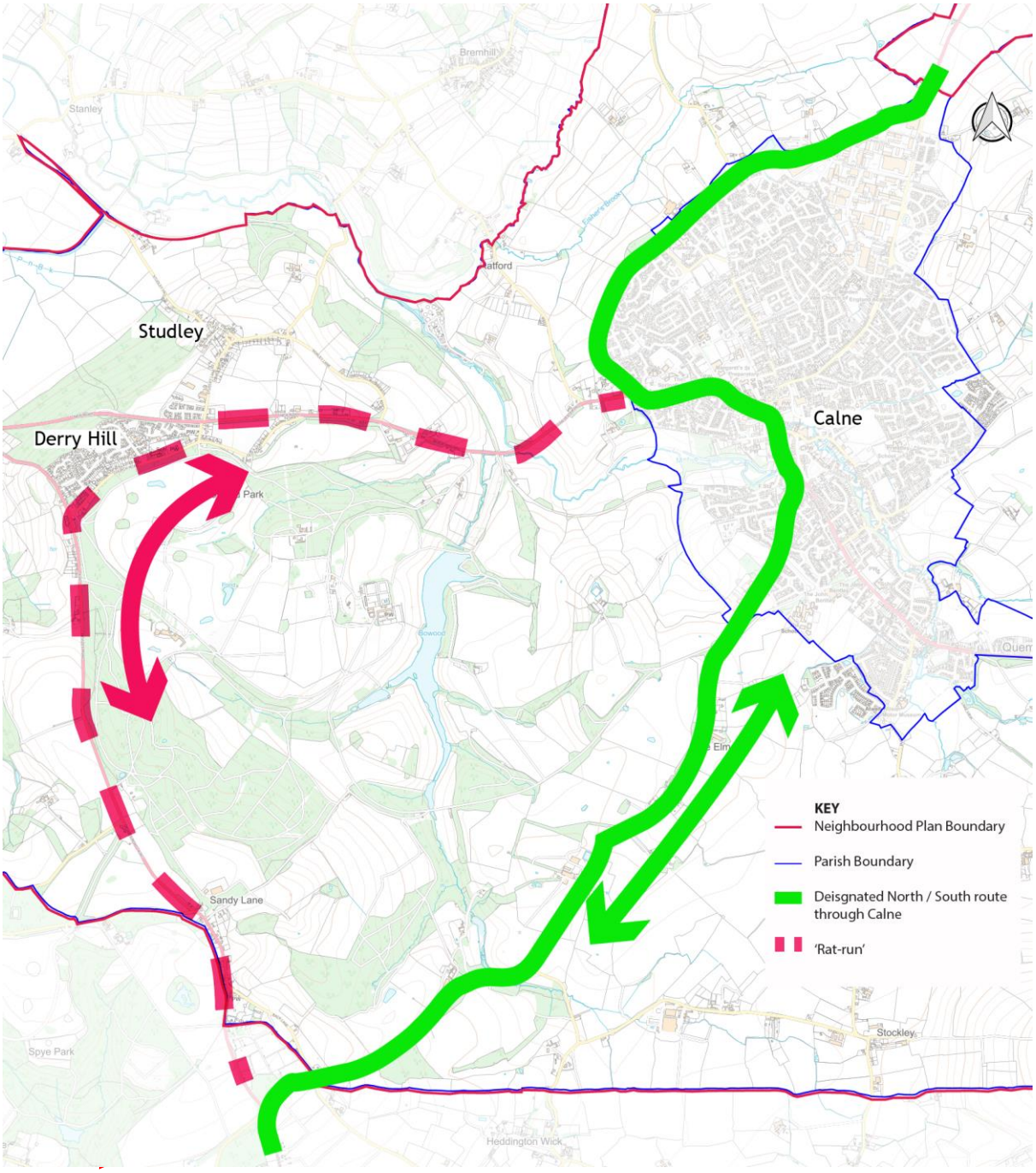
In the Neighbourhood Plan, a map is included that shows the location and severity of accidents across the Neighbourhood Area between 2016 and 2022.

In 2021, there were a total of 36 recorded road traffic accidents in Calne Without (3 categorised as either serious or fatal) and 18 in Calne Town (2 categorised as either serious or fatal) (data from Wiltshire Council).

Between 2011 and 2020, Calne Without appears to have a disproportionate number of casualties due to the accident records of many of the high-speed principal roads through the parish, particularly the A4 around Derry Hill and Studley, the A3102 through Mile Elm and to a lesser extent the A342 Devizes Road between Derry Hill and Sandy Lane. These roads have developed from ancient roadways and are not consistently designed to modern standards, speeds are high and traffic volumes particularly on the A4 are very high (around 13,000 vehicles a day in Studley). Any collisions that occur are more likely to have more serious consequences than on urban, lower speed roads. These roads are also used by cyclists, horse riders and walkers which increases the risk.

On the short stretch of the A3102 from the town towards Sandy Lane, for example, there have been 34 accidents which resulted in personal injuries in the 10 years from 2011 to 2020, one of which was fatal and 7 resulted in serious injuries. In the same time period there were an additional 13 injury accidents at the junction of the A3102 with the A342, of which 2 were serious (source Department of Transport Road Safety Data via Parish Online).

The streets within Calne show a high number of injury accidents. This underlines the need to separate pedestrians and cyclists from motor traffic and ensure that there are sufficient safe road crossings. New developments must be integrated into the cycle and footpath networks within the town and must provide sufficient parking places to keep the roads clear from parked vehicles and other obstructions.



A large part of Calne covering most of the town centre has been designated an Air Quality Management Area due to pollution levels well in excess of Government limits for Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulates (small particles in the air). Both these pollutants emanate from road traffic and can be very damaging to human health. It has been estimated that this level of pollution contributes to the premature death of 9 people in Calne every year.

Of the three sites monitored for Nitrogen Dioxide in Calne (34 New Road, 30 London Road, and 57 Curzon Street) in 2020 London Road and Curzon Street were

significantly below the threshold (both at approx. 20 µg/m^3 versus an annual mean threshold of 40 µg/m^3 · 34 New Road was slightly over threshold at just over 40 µg/m^3.

The levels of pollution are affected by the volume and make up of traffic, the speed of traffic, weather conditions and topography.

The A4 at Calne is designated as a Strategic Lorry Route by Wiltshire Council, linking the A346 west of Marlborough to the A350. The A342 to the south of Calne is also designated as a Local Lorry Route. Concerns have been raised about the difficulty and safety of the right turn from the A342 Old Derry Hill onto the A4 New Road for HGVs adhering to the designated Local Lorry Route. There is likely to be an increase in HGV movements using this route as the Hills Waste site is developed. Heavy goods vehicles are the main contributor of air pollution, which, combined with the congestion caused by large volumes of cars creates the above described high pollution levels. The proportion of HGVs travelling on the A4 through Calne has reduced significantly with the introduction of the internal Hills link road but a large proportion of this traffic has been rerouted to residential areas along Sandpit Road and Spitfire Road potentially moving the problem to this area.

New housing developments planned for this area will add a significant number of new vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists to an area that is already a primary HGV route.

There is a need to reduce the number of HGV movements which has led to both Calne Town Council and Calne Without Parish Council previously objecting to planning proposals which will generate significant levels of HGV traffic passing through the area. It should also be noted that the North south lorry route takes traffic through the AQMA exacerbating air pollution issues.