

Land at Springville, East Sleekburn, Northumberland

Residential Travel Plan

Amethyst Homes Ltd

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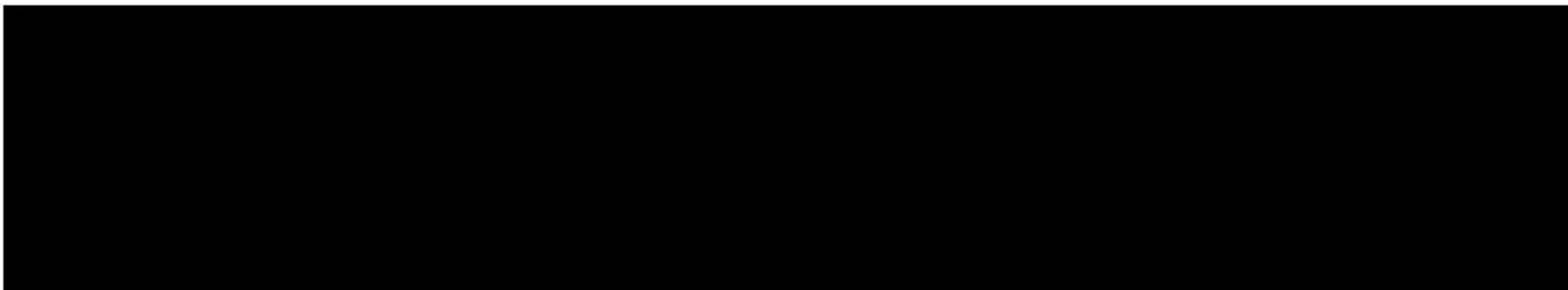
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1.0 Introduction

This Residential Travel Plan (RTP) has been prepared by Cundall on behalf of Amethyst Homes Limited to accompany a planning application for a proposed 48-unit residential development located adjacent to Brock lane, East Sleekburn, Northumberland.

1.1 What is a Travel Plan?

A Travel Plan (TP) is a package of measures designed to reduce reliance on car journeys and to promote the use of alternative, more sustainable modes of travel. The overall strategy can provide benefit for the wider community in addition to development residents.

1.2 Purpose of the report

This RTP has been produced as part of the package of documents which accompanies the proposals for the development of land adjacent to Brock Lane and has taken due cognisance of the following documents:

- Department for Transport – The Essential Guide to Travel Planning;
- Department for Transport – Good Practice Guidelines: Delivering Travel Plans through the Planning Process;
- Department for Transport – Making Residential Travel Plans Work; and
- Department for Communities and Local Government – National Planning Policy Framework.

The overall objective of the plan is to encourage residents to use more environmentally friendly alternatives than driving alone, for example, walking cycling and using public transport. The RTP is supported by the following four specific objectives:

- To encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport;
- To reduce unnecessary travel;
- To ensure that all residents are aware of the travel plan; and
- To improve the health of residents, through active living initiatives.

1.3 Why is the travel plan required?

A Residential Travel Plan (RTP) is intended to provide future residents with information on sustainable transport facilities, promoting their use so that dependence on individual car use is minimised. Reducing private car usage, especially single occupancy vehicle trips in favour of sustainable means of transport, can have a positive impact on and help meet wider sustainability objectives.

It should be noted that this RTP represents an initial approach that will be undertaken to develop an RTP strategy following occupation of the initial development phase, and that the document may be amended in the future to respond to changes in best practice. This RTP outlines a framework of measures that will be used to develop an RTP over time, identifying a clear monitoring strategy to assess the effectiveness of the Plan.

1.4 What are the benefits of the travel plan?

Residential Travel Plans can generate a range of benefits for new developments including:

- Enhancing the accessibility of a site;
- Identifying the range of travel options available to new residents enabling sustainable travel habits to be established at the outset;
- Assist in the creation of sustainable communities that promote healthier lifestyles; and
- Minimise the impact of a development on the adjacent highway network.

2.0 Existing Conditions

2.1 Site Location

The site is located to the north-west of East Sleekburn village and is bound by Brock Lane to the north and east, existing private residential dwellings and allotments to the south and the A189 to the west.

Figure 2.1 shows the site's location in relation to East Sleekburn.

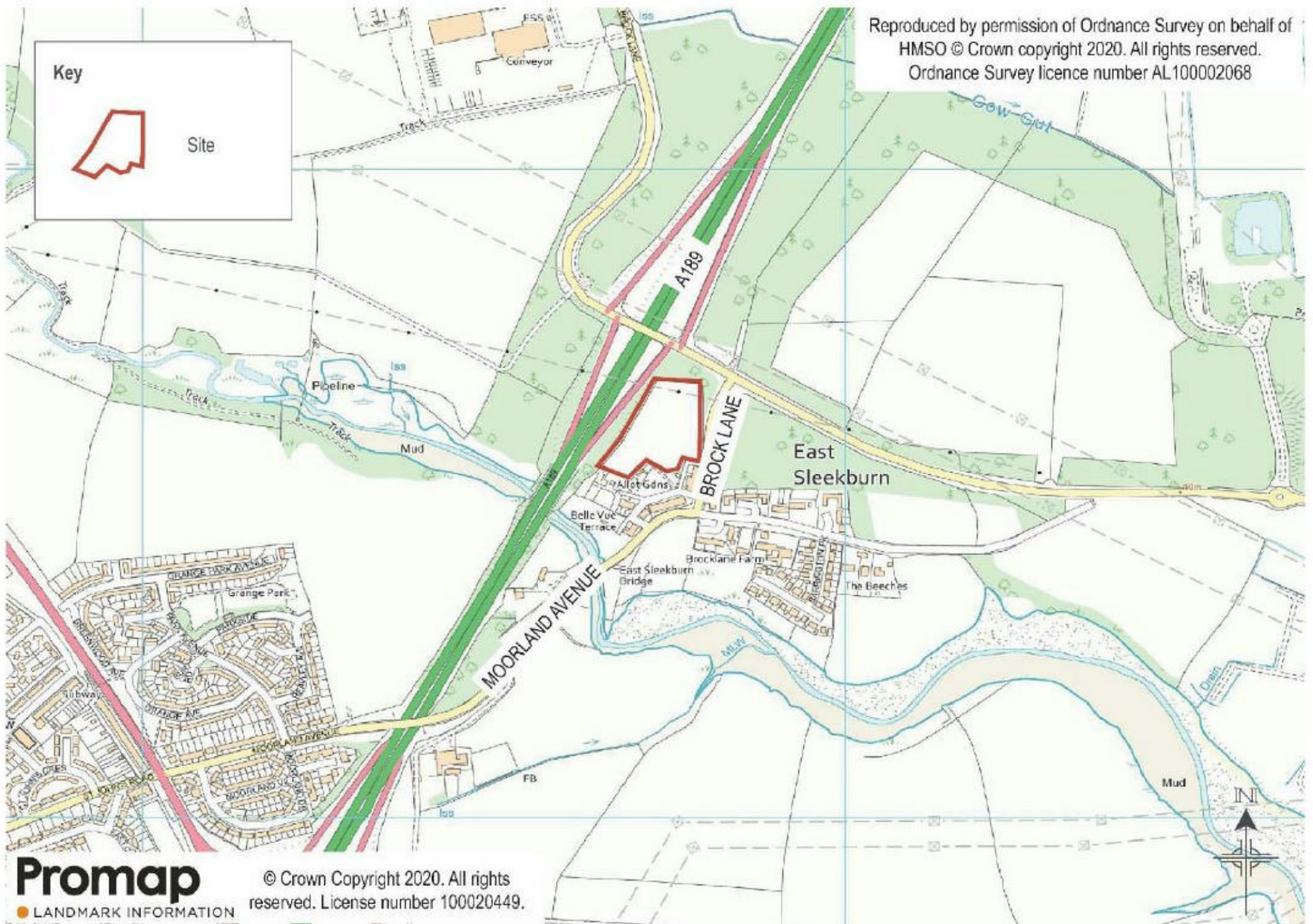


Figure 2.1 Site Context

2.2 Pedestrian Facilities

A lit footway is provided to the south of the site and located on the western extent of Brock Lane. The footway measures approximately 2.5m in width and connects with footways on both sides of Brock Lane, approximately 20m to the south of the site.

The closest operational bus stop to the site is located on Brock Lane to the north, being provided on the grass verge. Whilst there is no formal footway provision provided directly from the site, there is a wide grass verge, approximately 5m in width, that facilitates access to the nearest operational bus stops. It is acknowledged that there is a bus stop located in the immediate vicinity of the site however this is not currently in use.

A network of segregated footpaths is provided in and around East Sleekburn, providing connection to Cambois to the east and Bedlington to the west, via a section of the England Coast Path.

Figure 2.2 shows the site's location in relation to the closest pedestrian facilities to the site.

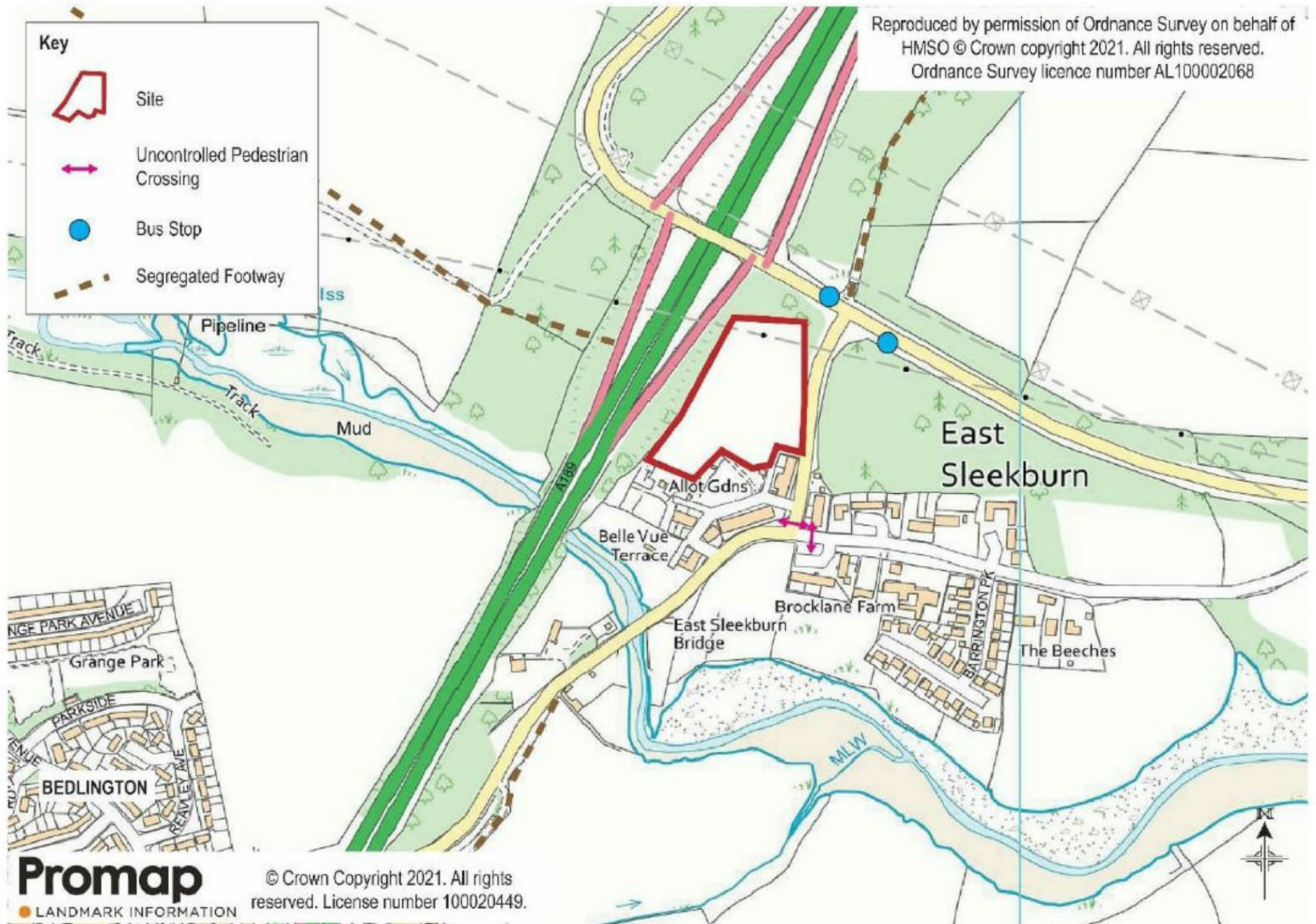


Figure 2.2 Pedestrian Facilities

The pedestrian network is supported by uncontrolled pedestrian crossing facilities approximately 100m to the south of the site at the junction with Brock Lane / Moorland Avenue.

The site’s location in relation to existing pedestrian facilities will provide good opportunity for residents to access local employment and education opportunities, in addition to local amenities on foot.

2.2.1 Walking Accessibility Assessment

The Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot confirms that residents are generally prepared to walk up to 2km to access employment or education opportunities. A walking accessibility assessment has been undertaken to understand how the development links to the surrounding area, with its local facilities, on foot and the results of the assessment are shown in Figure 2.3.

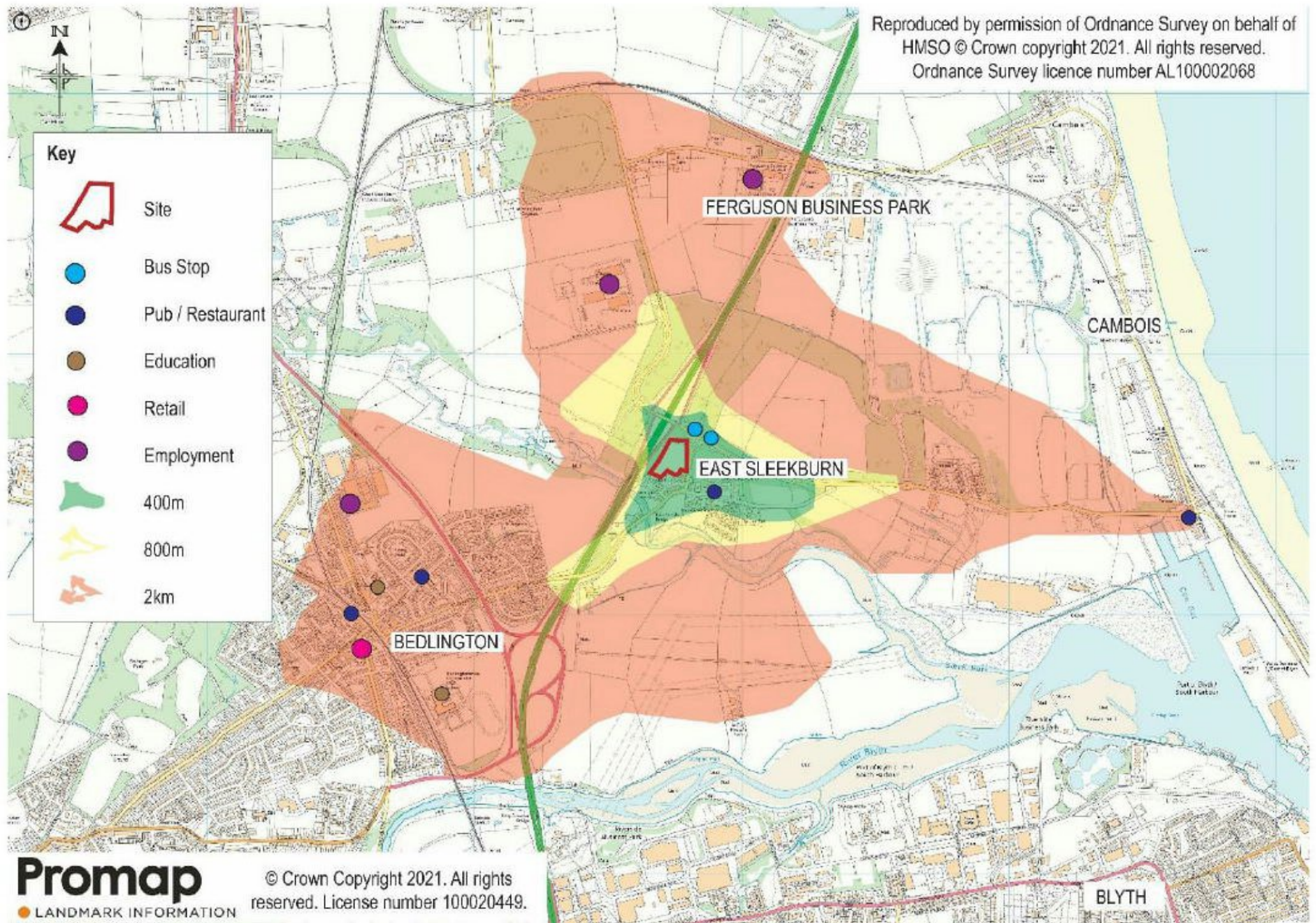


Figure 2.3 Walking Accessibility Assessment

The results of the above appraisal indicate that the closest bus stops to the site are located within a convenient 1 minute (100m) walk of the site. Bedlington Primary School is located approximately a 19 minute (walk and Bedlington Academy around a 21-minute walk, to the south-west of the site. A number of employment opportunities are provided at Ferguson Business Park around a 12 minute (1km) walk to the north of the site, in addition to further opportunities located in Bedlington, the nearest town located to the west of the site.

The site’s location will therefore provide good opportunity for future residents to access local employment and education opportunities on foot.

2.3 Cycling Facilities

The local highway network is lit, predominantly residential in nature and subject to a 30mph speed limit within East Sleekburn, providing an environment which is considered to be attractive to cyclists.

National Cycle Route 1 (NCR1) runs adjacent to the site along Brock Lane, linking the area with a number of settlements along the Northumberland coast, including Blyth to the south, Cambois to the north-east and Newbiggin-by-the-Sea, to the north, in addition to the centre of Bedlington to the south-west. NCR1 combines both traffic free and on-road cycle paths, which are provided in the vicinity of the site.

Figure 2.3 shows the location of the nearest cycle facilities to the site.

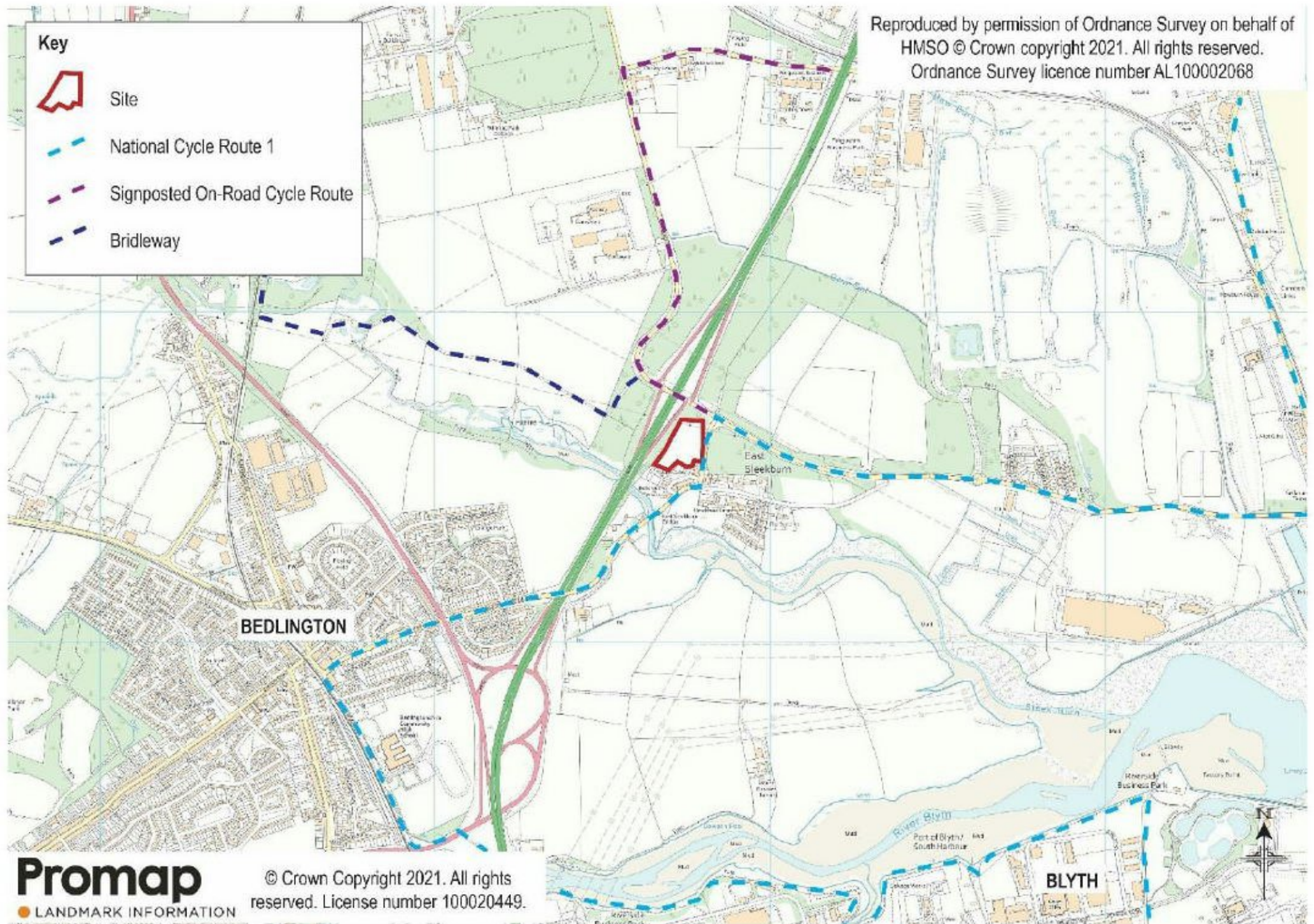


Figure 2.4 Cycle Facilities

A signed on-road cycle route is provided on the northern boundary of the site on Brock Lane and links to off-road routes providing onward connections to Ashington to the north and its associated employment opportunities. The facilities will also provide convenient access to Bedlington to the south with its employment and education opportunities.

The site's location in relation to existing cycle facilities, will provide good opportunity for future residents to access local employment and education opportunities by bicycle.

2.3.1 Cycling Accessibility Assessment

It is generally accepted that residents are prepared to cycle up to 20 minutes to access their place of education or employment by bicycle, a distance which equates to a 5km cycle. A cycling accessibility assessment has been undertaken to understand how the development links to local facilities by bicycle based on this distance and the results of this assessment are shown in Figure 2.5.

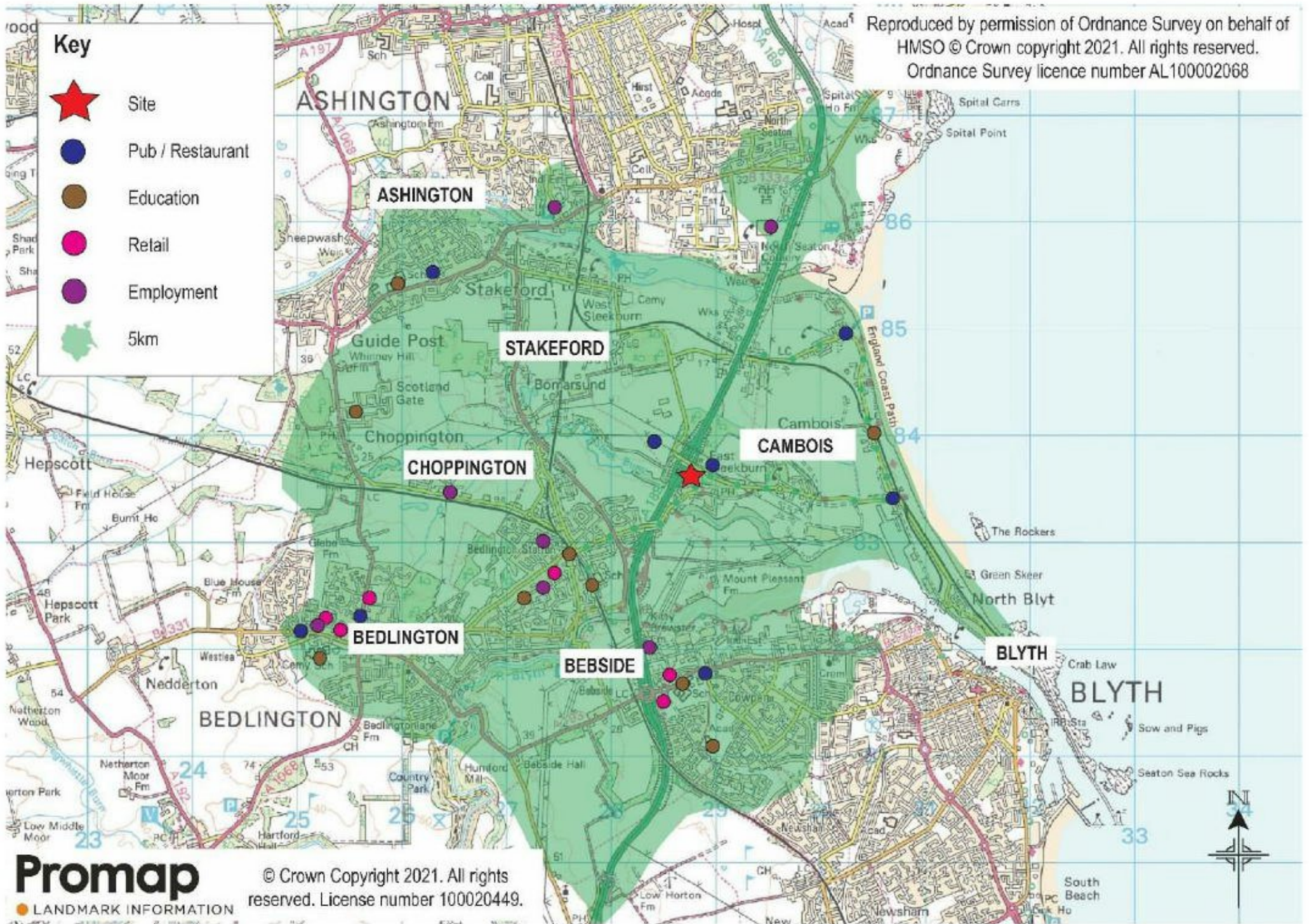


Figure 2.5 Cycling Accessibility Appraisal

The analysis confirms that a large proportion of Stakeford to the north, in addition to a large proportion of Bedlington to the west, is located within a convenient 20 minute (5km) cycle of the site. The whole of Cambois, Stakeford, Bedside and a proportion of Blyth with their local employment and education opportunities are also within a 20 minute (5km) cycle of the site. The nearest secondary school (Bedlington Academy) is located within a 20 minute cycle of the site.

The site’s location will therefore provide good opportunity for future residents to access local education and employment opportunities by bicycle.

2.4 Public Transport Facilities

2.4.1 Bus Services

The nearest operational bus stops are located to the north-east of the site on Brock Lane, around a 1 minute (100m) walk and provide access to Service 434 operated by Go North East. Table 2.1 summarises the destinations served by the service and times at which the service can be accessed from the nearest stops to the site.

Bus Service	Operator	Route	Service Frequency
434	Go North East	Linton Orchard View – High Market Bothal Cottages – Ashington Bus Station – North Seaton – Stakeford – Cambois – North Blyth – East Sleekburn – Bedlington Station	10.16
			11.46
			13.46

Table 2.1 Bus Service Summary

As can be seen from the summary presented in Table 2.1, the service connects the site with a number of settlements including Bedlington to the south-west, Cambois to the north-east and Linton to the north, providing an alternative to the private car for future residents to access the wider area.

The site's location will therefore provide opportunity for future residents to travel to and from the site by public transport.

2.5 Sustainable Transport Summary

The site is located adjacent to a network of pedestrian facilities which offer convenient access the surrounding area. A large proportion of East Sleekburn's highway network is residential in nature and therefore provides an environment which is considered attractive to cyclists and this is supplemented by a network of advisory and segregated facilities, in addition to NCN1, providing good opportunity for residents to access the surrounding area, by bicycle.

The site is also located within a convenient 1 minute (100m) walk of the nearest operational bus stops to the north-east of the site on Brock Lane, with the stops providing access to services linking the area with Bedlington to the south-west, Cambois to the north-east and Linton to the north.

The location of the site will therefore provide good opportunity for future residents to travel to and from the development using sustainable modes of travel in accordance with local and national planning policy.

3.0 Objectives

The overall objective of the RTP is to encourage residents to use more environmentally friendly alternatives rather than driving alone. The plan is supported by the following four specific objectives:

- To encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport;
- To reduce unnecessary travel;
- To ensure that all residents are aware of the travel plan; and
- To improve the health of residents, through active living initiatives.

As the plan develops it will be appropriate to review these objectives and consider the adoption of further objectives, to ensure that the TP adapts to changing circumstances and evolving best practice.

4.0 Mode Share Targets

4.1 Existing Travel Habits

The setting of targets is an essential part of a successful TP, with the targets providing a means of reviewing the success or otherwise of a travel plan.

Mode share data has been extracted from Census 2011 data (Method of travel to Work QS701EW) for Output Area Northumberland 020 which covers the site. Table 4.1 summarises the mode share for the output area

Mode	Mode Share
Underground, metro, light rail or tram	0.1%
Train	0.5%
Bus, minibus or coach	8.6%
Taxi	0.5%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.8%
Driving a car or van	70.9%
Passenger in a car or van	8.0%
Bicycle	1.4%
On foot	8.7%
Other method of travel to work	0.5%
Total	100.0%

Table 4.1 Mode Share Data

4.2 Mode Share Targets

It is considered that the site location provides greater opportunity for future residents to access employment opportunities located in the surrounding area on foot, by bicycle or by bus. Initial mode share targets have been set for the proposed development based on this expectation are summarised in Table 4.2.

Mode	Mode Share
Underground, metro, light rail or tram	0.1%
Train	0.5%
Bus, minibus or coach	12.0%
Taxi	0.5%
Motorcycle, scooter or moped	0.8%
Driving a car or van	63.0%
Passenger in a car or van	8.0%
Bicycle	4.6%
On foot	10.0%
Other method of travel to work	0.5%
Total	100.0%

Table 4.2 Adjusted Mode Share

The Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC) should set targets that lead to a shift towards sustainable travel in association with the objectives of the TP. Targets will be set within one year of occupation of the initial development phase and travel mode surveys will be undertaken within six months of this.

Cundall has prepared example objectives and initial actions for this RTP, however, these will be reconsidered and revised once the initial development phase is occupied, for inclusion within future TPs.

5.0 Measures

The RTP has reviewed the accessibility of the site, from this a range of measures have been identified to encourage the use of sustainable modes of travel when accessing the site. The measures will be reviewed prior to implementation by the TPC within 12 months of the development becoming fully occupied.

A combination of measures has been identified which encourages residents to choose sustainable travel options, whilst considering their own day to day requirements, and lifestyle.

5.1 Appointment of a Travel Plan Coordinator (TPC)

To ensure the success of any travel plan, it must be monitored and promoted and current best practice recommends that a single point of contact is appointed in order to take overall responsibility for addressing transport issues relevant to the site. It is envisaged that the developer will appoint a TPC prior to the development becoming fully occupied.

It will be essential to the success of the TP that the TPC is seen as an enthusiastic exponent of the travel plan measures. This will include the ability to lead by example, the ability to approach issues with a practical and balanced perspective, and a flair for original and innovative thinking to raise awareness of the travel plan.

The TPC is key to the success of the TP and whilst the precise nature of the position will vary, the coordinator should become the main driving force behind the plan. It is therefore important that the TPC has sufficient time to manage the travel plan.

The role of the TPC will include the following:

- Acting as a point of contact for all development residents on travel issues;
- Ensuring that the TP is kept up to date;
- To obtain and maintain commitment and support from all residents;
- To design and implement effective marketing and awareness raising campaigns to promote the TP;
- To set up and coordinate car share schemes, steering groups, working groups etc.; and
- To coordinate the monitoring programme for the TP.

5.2 Travel Plan Working Group (TPWG)

To ensure the TP is available to all residents and takes account of their needs, it is important that a TPWG is established when the development becoming fully occupied. The group will be responsible for developing the action plan, implementing initiatives and the overall monitoring and review of the plan.

When the TP is prepared a list of group members and the current TPC should be identified. All residents should have access to the TP and as such would know who their representative in the group is.

The main duties of the TPWG would include:

- Develop and oversee the implementation of the action plan;
- Manage the promotion of events to encourage sustainable travel to and from the site;
- Provide travel advice and information; and
- Coordinating the monitoring programme for the TP, including target setting.

5.3 Marketing and Communication

A shift towards environmentally acceptable or active forms of travel, will ultimately require behavioural change. It is important that residents realise the TP is not anti-car but aims to encourage informed decision making offering greater travel choice to residents who can use alternatives.

The first and possibly most significant barrier to travel is the lack of information on sustainable travel modes and facilities. Providing information relating to public transport services, walking, cycling and car sharing would contribute towards encouraging a shift to these sustainable modes of travel. The provision of information builds awareness of the range of travel modes available and informs choices about how to travel.

The following measures will be adopted as part of the TP:

- A TP section will be provided on the development's website with links to key travel websites and details of the sustainable travel linkages at the site;
- Promotional events can be held on occasions such as Bike Week and Liftshare week; and
- The TPC will investigate the opportunities to provide a personalised travel journey plan for residents.

5.4 Welcome Pack

A welcome pack will be issued to new residents to provide the following information to encourage residents to consider using more sustainable modes of transport:

- Name and contact details of the TPC;
- Details on personal travel planning assistance, including how to book an appointment with the TPC to obtain information on travel options;
- A map showing the route of local cycling facilities;
- Bus service timetable information to encourage access to employment opportunities in Northumberland and further afield, by public transport;
- Links to public transport operator websites; and
- A map showing the location of the nearest bus stops to the site.

5.5 Pedestrian Initiatives

Walking as a form of transport, is the most sustainable mode, benefiting the environment through reduced car use and car parking demand. In turn, advantages for the individual come through increased exercise, reduced stress and no financial cost.

As part of the TP, the following measures will be provided to encourage residents to access the site on foot:

- Convenient connection to the adjacent pedestrian network;
- The TPC will promote, publicise and provide information on walking, including raising awareness of the health benefits and providing information on suitable routes; and
- The TPC will ensure that national walking events are advertised to encourage walking amongst residents. For example, the annual Living Streets "Walk to Work Week".

5.6 Cycling Initiatives

Cycling as a mode of transport is one of the most sustainable methods of travel and offers cost reductions as well as health and fitness benefits, to the user when compared with car travel.

As part of the TP the following measures will be provided to encourage residents to access the site by bicycle:

- Convenient connection to the adjacent highway network;
- Secure on-site cycle parking will be provided in accordance with NCC standards;
- Prior to occupation of the initial development phase, a plan showing the location of local cycle facilities will be provided; and
- The TPC will ensure that national cycle events are advertised to encourage cycling amongst residents. For example, Bike Week is an event held every year to encourage more residents to cycle to work rather than travel by less sustainable modes.

Individual residential properties will be designed to accommodate secure cycle parking.

5.7 Public Transport Initiatives

Accessibility to, and use of, public transport is considered to be a key element of any TP and this development is located adjacent to the nearest bus stops providing access to services which connect the site to Bedlington, Blyth and Cambois.

As part of the TP the following measures will be provided to encourage residents to use public transport when accessing the site:

- Following occupation of the initial development phase, a noticeboard will be provided within the site outlining the location of local bus stops and bus / rail timetable information; and
- Following occupation of the initial development phase, the TPC will investigate the possibility of providing personalised journey plans to residents.

5.8 DDA Access

Accesses into the development will be DDA compliant and suitable for use by all residents.

5.9 Transport hierarchy

It is envisaged that travel to and from the site could follow a sustainable transport pattern and hierarchy. Figure 5.1 summarises the suggested transport hierarchy for the development site.

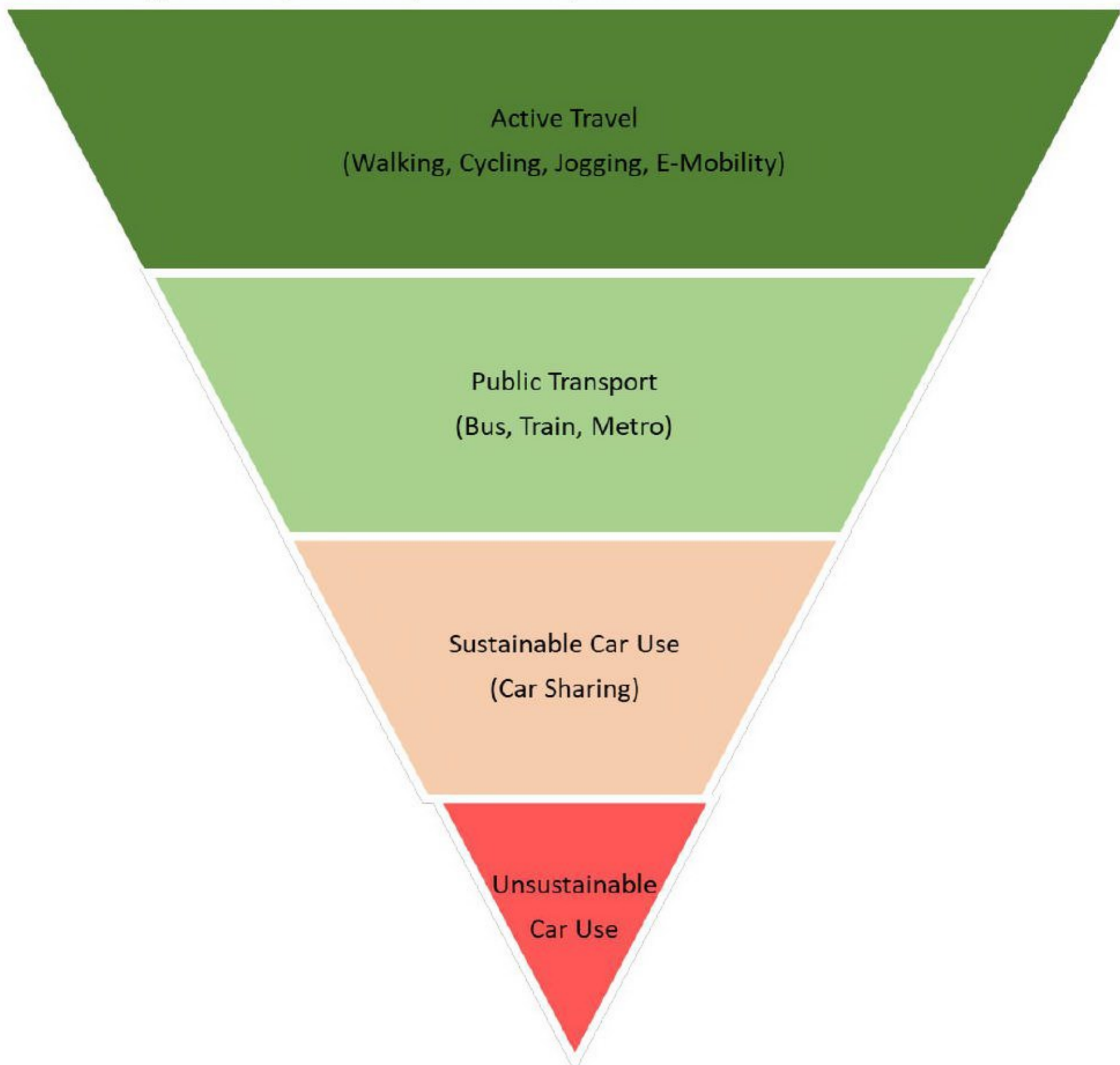


Figure 5.1 Transport Hierarchy

6.0 Monitoring and Review

It is essential to monitor and review the success of the TP to improve its effectiveness and:

- Identify whether individual aspects of the plan are particularly successful or unsuccessful;
- Identify whether the level of travel by sustainable modes is being maintained; and
- Determine whether, in general terms, the aim of encouraging access by sustainable modes of travel is being achieved.

Following the development of the TP, monitoring would be carried out for at least five years after the occupation of the initial development phase. Based on this timescale, years one, three and five are likely to consist of the following elements:

- Site audit to review the sustainable travel alternatives in the local area;
- Surveys of residents to determine existing travel patterns and barriers to encouraging travel by sustainable modes; and
- Updating the TP based upon the findings of the above.

The monitoring and review of the TP would be the responsibility of the TPC.

7.0 Action Plan

An initial Action Plan for the proposed development has been developed from the measures set out in Chapter 5. The Action Plan will be updated as part of the TP.

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
General Actions		
Appoint TPC and set up TPWG	Prior to full occupation of the initial development phase	Site management
Prepare Final Travel Plan	12 months after full occupation of the initial development phase	TPC
Undertake survey one year after full occupation of the initial development phase and update TP	12 months after full occupation of the initial development phase	TPC / TPWG
Undertake survey three years after full occupation of the initial development phase and update TP	Three years after full occupation of the initial development phase	TPC / TPWG
Undertake survey five years after full occupation of the initial development phase and update TP	Five years after full occupation of the initial development phase	TPC / TPWG
Marketing and Communication		
Install on site noticeboard with key information on sustainable travel options	Prior to full occupation of the initial development phase and ongoing	Site management
Prepare an information pack for issue to new residents		TPC
Investigate opportunity for personalised journey planning for residents		TPC/TPWG
Participate in promotional events such as Bike Week and Liftshare Day		TPC/TPWG
Walking		
Ensure site is fully connected to the adjacent pedestrian network	Prior to full occupation of the initial	Site management

Prepare a Welcome Pack for issue to new residents	development phase	TPC
Cycling		
Ensure site is fully connected to the adjacent highway network	Prior to full occupation of the initial development phase	Site management
Ensure on site cycle parking is provided prior to full occupation of the initial development phase		
Provide noticeboard identifying local cycle facilities		
Prepare a Welcome Pack for issue to new residents	Within 12 months of full occupation of the initial development phase and ongoing	TPC
Participate in promotional events such as Bike Week		TPC/TPWG
Public Transport		
Investigate the potential to provide personalised journey plans for residents	Prior to full occupation of the initial development phase and ongoing	TPC/TPWG

8.0 Conclusion

This Residential Travel Plan has been prepared by Cundall on behalf of Amethyst Homes Limited to accompany a planning application for a proposed 48-unit residential development located adjacent to Brock lane, East Sleekburn, Northumberland.

The development of the site provides opportunity to encourage residents to use sustainable travel modes immediately following occupation rather than attempting to encourage a mode shift following establishment of non-sustainable travel habits.

The TP brings an array of benefits for those accessing the site, whilst minimising the environmental impact on the surrounding community and demonstrates the commitment of the developer to creating a sustainable community.

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