

Monmouthshire County Council and Strategic Partners

Chepstow Transport Study WelTAG / TAG Stage Two

Summary Document

March 2021

Introduction

Background and the Stage Two Study

A Welsh transport appraisal guidance (WelTAG) **Stage One** (Strategic Outline Case) Chepstow Transport Study was previously undertaken between April 2018 and December 2018, which was jointly commissioned by Monmouthshire County Council, Gloucestershire County Council and Forest of Dean District Council. The 2018 Stage One Study focussed upon the strategic corridor of the A48, which included wider issues and impacts along the corridor from Lydney in the east to Chepstow in the west.

Arup has been commissioned to undertake a WelTAG / Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) **Stage Two** (Outline Business Case) (referred to as ‘this study’ or the ‘[Chepstow Transport Study](#)’) by Monmouthshire County Council, on behalf of several Strategy partner organisations in Wales and England.

Partner organisations that helped Monmouthshire County Council to fund and/or steer the Stage Two study included:

- Welsh Government
- Department for Transport
- Highways England
- Welsh Office
- Forest of Dean District Council
- Gloucestershire County Council
- South Gloucestershire Council
- Members of the Senedd
- Members of Parliament
- County Councillors

Study Approach

The approach taken to appraising potential transport interventions for the Chepstow Transport Study follows the WelTAG and WebTAG guidance. This is important given the cross-boundary nature of the transport system in connecting Chepstow on its Welsh and English borders. Further information on the study approach is provided within section 1.3 of the study’s Impact Assessment Report (IAR), available on request.

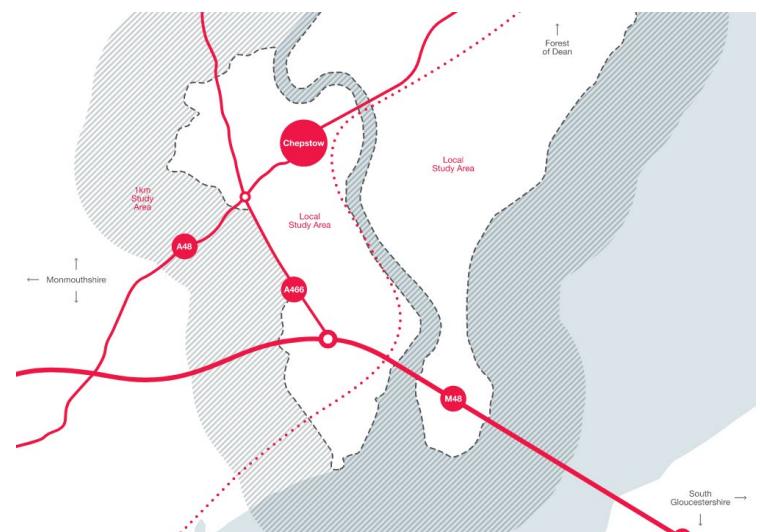


Figure 1: The Regional Study Area

Figure 2: The Local Study Area

Study Context

This study has evolved applying the **Five Cases** (**strategic case, transport case, financial case, commercial case, management case**). This section provides a succinct overview of the study context and how options have developed. Sections 2 to 7 of the IAR should be read to understand the detailed evidence base for the study.

Following a comprehensive review of the study context and feedback from stakeholders, a number of problems have been identified, with **some problems occurring at a local level pertinent to Chepstow, and others relevant at a regional or strategic level**.

These **problems** are summarised as:

- High levels of congestion and increasing traffic
- Limited bus connectivity and facilities
- Higher relative cost of public transport journeys
- Poor facilities for Ultra Low Emission Vehicles
- Limited network resilience with few alternatives for crossing the River Wye
- Limited rail connectivity and facilities
- High number of commuting journeys
- Air quality issues
- The highway network dominates Chepstow, with perceived safety issues
- The A48 causes community severance through Chepstow

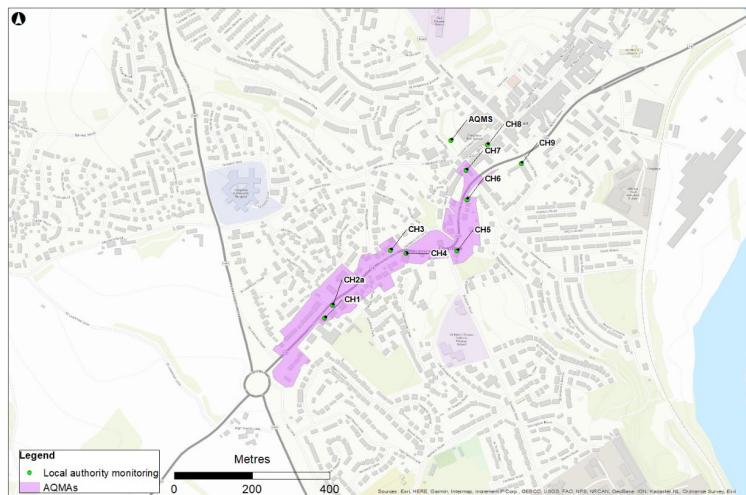


Figure 3: Chepstow AQMA

Further to this, we have identified a number of study objectives, which take into account the identified problems as well as key legislative and policy drivers at both a local, regional and national context.

These **objectives** are summarised as:

- To reduce congestion within Chepstow
- To promote and improve accessibility to integrated, sustainable and low carbon transport modes
- To improve network resilience
- To be more globally responsible
- To reduce the need to travel
- To create safe, equal and cohesive built environments
- To enable inclusive economic development
- To promote active travel
- To make Chepstow a more attractive place to live, work and visit
- To protect and promote Welsh culture and language

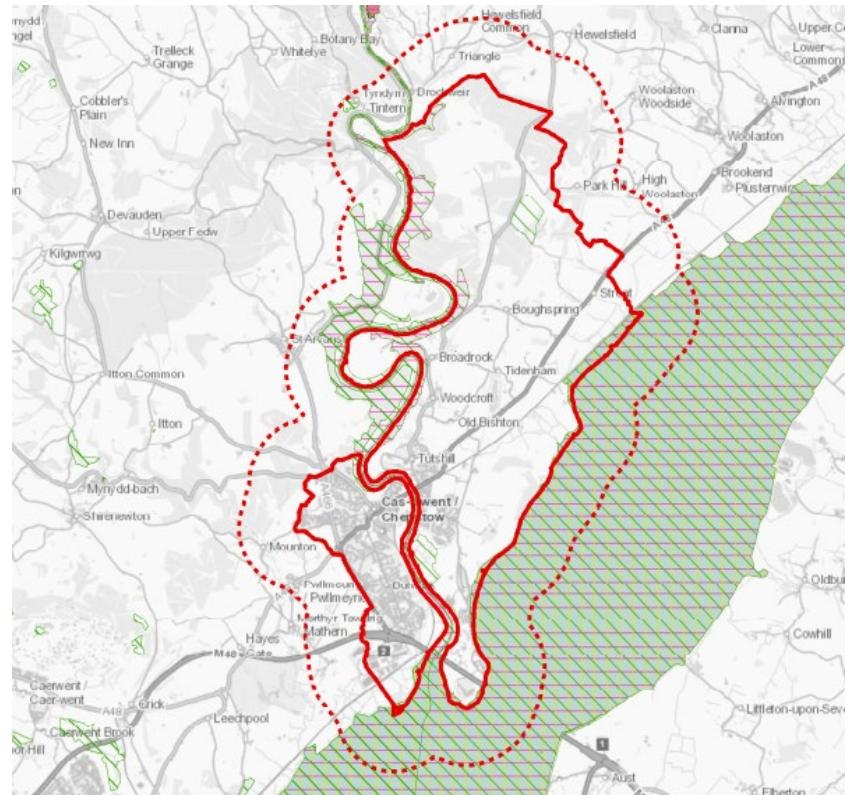
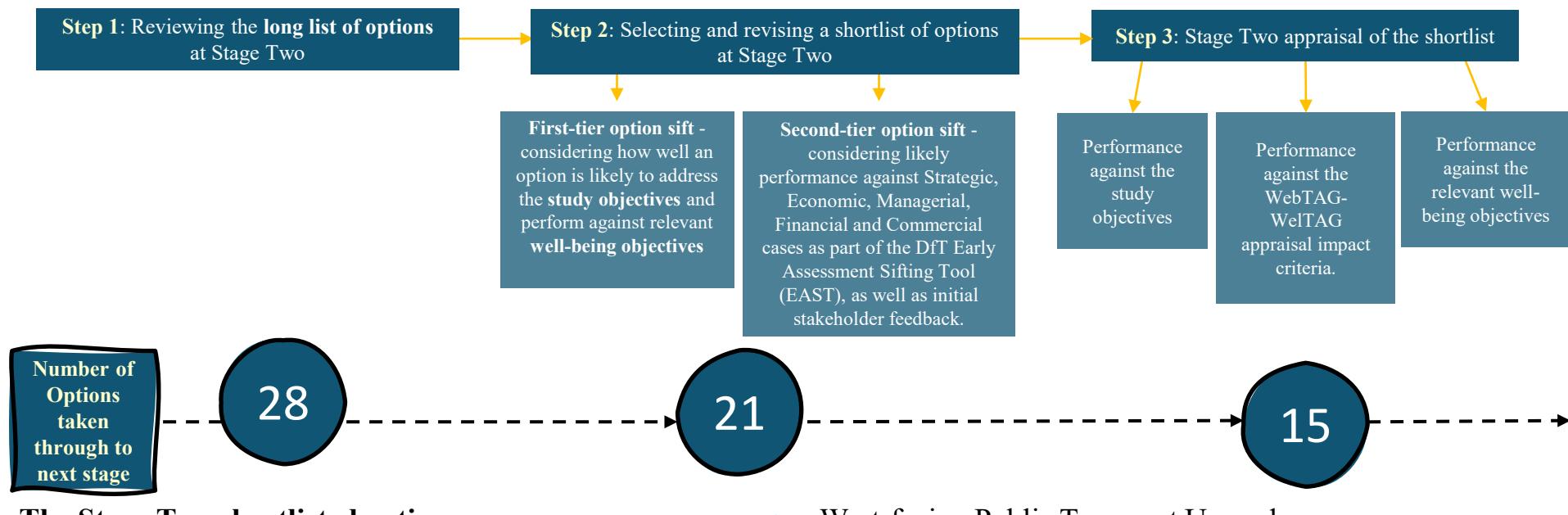


Figure 4: Nature Conservation Designations

Option Development

This Stage Two study has comprised a number of steps in terms of the development, appraisal and sifting of options. **Figure 5** below provides an overview of the different stages of this process. Stakeholder and public feedback have helped to identify, develop and appraise the options at the respective stages. Full details of how this engagement has informed the study can be found within the Participation Report (Appendix O to the IAR).

Figure 5: Option Development and Sifting Process



The Stage Two shortlisted options were:

- Reducing the need to travel
- Encouraging sustainable travel behaviour, freight Delivery and Service Plans
- Active Travel Upgrades and Additions
- Walking Friendly Chepstow High Street
- Chepstow Bike Share Scheme
- Chepstow Transport Hub
- West-facing Public Transport Upgrades
- East-facing Public Transport Upgrades
- Park and Ride (Rail)
- Local Bus Service Upgrades
- On-demand taxi (Demand Responsive Transport)
- Electric Vehicle Charging Points
- Chepstow Bypass - 60mph Carriageway Option
- Chepstow Bypass - 40mph 'Lower Carbon' Option

As part of the Transport Case, **Appraisal Summary Tables** have been produced to set out the expected impacts of each of the options against a range of assessment criteria including the study objectives, Monmouthshire County Council's well-being objectives and the WebTAG impact criteria (see Appendix T.1 of the IAR).

The results of the appraisals show that overall, **the options would provide benefits and achieve the study objectives**.

The proposed active travel measures would provide opportunities for environmental and social benefits at a local level.

Generally, the strategic public transport options would provide additional benefits to the local active travel options, helping transfer some of the commuter population (strategic traffic) onto public transport options.

Whilst the highway options demonstrated clear benefits for reducing congestion and increasing network resilience, the environmental impact of the bypass options would provide adverse effects on some environment features. This would largely be owing to the significant adverse impacts predicted upon the historic and natural environment. The value for money of the 40mph 'lower carbon' bypass option would be greater than the 60mph option.

Recommendations

Preferred Options

Given the identified need for improvements to address the study problems and meet the study objectives now and in the future, it is recommended that a ‘do something’ scenario is progressed for further consideration and that the ‘do minimum’ (or do nothing scenario) is not appropriate.

In summary, it is considered that the following options should be taken forward for further study at WelTAG / TAG Stage Three, grouped into [three distinct packages](#).

It is considered that it would be most appropriate to undertake separate future studies for each package, acknowledging the strong dependencies and opportunities present from planning some schemes in conjunction with each other. Whilst all options / packages would have some interconnections with others, for expediency, the packages have been recommended in order of priority and ability to be delivered in the short, medium and longer term.

It is considered that each package would help address the identified problems and achieve the study objectives and the well-being objectives, as well as perform positively against most of the WebTAG appraisal impact criteria. The delivery of all of the packages would deliver the greatest results but each could be progressed individually without compromising or depending on another.

- **Package 1: Active Travel Improvements** [AT1 - Active Travel Upgrades and Additions; AT2 - Walking Friendly Chepstow High Street; AT3 – Chepstow Bike Share Scheme]
- **Package 2: Chepstow Transport Hub and Connectivity Improvements** [PT2 – Chepstow Transport Hub; PT7 Park and Ride (Rail); PT4 – West/North-facing Regional Public Transport Upgrades; PT5 – East-facing Regional Public Transport Upgrades; PT8 – Local Bus Service Upgrades; Option B1, 2 and 3: Influencing travel behaviours; Option ULEV1: Electric vehicle charging points; Option PT9 – On-demand taxi (Demand Responsive Transport Services)]
- **Package 3: Chepstow Bypass** [Option H2B– Beachley and Sedbury 40mph ‘Lower Carbon’ Single Carriageway]

Further details and plans for the options, the recommended packages, and reasons for progressing or discounting options is set out within the IAR.

Next Steps

It is recommended that future WelTAG Stage Three studies seek to provide further work and detail on the packages, to help prepare them for contracting and implementation, if approved. Further details about the recommended next steps including survey work, design and planning can be found within Section 8 of the IAR.

It is expected that further studies could be commissioned in late 2021 and conclude in 2023, subject to funding and procurement processes being undertaken and satisfied.

The results of those studies would seek to enable contractors to be appointed and progress to detailed design and construction in 2023/24 onwards for any of the measures selected for implementation.

For further information, please contact:

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