AECOM

Bedford Levelling Up Fund Bid

Option Assessment Report
Supporting Document

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Delivering a better world

Quality information

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Table of Contents

Tables

1. Introduction

1.1   This report serves as a light touch Option Assessment Report (OAR), summarising the process by which preferred interventions were identified to address the key challenges facing Kempston.

1.2   The assessment process was informed by the Department for Transport's (DfT) Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) and Transport Appraisal Process (TAP). The OAR documents the option generation and appraisal process for the Scheme, including the selection of a preferred option/package of options.

1.3   Information, data, the selection of options, and the core narrative in this Report were drawn from existing documents and Bedford Borough Council (BBC).

1.4   The OAR:

- Discusses the need for intervention;

- Presents the policy context;

- Identifies project objectives;

- Provides details on option generation and appraisal;

- Summarises the results of the option appraisal; and

- Provides the project risks and uncertainties.

2. Study area

Geography and Demographic Context

2.1   Kempston has a population of around 20,000 and is located immediately south-west of its larger neighbour Bedford.

2.2   There are areas within Kempston North ranked amongst the 10-20% most deprived in England based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, whilst Kempston Central & East has areas in the 20-30% most deprived.

2.3   The population is 24% non-white (compared to 15% nationally), of which 11.4% are Indian (compared to 2.5% nationally).

3. Current and Future Context

3.1   This section summarises the headline challenges and issues in the area. These informed the development of objectives and proposed interventions.

Socio-Economic Profile

3.2   The economic and demographic data for Kempston reveal that it is performing at a worse than average level compared to England as a whole, and the Eastern Region in particular[1,2].

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[1] Local Insight profile for 'Kempston Central and East' area, LI - Bedford Borough Council, Created on 21 May 2021
[2] Local Insight profile for 'Kempston Town' area, LI - Bedford Borough Council, Created on 21 May 2021

3.3 Performance on some of the key indicators give a feel for the situation compared to the English average (from ONS data):

- Unemployment is higher (7.5% in Kempston vs. 6.6% in England)

- The number of people on benefits searching for work is higher (6.6% in Kempston vs. 6.0% in England)

- Working age benefit claimant numbers are higher (11% in Kempston vs. 10.7% in England)

- Crime rates per 1,000 population are higher (30.8 in Kempston vs. 23.5 in England)

- Crime is higher in the area around the Saxon Centre as its poor state makes it a magnet for anti-social behaviour. In Kempston Central & East the rate is 26.3% higher than the England average.

- Experian data shows that unit vacancy rates in Kempston were 10% in 2020.

Transport Network

3.4 The transport network in Kempston is dominated by highway provision for motor vehicles, although there is good public transport.

3.5 Whilst there are some facilities for cyclists, these are dated and do not generally conform to modern design standards.

3.6 The link between Kempston and the new village of Great Denham on the north bank of the River Great Ouse is particularly problematic with long-term issues at both of the bridges on the route.

Traffic Conditions

3.7 Congestion within Kempston has been improved by the opening of the Bedford Western Bypass, but there are still local hotspots, particularly along Elstow Road and Bedford Road.

Travel Patterns and Mode Share

3.8 The predominant flows in Kempston are currently out of town in the morning peak as residents leave for jobs and education outside Kempton, in particular to Bedford.

4. Identifying the Need for Intervention

4.1 Bedford Borough Council has identified particular issues with the economic vitality of Kempston. To deal with these, a twin-track approach to encourage the use of the town centre and access to it was defined through by focusing on regeneration and active travel.

4.2 Regeneration in the Kempston town centre is necessary due to the following:

- The Saxon Centre is the main shopping area in the town, and suffers from a generally run-down, tired and unattractive appearance.

- Health provision is fragmented and provided in increasingly unacceptable, traditional buildings which were originally designed for residential rather than medical requirements.

- The Saxon Centre office block has been vacant for many years, giving an increasingly derelict feel to the area.

4.3 Active Travel improvements across the wider area of Kempston are also necessary as:

- Cycling provision is outdated and in need of expansion.

- The walking and cycling route from the nearby new village of Great Denham is blighted by a major bridge which is in a poor state of repair, another that lacks step-free access and a rough, unmade path between them.

- The public realm in central Kempston is unattractive and does not create an ambience within which shoppers are encouraged to linger and enjoy the town's facilities.

5. Objectives

5.1 Based on the identified local challenges, the project objectives were defined to help alleviate the issues experienced by residents in Kempston.

5.2 Kempston is underperforming. Local GP surgeries are comparatively oversubscribed, there is limited community space and limited opportunities to support businesses looking to start up and grow. The pedestrian and cycle network which connects residents to the high street and its key services needs improvement. Private and public sector investment has missed Kempston and focussed on Bedford instead, which lies close by. However, there are opportunities for regeneration in the town. The Saxon Centre lies at the heart of the high street, where a derelict office building blights the area; the Saxon Centre Plaza offers a poor quality and out-dated design, which needs renewal; and the Police Operation Division, located on the high street, will be vacant in 2022 leaving a large public sector site for use.

5.3 The residential areas of Kempston are affected by deprivation, but issues can be tackled by targeted regeneration. The regeneration of the town centre and the immediate surrounding area can be achieved by investing in key sites in the town centre, making best use of the council's existing assets to provide important social infrastructure and community uses, and enhance the economic vitality of the town. This would bring about meaningful change, opportunities and build civic pride for local people.

5.4 The aim is to regenerate Kempston by the provision of new social and community facilities, updated high quality public space, and new business space, which is supported by local active travel transport infrastructure enabling local people to make better use of the town centre.

5.5 The overarching objective is then: *To provide sustainable transport and active travel to support connectivity and Net Zero Carbon whilst improving the economic vitality of Kempston*.

5.6 The overarching objective has two broad objectives that work together to achieve the desired change: support active travel and enable regeneration. These two broad objectives form the two projects for this Levelling Up Fund bid.

5.7 Under the overarching objective six sub-objectives were developed, which match the two projects. These are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Project Objectives

Broad Objective	Objective Reference (ID)	Objective	Description
Active Travel: Sustainable transport and active travel to support connectivity and Net Zero Carbon	1	To provide a reliable, efficient and sustainable transport network to support Kempston's town centre economy and surrounding residential areas.	To invest in key projects, which enable an effective transport network to operate, and therefore attract investment to Kempston.
	2	To provide new and improved active travel infrastructure by addressing gaps in provision and improving quality.	To enhance connectivity and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists in particular, in order to increase the number of people who walk and cycle
	3	To support mode shift to active travel for healthy lifestyles and	To encourage the use of active travel, which leads to health benefits and helps address local

Broad Objective	Objective Reference (ID)	Objective	Description
		environmental improvements in the town centre.	environmental issues, such as air quality, carbon emissions, noise and streetscape, which impact on the town centre.
Regeneration: Improving economic vitality in Kempston	4	To support a vibrant town centre economy by making best use of council assets.	To attract investment for regeneration of key sites and improve community uses and increase footfall in the town centre to retain and grow local businesses.
	5	To enhance the provision of essential services including social infrastructure and community facilities in Kempston town centre.	To address the lack of key community facilities in the town centre, including modern facilities, shared community space, and good quality urban public space. There is potential to provide enhanced health facilities in the town centre, which are currently underprovided.
	6	To renew the Saxon Centre Office Block and public realm in Kempston, for public use and to leverage local and wider town centre regeneration.	The Saxon Centre (Saxon Centre Office Block and surrounding public realm (Saxon Centre Plaza)) is derelict and in a state of disrepair. The public space is of poor design and quality. These act as a significant detraction for the town centre, and impact negatively on the perception of place and community pride. They are in need of investment for renewal.

6. Policy Context

6.1   A review of relevant national, regional and local policies was undertaken to understand policy direction and goals, and how these align with the project objectives and possible interventions.

National Policies

6.2   Table 2 presents relevant national policies, key objectives, and alignment with the project objectives.

Table 2. National policies and their alignment to the project objectives

Strategy / Policy / Plan	Which element?	How the project reflects the strategy / objective
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	To promote sustainable transport and support development in locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.	The project will provide sustainable transport and support active travel infrastructure improvements and implementation of active travel facilities.
Highways England's Delivery Plan	To enable a shift towards sustainable travel, including improving cycling and pedestrian environments on roads.	The project will improve existing cycling and walking infrastructure and will provide additional active travel infrastructure and facilities that would encourage a shift to more sustainable modes.

Industrial Strategy	To support continuous growth and prosperity by making high-quality infrastructure. To provide infrastructure that would transform the economy and improve productivity.	The project will improve the area's economic vitality and will encourage business growth via the regeneration of the town centre, reduction of severance across the river and development of a community and open work space.
DfT Transport Investment Strategy	To create a more reliable and better-connected transport network that works for the users who rely on it; To build a stronger, more balanced economy by enhancing productivity and responding to local growth priorities; and To enhance the global competitiveness by making Britain a more attractive place to trade and invest.	Expansion and improvements of the proposed active travel infrastructure will help develop a more connected transport network, which have an effect on local growth. The proposed regeneration improvements at the town centre will not only help to boost the local economy, but also the national economy.
National Infrastructure Strategy	Boost growth and productivity across the whole of the UK, levelling up and strengthening the Union. Put the UK on the path to meeting its net zero emissions target by 2050.	The proposed regeneration project will make better use of existing land and assets or bring currently vacant / derelict units back in to use, boosting productivity. Investment in active travel will improve residents' health and contribute to meeting the 2050 net zero target.

Regional Policies

6.3   Table 3 presents relevant regional policies, their ambitions and alignment with the project objectives.

Table 3. Regional policies and their alignment to the project objectives

Strategy / Policy / Plan	Which element?	How the project reflects the strategy / objective
South East Midlands LEP Strategic Economic Plan	Cross Cutting theme - To ensure that this growth is undertaken in a manner that promotes social inclusion and environmental sustainability.	The twin themes of the bid support the local economy and the local community. They also aim to spread the benefits to adjacent communities and to increase accessibility for people with additional mobility requirements.
England's Economic Heartland - Transport Strategy	Action point 4 - Champion increased investment in active travel and shared transport to improve local connectivity to ensure that everyone can realise their potential	Improved facilities and opportunities for active travel will help to encourage more people to walk and cycle. The repairs and improvements to the bridges will deliver an uplift to the area's green infrastructure. The interventions will provide the opportunity for people to cycle and walk between communities and within Kempston, and facilitate short journeys to be made by non-car modes.

Local Policies

6.4   Table 4 presents relevant local policies, their ambitions and alignment with the project objectives.

Table 4. Local policies and their alignment to the project objectives

Strategy / Policy / Plan	Which element?	How the project reflects the strategy / objective
BBC Corporate Plan 2017-21	Goal 2 – Enhance Places	The project will improve the local built and natural environment. It will deliver localised safety improvements on and adjacent to the highway. It will provide a space for community cultural uses.
	Goal 3 – Create Wealth	The project will provide flexible workspace for small businesses. It will provide a space for focused activities on skills and job training. An improved local environment can encourage local retail and cultural activity.
BBC Local Plan 2030	Objective 3 – support a stronger local economy Objective 4 – create a distinctive, attractive and multi-functional town centre Objective 7 – improve the borough's transport infrastructure Objective 8 – develop a strong and multifunctional urban and rural green infrastructure network	The project will provide opportunities for economic growth in the town centre by providing high specification space for business and community uses, and by upgrading the public realm to provide a space for community events, such as markets and performances. Improved facilities and opportunities for active travel will help to encourage more people to walk and cycle. The repairs and improvements to the bridges will deliver an uplift to the area's green infrastructure.
BBC Growth Plan 2018-22	Growing Business Enhancing Place	The project will improve the local built and natural environment. It will deliver localised safety improvements on and adjacent to the highway. It will provide a space for community cultural uses.
Local Transport Plan	Vision - To create a transport system in which walking, cycling and public transport are the natural choices of travel for the majority of journeys because they are affordable, healthy, convenient and safe alternatives to the private car.	The interventions will provide the opportunity for people to cycle and walk between communities and within Kempston and facilitate short journeys to be made by non-car modes.

7. Option Development

7.1   BBC has been aware of the economic and social challenges in the Kempston area for some time, with a petition for improvements to the Saxon Centre and surrounding area having been presented to the Council.

7.2   As a result, a number of projects have been under consideration for some time, including improvements to the Saxon Centre, relocation of health facilities, and measures to improve walking and cycling opportunities.

7.3   When the Levelling Up Fund was announced, a meeting of local Council Members, the Portfolio Holder for Town Centres and relevant officers was convened to draw up a long list of potentially qualifying projects to include in a bid.

7.4   This list was assessed to select those schemes that gave a clear benefit to Kempston in terms of improving its economic vitality, being likely to attract match-funding and achieve a robust Benefit to Cost Ratio.

7.5   A long list of interventions was generated through a workshop amongst council departments, including Economic Growth, Property, Planning, Highways and Transport. This long list also drew on previous work undertaken by BBC, including:

- Kempston MCCC and Wootton GP Surgery Strategic Outline Business Case (Bedford Borough Council, 2020), which identified and appraised options for improving the provision of GP surgery facilities in Kempston and recommended a preferred option. This preferred option is taken forward here; and

- Saxon Centre: Feasibility Study (Sainsbury's and British Land, October 2011) which identified a preferred option for improving the Saxon Court Plaza. This preferred option is taken forward here.

7.6   Table 5 presents the long list of interventions proposed for the wider area of Kempston.

Table 5. Long list of interventions for the wider area of Kempston

ID	Project	Intervention	Description
1	Active Travel	Bridge improvements: Kempston Mill Bridge	Improvements to the Kempston Mill Bridge which is currently closed as it is not structurally sound. Important links to the recreational area at Gt Denham Park for cyclists and walkers.
2	Active Travel	Bridge improvements: Back Channel Bridge	Improvements to the Back Channel Bridge which is currently closed as it is not structurally sound. Upgrade the bridge for cycle / wheelchair / pushchair access. Important links to recreational area at Gt Denham Park for cyclists and walkers.
3	Active Travel	On-street Electric Vehicle Charge-points for houses without off-street charging areas.	Electric vehicle charging points at key locations within Kempston such as Sainsburys, St Johns Street and the Halsey Road shops
4	Active Travel	Ultra-low emission vehicle (ULEV) lanes	Provide ULEV lanes in Kempston
5	Active Travel	Bus stop improvements at the Saxon Centre	Provide a Real Time Information Board at the Saxon Centre bus stop. Potential Green Roof
6	Active Travel	Hillgrounds Road / Spring Road Junction – refurbishment and minor upgrade	Make improvements to this congested junction
7	Active Travel	Halsey Road and Williamson Road structural maintenance improvements	Improve the existing road condition on Halsey Road and Williamson Road
8	Active Travel	Bunyan Road Junction – modernisation	Square up this junction, replacing the existing diagonal cycle crossing for standard perpendicular crossings. Enable the junction to run more efficiently, improve red light detection and modernise the junction.
9	Active Travel	Structural maintenance for town area	Some carriageway resurfacing work required to Bedford Road between Bunyan Road and St John's (section by Sainsbury's).

ID	Project	Intervention	Description
10	Active Travel	Enforcement cameras (speed / red light)	Implement speed and red-light cameras on Bedford Road which has been identified as an area of concern.
11	Active Travel	Cycle path improvements Kempston West	Improve the existing cycle path which runs along the pavement between the Saxon Centre and Halsey Road
12	Active Travel	Footpath improvements Kempston West	Improvements along the length of the pavement (both sides) alongside the B531 between Kempston Hammers Sports and Social Club and Halsey Road - mostly pavement improvements to enable use of buggies and motorised scooters
13	Active Travel	Public realm improvements around the Saxon Centre and Kempston East	Have a clearly defined route for pedestrians and cyclists; re-pave and remove obstructions between Saxon Centre and Halsey Rd. Include planting and other aspects to improve the public realm
14	Active Travel	Improved lighting along core stretch of B531	Improve lighting along the B531 between Kempston Hammers Sports and Social Club and Halsey Road
15	Active Travel	Improved lighting along Kempston Riverside Path	Improve lighting along the Kempston Riverside Path between Kempston Mill Bridge and Sanders Close
16	Active Travel	Cycle Parking	Provide secure cycle parking at Saxon Centre (20 spaces). Upgrade existing cycle parking at Halsey Road shops. Potential to provide shelter for these bikes
17	Active Travel	E-bike Charging Hub	Provision of e-bike charging at Halsey Road shops
18	Regeneration	Public realm improvements around the Saxon Centre	Upgrade retail frontages and introduce a new "performance space" on the ground floor to attract footfall by hosting special events. Landscape plan to separate the community space from the traffic on the High Street and surfacing works to break up the public space with contrasting high-quality materials and planters. Improvements to the control of vehicles and waste
19	Regeneration	Health Hub acquisition and initial enabling works	Acquisition and initial enabling works of the former police station site for use as a new Multi-Speciality Community Care Centre to address a shortfall in existing health care provision. This will allow the closure and redevelopment of three current sites
20	Regeneration	Refurbishment of the Saxon Centre office block	Works to bring this facility up to modern-day standards and to re-design its first two floors into office and hot-desking space
21	Regeneration	No improvements to the public realm around the Saxon Centre (DO NOTHING)	Do Nothing would not support the project objectives and would not be supported by local leaders and the community. Public sector led intervention required.
22	Regeneration	Health Hub alternative options including DO NOTHING	Kempston MCCC and Wootton GP Surgery Strategic Outline Business Case' appraised alternative options including a Do Nothing. The preferred option is included here in Scheme ID 19
23	Regeneration	No refurbishment of the Saxon Centre office block (DO NOTHING)	Do nothing does not support the objectives of this Bid / Regeneration Project. It fails to support the long term economic vitality of the town centre. Do Nothing would not be compatible with the Saxon Centre Plaza scheme and limit benefits of the Active Travel Project.

8. Option Sifting

8.1 Each intervention was appraised against the six objectives as set out in Table 1 and four additional feasibility-related criteria:

- **Deliverability** – the dependency of the option and interface risk in relation to other projects, and its contractual complexity and risks.

- **Technical Feasibility** - the technical feasibility of an option, in terms of engineering and complexity.

- **Affordability** - the likely financial affordability of an option

- **Acceptability** - stakeholder acceptability of an option, including public acceptability, local authorities, delivery partners, statutory bodies, landowners and utility companies.

8.2 A scoring system was developed for the initial appraisal and sifting of interventions, as presented and described in Table 6.

8.3 Each option was appraised separately to determine its alignment with the project objectives and feasibility (deliverability, technical feasibility, affordability and acceptability, as described above). Note that interventions referring to the active travel objective were assessed against Objectives 1-3, while interventions identified to address the regeneration objective were assessed against Objectives 4-6. All interventions were assessed against the additional feasibility-related criteria.

Table 6. Scoring System

Score	Description
2	Very good fit
1	Good fit
0	Neutral or negligible impact
-1	Low fit
-2	Poor fit
-3	Showstopper, which would make the scheme untenable, or could pose considerable feasibility constraints
NA	Objective not applicable for particular intervention

8.4 The results of the sifting process are shown in Table 7, whilst the decision made for the shortlisted interventions is described in the following paragraphs. Note that the scoring is relative and therefore a low or negative score for a particular intervention does not necessarily imply that the intervention would perform poorly but rather that it is considered to be relatively less suitable in addressing the identified challenges at this stage.

8.5 Given the overarching objective of the project, interventions were also considered in terms of their suitability to be combined into a package of measures that could deliver further additional benefits when combined. This led to the development of a single package comprising 12 active travel and regeneration related interventions. This is discussed further below.

Table 7. Sifting Assessment

ID	Project	Intervention	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5	Objective 6	Deliverability	Affordability	Feasibility	Acceptability
1	Active Travel	Bridge improvements: Kempston Mill Bridge	1	2	1	NA	NA	NA	1	-1	1	0
2	Active Travel	Bridge improvements: Back Channel Bridge	1	2	2	NA	NA	NA	1	-1	1	1
3	Active Travel	On-street Electric Vehicle Charge-points for houses without off-street charging areas.	0	0	1	NA	NA	NA	-1	1	1	1
4	Active Travel	ULEV lanes	0	0	1	NA	NA	NA	-1	1	0	0
5	Active Travel	Bus stop improvements at the Saxon Centre	0	1	1	NA	NA	NA	2	2	2	1
6	Active Travel	Hillgrounds Road / Spring Road Junction – refurbishment and minor upgrade	1	0	-2	NA	NA	NA	-1	-1	1	1
7	Active Travel	Halsey Road and Williamson Road structural maintenance improvements	1	0	-2	NA	NA	NA	-1	-1	1	2
8	Active Travel	Bunyan Road Junction – modernisation	1	1	1	NA	NA	NA	-1	-1	1	2
9	Active Travel	Structural maintenance for town area	1	0	-2	NA	NA	NA	-1	-1	1	1
10	Active Travel	Enforcement cameras? (Speed / red light)	1	0	0	NA	NA	NA	2	2	2	0
11	Active Travel	Cycle path improvements Kempston West	1	2	2	NA	NA	NA	1	1	2	1
12	Active Travel	Footpath improvements Kempston West	0	2	2	NA	NA	NA	1	1	2	1
13	Active Travel	Public realm improvements around the Saxon Centre and Kempston East	0	2	2	NA	NA	NA	1	1	1	2
14	Active Travel	Improved lighting along core stretch of B531	0	1	2	NA	NA	NA	2	2	2	1
15	Active Travel	Improved lighting along Kempston Riverside Path	0	1	1	NA	NA	NA	2	2	2	1
16	Active Travel	Cycle Parking	0	1	2	NA	NA	NA	1	1	2	1
17	Active Travel	E-bike Charging Hub	0	1	1	NA	NA	NA	1	1	2	1
18	Regeneration	Public realm improvements around the Saxon Centre	NA	NA	NA	2	2	2	0	1	1	2

ID	Project	Intervention	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3	Objective 4	Objective 5	Objective 6	Deliverability	Affordability	Feasibility	Acceptability
19	Regeneration	Health Hub acquisition and initial enabling works	NA	NA	NA	2	2	1	0	1	1	2
20	Regeneration	Refurbishment of the Saxon Centre office block	NA	NA	NA	2	2	2	1	1	1	2
21	Regeneration	Public realm improvements around the Saxon Centre DO NOTHING	NA	NA	NA	-2	-2	-2	2	2	2	-2
22	Regeneration	Health Hub ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS including DO NOTHING	NA	NA	NA	-2	-2	-1	2	2	2	-2
23	Regeneration	Refurbishment of the Saxon Centre office block, DO NOTHING	NA	NA	NA	-2	-2	-2	2	2	2	-2

9. Preferred Options

9.1 Table 8 to Table 19 present the preferred interventions, with details on the appraisal and rationale for inclusion.

Table 8. Active Travel - Bridge Improvements: Kempston Mill Bridge

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	– This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would improve network efficiency and connectivity, but is not greatly sustainable. • It would connect the road system to existing cycling ways, hence it will increase the possibility of people travelling by active modes. • It would reduce severance between two sides of the river, hence possibility of attracting more jobs and improving economy is high. • This option is considered to have reasonable deliverability without being greatly affected by other schemes, low affordability as it is an expensive scheme (water and geotechnical engineers would need to have a greater role in the bridge design compared to other schemes), feasible and of neutral acceptability as stakeholders and the public are likely to be supportive, but other challenges may be a higher priority.

Table 9. Active Travel - Bridge Improvements: Back Channel Bridge

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would improve network efficiency and connectivity, but is not greatly sustainable. • It would connect the road system to existing cycling ways, hence it will increase the possibility of people travelling by active modes. Due to its proximity to the town centre, this option would improve the environment around the town centre. • It would reduce severance between two sides of the river, hence possibility of attracting more jobs and improving economy is high • This option is considered to have reasonable deliverability without being greatly affected by other schemes, low affordability as it is an expensive scheme (water and geotechnical engineers would need to have a greater role in the bridge design compared to other schemes), feasible and acceptable by both key stakeholders and the general public due to its proximity to the town centre.

Table 10. Active Travel - Cycle Path Improvements at Kempston West

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would provide a reliable, efficient and sustainable network, which will have a positive impact on the town's economy. It will provide new and improved active travel infrastructure, which could attract more people towards active travel, would improve health and wellbeing, and the environment around the town centre. • It is considered to be deliverable, as it is not expected to be affected by many other options, affordable, highly feasible and relatively acceptable, although marketing and other strategies will need to be put in place to direct people towards active travel.

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal

Table 11. Active Travel - Footpath Improvements at Kemspton West

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would provide a sustainable network, which will have a relatively positive impact on surrounding residential areas. It will provide a new and improved active travel infrastructure, which could attract more people towards active travel, would improve health and wellbeing, and the environment around the town centre. • It is considered to be deliverable, as it is not expected to be affected by many other options, affordable, highly feasible and relatively acceptable, although marketing and other strategies will need to be put in place to direct people towards active travel.

Table 12. Active Travel - Public Realm Improvements around Saxon Centre and Kemspton East

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would provide a sustainable network, which will have a relatively positive impact on surrounding residential areas. It will provide a new and improved active travel infrastructure, which could attract more people towards active travel, would improve health and wellbeing, and the environment around the town centre. • It is considered to be deliverable, as it is not expected to be affected by many other options, affordable, feasible and acceptable, although marketing and other strategies will need to be put in place to direct people towards active travel.

Table 13. Active Travel - Improved Lighting along Core Stretch of B531

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would provide a sustainable network, which will have a positive impact on the town's economy as it would reduce crime. It will address gaps in provision and could attract more people towards active travel, due to increased safety. It would improve health and wellbeing, and the environment around the town centre. • It is highly deliverable, affordable, feasible and overall acceptable, although some key stakeholders might not think it is a high priority.

Table 14. Active Travel - Improved Lighting along Kempston Riverside Path

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would provide a sustainable network, which will have a positive impact on the town's economy as it would reduce crime or the fear of crime. It will address gaps in provision and could attract more people towards active travel, due to increased safety. It would improve health and wellbeing, and the environment around the town, but not directly in the town centre. • It is highly deliverable, affordable, feasible and overall acceptable, although some key stakeholders might not think it is a high priority.

Table 15. Active Travel - Cycle Parking

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would provide a sustainable network, which will have a positive impact on the town's economy. It will address gaps in provision and could attract more people towards active travel, due to the implementation of a cycling facility. It would improve health and wellbeing, and the environment around the town centre. • It is considered to be deliverable, affordable, highly feasible and overall acceptable, although some key stakeholders might not think it is a high priority.

Table 16. Active Travel – E-Bike Charging Hub

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is an active travel option and was assessed only against Objectives 1-3 and additional criteria. • It would provide a sustainable network, which will have a positive impact on the town's economy. It will address gaps in provision and could attract more people towards active travel, however electric bikes are still not preferred over conventional bikes. It would improve health and wellbeing, and the environment around the town centre. • It is considered to be deliverable, affordable, highly feasible and overall acceptable, although some key stakeholders might not think it is a high priority.

Table 17. Regeneration - Public Realm Improvements around the Saxon Centre Plaza

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is a regeneration option and was assessed only against Objectives 4-6 and additional criteria. • It would support the economy and contribute towards creating a vibrant town centre, whilst making use of the council's assets in the best possible way. • It would enhance the provision of essential services in Kempston town centre, contribute towards improving the area's public realm and support the regeneration of the town centre. • Due to the complexity of such an option, some deliverability challenges might be experienced, while the option is considered to be affordable, feasible and of high acceptability to both key stakeholders and the general public.

Table 18. Regeneration - Health Hub (acquisition and initial enabling works)

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	• This is a regeneration option and was assessed only against Objectives 4-6 and additional criteria. • It would support the economy and contribute towards creating a vibrant town centre, whilst making use of the council's assets in the best possible way. • It would enhance the provision of essential services in Kempston town centre, and would overall contribute towards improving the area's public realm and support the regeneration of the town centre, but not as much as other regeneration options. • Due to the complexity of such an option, some deliverability challenges might be experienced, while the option is considered to be affordable, feasible and of high acceptability to both key stakeholders and the general public.

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal

Table 19. Regeneration - Refurbishment of the Saxon Centre Office Block

Intervention Status	Taken forward for further appraisal
Assessment	- This is a regeneration option and was assessed only against Objectives 4-6 and additional criteria. - It would support the economy and contribute towards creating a vibrant town centre, whilst making use of the council's assets in the best possible way. - It would enhance the provision of essential services in Kempston town centre, contribute towards improving the area's public realm and support the regeneration of the town centre. - The option is considered to be deliverable, affordable, feasible and of high acceptability to both key stakeholders and the general public.

10. Further Appraisal of the Two Projects

10.1   The two projects and their shortlisted interventions were further appraised to quantify their monetised and non-monetised impacts using AMAT and qualitative assessments.

10.2   The appraisal results are set out in responses to the Levelling Up Fund bid questions, and in the supporting Technical Notes attached with the submission.

11. Risks and Uncertainties

11.1   Possible identified risks relate to the uncertainty around social distancing and movement restrictions due to the pandemic, the interrelation of interventions and their implementation plan, budget overspend, programme management, stakeholder views and general acceptability of the interventions.

11.2   For each risk, we report the likelihood of it occurring during implementation. Risks of High (H) likelihood are more likely to occur than not; Medium (M) risks would be fairly likely to occur and Low (L) risks have a low possibility to occur but are not impossible.

11.3   Another level of assessment was added by considering the impact of each risk on the project programme. Risks that could have a great impact on the project cost, objectives, quality of outputs, would be expensive to recover from and could have a medium to long-term effect are marked as High (H). Medium (M) risks could reduce the project feasibility through inconsiderate use of time and resources, could impact the operational efficiency and would reduce the quality of the outputs, whilst imposing a medium-term, expensive effect. Low (L) risks could result in minor delays and interruptions to the project, whilst imposing a short to medium-term, inexpensive effect.

11.4   The final risk level was appraised, considering both the risk likelihood and programme impact, as shown in Table 20. To avoid extreme consequences, a mitigation strategy would be followed throughout the project and would reduce the risk level of these uncertainties.

11.5   A full list of identified risks is shown in Table 21.

Table 20. Risk Level based on the risk likelihood and programme impact

Programme Impact

		L	M	H
Likelihood	H	M	H	H
	M	L	M	H
	L	L	L	M

Table 21. Possible Risks and Planned Mitigation Strategies

Risk ID	Risk Description	Likelihood	Programme Impact	Risk Level	Mitigation Strategy
1	Project over-spend during implementation.	L	M	M	Regularly review costs against budget to ensure that cost and progress are effectively managed.
2	Insufficient resources to deliver scheme.	L	H	M	Fortnightly resourcing meetings will be held to ensure the delivery programme is followed and to monitor spending.
3	Lack of communication between involved parties.	L	M	M	Regular communication between project manager and client to ensure both sides are on schedule.
4	Delays in land obtainment and compensation costs greater than anticipated.	L	H	M	Land ownership negotiations will start at the early stages of the project to minimise this risk.
5	Change in political support and shift in priority challenges.	L	L	L	The identified challenges are part of the area's Local Plan. If key objectives change, the interventions can be appraised again.
6	Individual disciplines fail to deliver project deliverables.	L	L	L	Regular contact between involved disciplines will be held.
7	Stakeholders objection	L	M	M	Organise public consultation/exhibition events to keep them informed and quickly adjust plans (within reason) based on their feedback.
8	The funders (HMT, MHCLG and DfT) are not satisfied with the progress of the project, and funding could be withdrawn or allocated elsewhere.	L	M	M	Work closely with the funders throughout the programme, keep all interested parties informed and fill out quarterly monitoring as applicable.
9	Archaeological finds on site that could delay the programme.	M	M	M	The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Bedfordshire indicates that Roman remains are found around Kempton town centre. As the proposed interventions are not intrusive, we do not expect this to affect the programme, however we will consider undertaking archaeological surveys prior to alterations.
10	The interrelationship between schemes is not considered properly	L	M	L	Work closely with the Development Management teams on the development of the schemes

Risk ID	Risk Description	Likelihood	Programme Impact	Risk Level	Mitigation Strategy
	and affects deliverability of one or multiple interventions.				
11	Lack of a detailed programme document showing realistic timescales; key decisions on the project may be misinformed.	L	L	L	Create a Gantt chart at the outset, ensure that this is updated and checked with the Board. Update regularly.
12	Lack of clear governance of the project, which could incur time delays on process.	M	M	M	Maintain a governance chart that is regularly reviewed. Ensure involved parties are aware of their roles & responsibilities.
13	Increase in capital costs and impacts on the scheme cost-benefit analysis.	M	L	M	Regularly monitor costs and develop an appropriate risk-sharing procurement strategy.
14	Covid-19 Impact of achieving benefits at planned timescale.	M	M	M	This especially applies to the regeneration project. Social distancing measures will be put in place and government guidelines will be followed to increase safety.
15	Theft and vandalism of proposed interventions.	L	L	L	The local community will be involved in the consultation process throughout the project. This will create a sense of ownership for the place and facilities and services in it, which will reduce the likelihood of deliberate damage.
16	Core and sensitivity assumptions are not met.	M	L	L	National and local projections will be used to estimate growth in Kempston. This will help to accurately inform decisions on the extent of the interventions at the design phase of the projects.

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