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INTRODUCTION

This report has been produced by the Ashtead Community Vision's (ACV) Transport sub-group to provide details about transport provision and its related problems within the village to help inform the policies which are to be drawn up for the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The report covers areas of concern as found in both Surrey County Council's (SCC) and Mole Valley District Council's (MVDC) Transport Reports. The linked Objectives are based on those of the National Planning Policy Framework and shows how they relate to the situation within Ashtead.

MVDC Objectives (Core Strategy Goal No. 4 regarding Transport)

- To manage down traffic growth and encourage more sustainable transport choices by improving travel options and accessibility.

SCC Objectives

- Effective transport: To facilitate end-to-end journeys for residents, business and visitors by maintaining the road network, delivering public transport services and, where appropriate, providing enhancements.
- Reliable transport: To improve the journey time reliability of travel in Surrey.
- Safe transport: To improve road safety and the security of the travelling public in Surrey.
- Sustainable transport: To provide an integrated transport system that protects the environment, keeps people healthy and provides for lower carbon transport choices.

The high use of cars and congestion within the county is a major concern to both Councils and these two problems as experienced in Ashtead are shown in the report. As a proportion, the use of public transport to travel to work is less than half that of the car but the use of the train is on the increase as is the use of the bus service during the day although it suffers problems of reliability.

Cycling within the village, both as a means of accessing the station and as a form of leisure, is also on the increase. There are increasing numbers of cycling accidents in the district as a whole but fortunately statistics show that the number of accidents involving all forms of transport within the village is minimal considering the size of the population.

SUMMARY CONCLUSION

- Alleviate the worst areas of congestion and thereby reduce carbon emissions from transport.
- Work towards a more reliable bus service.
- Provide Real Passenger Time Information at key bus stops in the village.
- Address the safety improvements put forward by the Mole Valley Cycle Forum for the A24 cycle path but especially that of the crossing point at Grange Road.
- Address the problems faced by cyclists along Craddocks Avenue.
- Provide more cycle racks in the area of the shops, APMH and other meeting venues.
- Allow for the legal shared use of the wider footpaths around the village for pedestrians and cyclists in order to provide safer routes for cyclists and introduce signage to facilitate and encourage it.
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- That footpath connections are improved as part of new developments whenever the opportunity arises.

1.0 CAR USE AND CONGESTION IN ASHTEAD

Surrey has the highest level of car ownership and the most congested roads in the country outside London.

1.1 Car ownership and Methods of Travel to Work

The following table shows car ownership per household in Ashtead:

Car Ownership	Ashtead 2001	Ashtead 2011	Mole Valley 2011
Total households	5,440	5,639	35,828
Number of cars per household	1.52	1.59	1.57
% of households without a car or van	11.5%	10.5%	12.3%
% of households with 2+ cars or vans	48.2%	51.3%	48.7%

Source: ONS

This table shows the various methods by which residents travel to work:

Ashtead Residents' Mode of travel to work	2001	2011
Economically active residents aged 16- 74	6,323	6,969
Car	59.8%	56.7%
Rail	17.6%	20.2%
Bus	0.6%	1.0%
Motor cycle	1.0%	0.9%
Bicycle	2.0%	2.2%
Walking	4.5%	5.7%
Other	0.4%	0.5%
Works at/from home	11.9%	9.3%

Source: ONS

1.2 Traffic Congestion in Ashtead

Congestion is a problem within the village at commuter times, especially in the morning. In 2008, Mole Valley Transport Evaluation identified the following congestion hotspots in Ashtead:

- a) Craddocks Avenue between A24 Epsom Road and Barnett Wood Lane.
- b) From the Knoll Roundabout (adjacent to the bridge across the M25) along the A24 to Woodfield Lane. From the Knoll Roundabout (adjacent to the bridge across the M25) along the A24 to Woodfield Lane. Due to the weight of traffic regular tailbacks are experienced in both directions. The tailback in the morning especially impedes exit at junctions along the extent of the road.
- c) The Plough Roundabout (junction of A245 Kingston Road and B2430 Kingston Road and Barnett Wood Lane). This congestion can cause long tailbacks along Barnett Wood Lane in the morning commuter period.

Congestion To and From Ashtead Station

Congestion is a problem to and from Ashtead Station along Woodfield Lane from Craddocks Avenue especially at peak times. In order to alleviate this problem MVDC, in conjunction with SCC, and following public consultation, put forward a plan for the existing road to be widened and the present pavement to become a parking area subject to time restrictions thus allowing constant two-way traffic. Surrey Highways, had to submit an application to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for permission to go ahead with the scheme because it involved the use of common land and this has now been given.

Congestion Around the Schools

Each of the schools in the village suffers a serious traffic problem due to the high proportion of parents taking their children to school by car. Narrow roads, parking on the roads and in most cases the regular bus service being of limited use has meant that each of the schools has had to devise a school travel plan or is in the process of doing so in an attempt to manage the situation. The object of a school travel plan is also to reduce the risk of casualties and encourage sustainable travel.

Expansion of The Greville and St Peter's Primary Schools, each by 210 places, in particular will seriously affect the areas surrounding the schools but SCC is currently developing a Transport Strategy for the schools in order to mitigate the impact on the local community.

A survey of staff and pupils at The Greville in 2014 showed the following modes of transport used by pupils and staff:

Mode of Travel	No. of Staff	Staff	No. of Pupils	Pupils
Car	33	56%	253	53%
Walk	1	2%	172	36%
Cycle	15	25%	13	3%
Scoot	3	5%	33	7%

Source: The Greville Primary School

In the case of West Ashtead, access to and from the school by way of a back gate onto the new A24 cycle path is helping relieve pressure on Taleworth Road. The school also has 30 bike racks and so pupils are being encouraged to cycle to school.

It is known that the schools encourage their pupils to walk, cycle, scoot or use the dedicated school bus or school mini-buses but with schools working at capacity and with expansion plans for one of the infants schools in the pipeline as well as the two junior schools as reported above, the situation is not going to get any easier.

Conclusion for Ashtead

- Alleviate the worst areas of congestion and thereby reduce carbon transport emission.

2.0 PARKING FACILITIES AND CONGESTION CAUSED BY PARKING

The Parking Strategy component of the Surrey Transport Plan states that, relative to other counties in England, Surrey has a high level of car ownership and use therefore it follows that the car is of huge significance to Surrey's residents. Certain towns in Surrey also suffer from severe congestion, which is an issue that can be influenced by parking provision and regulation. Consequently the management of residential and town centre parking is an important function of the County Council.

SCC's responsibilities in respect of parking include on street parking provision, civil parking enforcement (carried out their behalf by MVDC), residential parking and parking demand management. This strategy is designed to help shape, manage and deliver the county council's vision for parking which is to '*provide parking where appropriate, control parking where necessary*'.

The objectives of the Parking Strategy are:

- Reduce congestion caused by parked vehicles.
- Make best use of the parking space available.
- Enforce parking regulations fairly and efficiently.
- Provide appropriate parking where needed.

2.1 Parking in Ashtead

- APMH car park: 144 spaces with 6 disabled spaces and both long term and short-term parking available.
- Grove Road car park: 47 spaces with 1 disabled space.
- There is also short-term parking for shoppers at Craddocks Parade, Barnett Wood Lane by the shops, and in The Street.

Parking at GP Surgeries

St Stephen's House Practice

§ 8 parking spaces plus 1 disabled space.

§ Timed spaces in the road directly opposite the surgery.

§ There is the possibility of parking in Woodfield Lane and in Craddocks Parade if patients are able or are prepared to walk but it can be problem during the morning and evening restrictions in Woodfield Lane / St.Stephen's Road.

Gilbert House Practice

§ 13 spaces plus 2 disabled spaces.

§ Extra parking possible in area set aside for the Library and Ashtead Clinic.

Report from Chairman of AGN (Ashtead Good Neighbours) – 23rd July 2013

"The feeling at the meeting was that parking at both surgeries is tight with not a lot of space to open doors for someone who needs help in and out of a car. There are two disabled spaces at Gilbert House one of which is right by the hedge and very difficult to get in and out of and therefore it tends to be avoided. St Stephen's has timed parking spaces on the road opposite the entrance door and so long as the client can walk up the few steps, that parking is preferred".

2.2 Yellow Lines

Various timed single yellow lines and double yellow lines have been introduced in the area of each of our schools to help improve sight lines, deter parking and improve safety.

There are timed yellow lines on both the north and south approaches to the railway station and in the area of the pond to help with congestion problems and to improve sight lines and safety.

3.0 RAIL TRAVEL

The train station is situated to the north of the village. It is 1.1km from the A24 / Woodfield Lane junction, over 1.5 km for those living to the west of the village and nearer to 3km for those living to the east. The location means that, for most, access is going to be by car, cycle or possibly by bus if it is during the day.

There is a regular train service during the day with six trains an hour going to either Waterloo or Victoria but the service is increased for commuter travel at the appropriate times. There is also one through train and a later fast service, albeit requiring a change at Epsom, to London Bridge for morning commuters and three services returning in the evening. Key destinations in the opposite direction are Leatherhead, Guildford, Dorking and Horsham.

Passenger numbers using Ashtead Station

Year	Overall Total Passengers	Passenger Entries	Passenger Exits	Change on previous year
2011 / 2012	1,176,560	588,280	588,280	
2012 / 2013	1,205,956	602,978	602,978	+2.5%
2013 / 2014	1,249,748	624,874	624,874	+3.6%

Source: Office of Rail Regulation

Use of the station is the third highest in Mole Valley.

It has been suggested that the attraction of Ashtead Station is due to the variety of trains and destinations available coupled with the large car park thus attracting commuters not just from Ashtead but also from Epsom, Langley Vale and Leatherhead.

Because track capacity into our two London Terminals is now full, Network Rail agreed to lengthen all platforms in the suburban area, including those at Ashtead, to accommodate ten car trains to both Dorking and Guildford.

Southern Railways now runs 10-car trains daily but South West Trains have to procure extra carriages or new stock to complete the improvements i.e. run 10-car trains all day, or on most services.

There are 198 car parking spaces at the station which includes 12 disabled places and 4 electric car-charging points. There are 96 covered cycle storage places and in the region of 90 cycles can be found daily at the station.

Taxis may be hired opposite the station entrance.

4.0 TRAVEL BY BUS

The two main roads running through the village, the A24 through the centre, and Barnett Wood Lane to the northwest carry the bus routes which serve the community. Three bus routes run along the A24, each with an hourly service and they provide access to Banstead and Epsom, with its hospital, to the east and Guildford via Leatherhead to the west.

The route along Barnett Wood Lane serves residents living to the north of the village and provides access to Epsom, Leatherhead and Guildford and to the basic village facilities such as Ashted Station, the doctors' surgeries and the library during the day.

One particular bus company is doing its best to respond to the needs of the village within the bounds of balancing use versus economics by providing more buses in the mornings when the older section of the community tends to use them. A new route (477), which has been introduced along the A24 in response to requests from the public, has shown increased use in a very short time. Although the running times of certain buses have recently been extended into the early evening, which allows for some use by commuters and for later visiting at the hospital, they do not cater for those wishing to visit Epsom or Leatherhead for evening leisure activities. There is a limited bus service on both roads on Saturdays and an even more restricted service on the northern route on Sundays.

Areas not easily served by the bus services are to the north of the station and the most southerly parts of the village such as Park Lane and Paul's Place. The central areas of the village e.g. the part bounded by the A24 and Craddocks Avenue have a walk of approximately 0.5km or more to the nearest stop and those at the extremes of the village up to 1km.

With the bus routes being restricted to the main roads through the village because the network of roads leading off them are very narrow or restricted by parking, and with an extended walk for many to access a bus, the car is the preferred option for the majority of villagers.

Surrey Objective - To Improve the Reliability of Journey Times of Travel in Surrey.

Based on the SCC Bus Review of 2012, it was found that there is a need for an improvement for bus priority schemes and measures to improve reliability.

Buses such as the 479, which travel from Guildford to Epsom via Ashted in the morning, have to contend with heavy commuter traffic around the Leatherhead one-way system and are inevitably late until half way through the morning when there is a possibility of making up lost time.

Real Time Information at key stops in the village would be a benefit by reassuring passengers and giving them accurate information as to the arrival time of their chosen bus. If there is a delay, as is often the case with the earliest buses available to those with bus passes, or even a cancellation, it would allow for alternative arrangements to be made. The lack of RTPI is felt to be a disincentive to many potential bus users in Ashted.

Conclusions for Ashtead

- § Work towards a more reliable bus service.
- § Provide Real Time Information at key bus stops in the village.

4.1 Other Forms of Road Transport Available in Ashtead

According to the MDVC Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report one of the key objectives relevant to the Local Plan is to support the current network of voluntary car drivers.

Ashtead Good Neighbours

AGN is a voluntary organisation serving Ashtead adults who are in need. It offers an alternative for those who are unable to drive, those for whom walking is problem and those for whom use of the bus is not possible. AGN provides transport to reach medical facilities such as the doctor's surgery or hospital or do basic shopping.

Year	Volunteers	Clients	Assignments
2013	173	418	1,580
2014	182	433	1,744

Dial-A-Ride

This service is designed to support the independence of Mole Valley residents by providing transport within the district and neighbouring areas to those who are disabled and cannot use public transport or are aged above 60 and require Day Centre transport. Every Dial-A-Ride vehicle is adapted with lifts for wheelchair users and others who have mobility problems and the drivers are there to assist clients, whatever their disability.

The service runs daily, including weekends, between 9am and 4.45pm and operates on a first come, first served basis.

5.0 CYCLINGMVDC Objectives in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2013

- A strategic cycle network linking villages and towns is one of the key objectives for Mole Valley.
- Improved cycle facilities to improve overall safety of cyclists.

SCC Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan - February 2014 – Cycle Strategy

The strategy includes:

- Improve infrastructure for cycling.
- Promote and encourage cycling as a means of transport, health promotion and for sports and leisure.
- Implement measures to make cycling safer by delivering cycling training available to all.
- Ensure that every child in Surrey has the opportunity to learn to ride a bike

- working with Surrey cycling clubs and other partners.
- A cycling Action Plan to be prepared for each district.

There are three roads where cycle paths are indicated in the village.

1. A path along the A24 from The Street to the M25 Bridge (1.75 km) and this continues on into Leatherhead for a further 800m.
2. A section of Craddocks Avenue roughly in the area where there are the entries to Newton Wood Road (approx 600m).
3. A section of Barnett Wood Lane from the bridge over the M25 (approx 350 m) to Caen Wood Road.

Many of the roads in the Ashtead are unsuitable and unsafe for cyclists because they are narrow (the Lanes area or south of the A24), riders have to contend with riding between speed humps and the kerb (Barnett Wood Lane) and potholes on all major routes. But even the sections of marked cycle paths are dangerous and in need of improvement as has been shown by recent surveys undertaken by members of the Mole Valley Cycle Forum.

The A24 Cycle Path

The objective of linking towns and villages by cycle paths has partly been achieved for Ashtead with the new path along the A24 from Ashtead to Leatherhead although it does not run from centre to centre.

The Mole Valley Cycle Forum (MVCF) welcomes the path saying that it is generally of a high standard but there are several issues which need to be improved, many of which could be easily achieved such as the re-sighting of badly placed bollards and the moving of unnecessary obstructions. Two areas, however, come in for severe criticism. The first is the fact that it stops short of The Street. Their report states:

“Approaching Ashtead the route stops several hundred metres from the village. This is precisely at the most dangerous and unpleasant point on the route where the road narrows and bends and there is a hill on the exit from the village. Few people will choose to ride on the road at this point. There is effectively no access to Ashtead for the types of cyclists (families, children and the elderly) this route is designed to attract”

The second strong criticism is as follows: *“Crossing Grange Road is still both dangerous and unpleasant. This is a busy crossing used by many school children. The central reservation is too narrow to stop half way across. Waiting on the side of the road can feel unsafe since vehicles turning in pass very close. It is not uncommon for vehicles to mount the kerb at this point.”*

Craddocks Avenue Cycle Path

A recent MVCF survey of the Craddocks Avenue cycle path highlights the problems faced by riders such as a low sunk drain right in the centre of the path, a marked slalom course on and off the road to avoid the bollards and an exit from the footpath right into the road and into the path of the traffic.

Barnett Wood Lane

A study has been made by a local Transport and Planning engineer to show that it would be possible to improve the safety for cyclists along the extent of Barnett Wood Lane. This could be achieved by incorporating some of the wider verges where available, and where there are none, by introducing a road-sharing scheme for cycles and cars as used in Holland.

Cycling to work in Ashtead

According to the latest census 2.2% of the population of Ashtead travel to work by cycle as opposed to 2.00% in 2001.

Accident Rates

For the whole of Surrey, in 2010, 98 riders were killed or seriously injured which showed an increase of 19% over the 1994-98 average.

The accident rates for Ashtead are shown in the table below: the statistical year runs from September to August the following year.

<u>Cycling</u>	<u>Fatal</u>	<u>Serious</u>	<u>Slight</u>	<u>Total</u>
2007 / 2008	0	1	3	4
2008 / 2009	0	0	0	0
2009 / 2010	1	0	2	3
2010 / 2011	0	2	5	7
2011 / 2012	0	0	2	2
2012 / 2013	0	1	3	4
2013 / 2014	0	1	4	5

Source: Surrey County Council Safety Engineering Team

The relatively high number of accidents for 2010 /11 may be explained by the heavy snow that winter.

Cycle Racks

1. Station see Section 3
2. The Street – 4 places
3. Craddocks Parade – 5 places

There are no cycle racks provided in the APMH car park for those using the hall.

Cycle Lessons

- § Available to Years 5 and 6 at The Greville Primary School.
- § For all ages provided by two commercial companies based in Ashtead.

Conclusions for Ashtead

- Address the safety improvements put forward for the A24 cycle path by the Mole Valley Cycle Forum but especially that of the crossing point at Grange Road.
- Address the problems faced by cyclists along Craddocks Avenue.
- Provide more cycle racks in the area of the shops, APMH and other meeting venues.

- Allow for the legal shared use of the wider footpaths around the village for pedestrians and cyclists in order to provide safer routes for cyclists and introduce signage to facilitate and encourage cycling.

6.0 GENERAL ROAD SAFETY IN ASHTEAD

Pedestrians	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
2007 / 2008	0	0	3	3
2008 / 2009	0	1	2	3
2009 / 2010	0	0	1	1
2010 / 2011	0	1	2	3
2011 / 2012	0	1	2	3
2012 / 2013	0	2	3	5
2013 / 2014	0	1	3	4

All Casualties	Fatal	Serious	Slight	Total
2007 / 2008	0	2	23	25
2008 / 2009	0	1	19	20
2009 / 2010	1	2	19	22
2010 / 2011	0	3	28	31
2011 / 2012	0	3	16	19
2012 / 2013	0	6	15	21
2013 / 2014	0	3	24	27

Source: Surrey County Council Safety Engineering Team

The relatively high number of accidents for 2010/11 may be explained by the heavy snow that winter.

It is stated in the MVDC Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2013 that there is a scheme to improve the safety of the Plough roundabout for cyclists as well as pedestrians and vehicle drivers. Although the roundabout is in Leatherhead, it will be of benefit to the residents of Ashtead with it being at the end of Barnett Wood Lane, one of the main access points to the village.

7.0 FOOTPATHS

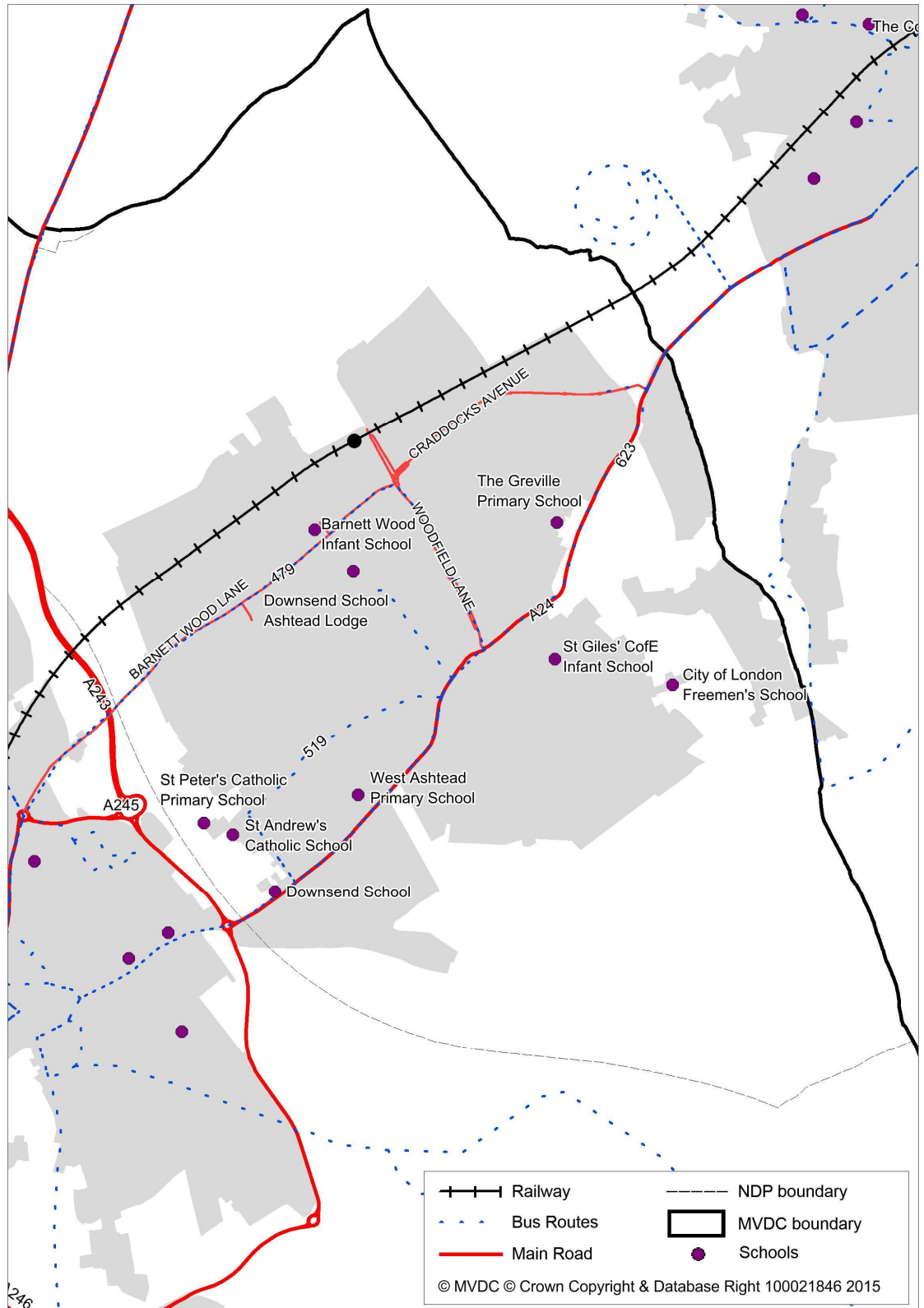
According to MVDC's Built up Areas Character Appraisal of Ashtead (2010) the village is "*permeated by a strong network of public footpaths which take some of the pressure off the road network and are a particular asset in terms of providing access to the village from the adjacent residential areas*".

In total, there are fifteen footpaths. Two of the longest connect Agates Lane and Taleworth Road to the A24 and thereby to The Street and to the north of the Ashtead a long footpath leads from Barnett Wood Lane to Ashtead Common via Green Lane.

If the site at the Murreys were to become available, it has been put forward that the Agates Lane footpath could be extended to link to the site to allow easier pedestrian access to The Street.

Conclusion

That footpath connections are improved as part of new developments whenever the opportunity arises.



A map showing the position of the station to the north of the village which for many can only easily be accessed by car. Two schools are served by a dedicated bus service but the others are not which leads to local congestion in the surrounding areas.