

Appendix D - Levels of Use

1.0 Background

Based on National Travel Survey responses, a survey asked about the barriers to people cycling more. Individuals were asked to look at a list of reasons for not cycling more and select which apply to them, regardless of whether they currently cycle or not. Respondents could select more than one barrier from the list. The most common barriers cited for people not cycling more were "No interest in cycling" (28%) and "Road safety concerns" (24%). These was followed by "Too much traffic/ traffic too fast" (16%) and the weather (15%).

The most common encouragements identified related to safer roads (28%), safe cycle lanes (21%) and segregated cycle paths (19%).

This lack of infrastructure for active modes acts as a deterrent for sustainable travel. Therefore, it has been identified there is a need for intervention to provide high quality infrastructure to encourage people to travel sustainably and in turn, reduce the number of single occupancy car trips. To be able to reduce congestion, interventions and incentives need to be implemented to provide people with better and greater choice of how they travel. To give an example of this, cycle routes have recently been implemented along the A555 between High Lane and Manchester Airport and Wilmslow/Oxford Road between Didsbury and Manchester City Centre. Both have proven popular and seen increasing number of users over their lifespan so far. It would be anticipated that a cycle route along the nearby A34 would reap the same benefits.

2.0 Proposals

One of the aims of the proposals is to provide additional and enhanced infrastructure to support walking and cycling along the A34 corridor in Stockport between the Cheshire East and Manchester boundaries and to areas including Cheadle, Gatley, Cheadle Hulme, Heald Green and Bramhall. In addition, the scheme will provide measures to form improved higher standard walking and cycling routes through quieter roads, to act as an alternative to travel along known busier routes. This is facilitated by providing segregated pedestrian and cycle routes, shared routes, and traffic calmed routes to slow vehicular speeds and encourage on road cycling to create 'quiet' lanes. Furthermore, the provision or improvement of formal, safer crossing facilities at existing lines of severance should bolster connectivity via active travel modes and improve local accessibility to key local facilities, schools, and amenities. It is hoped that the improved infrastructure will encourage more use of these modes (including the transfer of some journeys which are currently made by car), which will in turn deliver economic, health, environmental and other societal benefits.

3.0 Existing and future user demand

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible to undertake robust counts for use in the appraisal of this scheme. However, existing user demand has therefore been based instead on the following method:

- Taken Census 2011 data, extracted from the Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT), which provides MSA (Middle Layer Super Output Areas) to MSA main mode of travel journey to work numbers. The data for the MSAs surrounding the proposed measures, and the MSA associated with A34 and neighbouring attractions, were analysed as an estimate of users who make regular journeys within and between these areas, and may therefore likely to use the scheme.
- Assumptions were applied estimating the proportion of those journeys which could travel on a route which would take advantage of the scheme measures;
- The data suggests the baseline cycling mode share in the areas along the A34 corridor is around 2% with the PCT model providing a Government target of increasing this to 6% mode share using intervention (enhanced infrastructure);

- For cycling, PCT data includes a Government Target scenario for each MSOA pair. This aligns to bicycle commuter numbers doubling as per the proposed target set out in the DfT's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy;
- The methodology applied to estimate existing user demand was replicated for the future demand, based on the Government Target scenario values;
- The areas have been analysed and the data shows providing interventions such as the schemes outlined in the Area Committee report, there is likely to be an increase in cycling usage of between 170% and 215%;
- For walking, journeys are already more prevalent, the Census data suggesting local travel mode share ranges between 6% and 48%. Therefore, a smaller increase in activity is anticipated;
- It is worth noting that this figure could increase given development proposed along the A34 corridor, including Garden Village Handforth and Griffin Farm (Seashell Trust) developments.

Examples – A6MARR – Cycle Counts (Baseline and Post Year Opening)

- A key component of the A6MARR scheme was the provision of the cycle/pedestrian route along the scheme and the existing A555, and complementary measures that have been proposed to make efficient use of the road space that will be released when traffic is removed from existing roads. Baseline pedestrian and cycling data was collected across the study area, in the vicinity of the scheme and on approaches to the scheme.
- Surveys were undertaken on three days, a Saturday, Sunday and a weekday to provide an indication of a typical day between 07:00 – 21:00 in 2014 and following the opening of the A6MARR, the same surveys were undertaken 1 year post opening of the road (2019).
- The table below shows that the %difference in cycling varies significantly, ranging between 15% and nearly 400%. The figures vary depending on the infrastructure and interventions provided within the scheme and the attraction for cyclists to use the new route along the A6MARR by including the provision of crossing points and shared use facilities.

Cycle Counts

Location	Baseline (2014)	Following the scheme (2019)	% Difference
A - A6 Buxton Road, Btwn Threaphurst Lane & Middlewood Road	245	450	84%
B – Toucan crossing on the A6 Buxton Rd in Hazel Grove	16	79	394%
C - A6 London Road, Btwn Lever Street & Hatherlow Lane, Hazel Grove	211	294	39%
D – A523 Macclesfield Road	164	243	48%
E - A523 Macclesfield Road	342	394	15%
F - Footpath 3 at the end of Mill Hill Hollow	1	4	300%
G - Footpath 31 at Woodford Road	0	4	400%