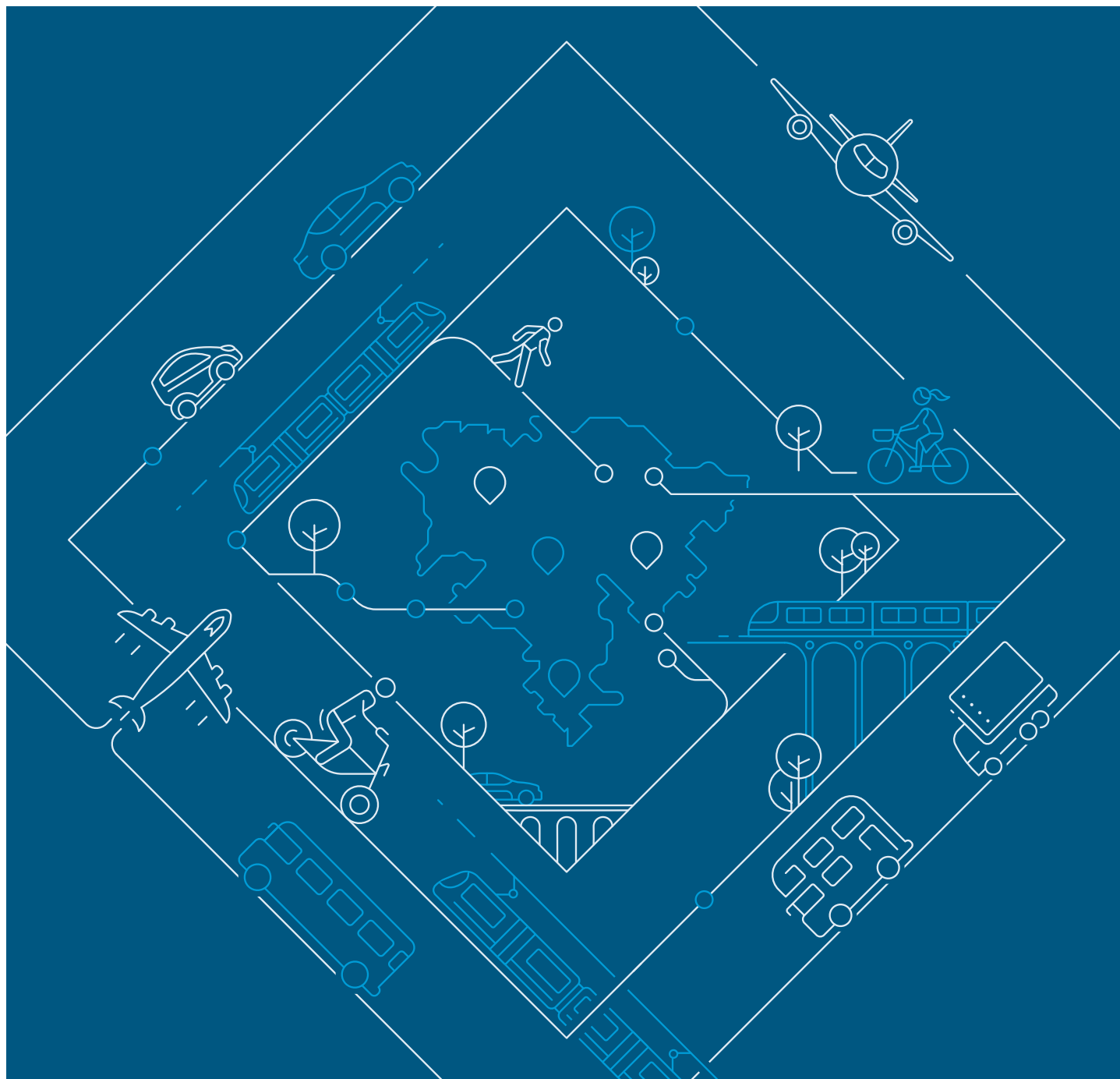


South East Manchester Multi-Modal Strategy

Key Messages - Final Version

June 2019





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Background

The South East Manchester Multi-Modal (SEMMM) Strategy was approved in 2001, outlining a 20-year plan of the transport needs for this area. Delivery of the Strategy progressed over the following years, and many of the measures which the Strategy endorsed are now in place or nearing completion.

The need to update the Strategy comes from the transformational change taking place across this part of the North West region. Transport is key to economic prosperity and updating the Strategy will provide the framework for Cheshire East and Stockport Councils to deliver improved facilities to assist people moving about for the next 20 years.

The continued growth and development of northern cities is anchored by the increased prominence of Greater Manchester as a national focal point and global hub. Manchester Airport is central to this, and the whole of the south east Manchester area has the potential to support wider growth in the region.

The Strategy area (see Figure 1) is one of great diversity. It includes the south eastern extents of Greater Manchester's urban area, and the rural fringe of North Cheshire. Within the area are contrasting levels of urbanisation, and demographic characteristics.

Stockport town centre is established as one of Greater Manchester's major centres, and lies in the heart of the Strategy area, whilst Macclesfield is Cheshire East's second largest settlement and forms the southern tip of the Strategy area. To the immediate west of the area lies Manchester Airport, the North West's main global gateway and the third busiest passenger Airport in the UK.



Some of the schemes delivered through the Original SEMMM Strategy



ALDERLEY EDGE BYPASS

Opened in 2010 providing congestion relief to the town centre.



POYNTON RELIEF ROAD

Has secured planning approval and is planned to be open by 2021.



A6 TO MANCHESTER AIRPORT RELIEF ROAD (A6MARR)

Scheme opened to traffic in October 2018 including a new segregated cycling and walking route along its length.



A6 QUALITY BUS CORRIDOR (QBC)

The SEMMM Strategy supported the introduction of the A6 QBC between Manchester and Hazel Grove. This has been in operation since the early 2000s.



SKYLINE BUS PRIORITY

A series of bus priority measures, at locations associated with the branded bus services linking Gatley, Cheadle, Cheadle Hulme, Hale, Altrincham, Sale and Wythenshawe to the Airport.

Much of the area is well connected to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) in the form of the M60 and M56, whilst larger settlements have good rail connectivity via the West Coast Mainline (accessed from Stockport, Wilmslow and Macclesfield).

Strategic assets include Manchester Airport, the Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise Zone, major parkland employment locations for international businesses, and the proximity of Manchester city centre and world-class academic institutions. The phased introduction of High Speed 2 rail will also present an exciting opportunity for better pan-regional connectivity.

Despite its growing strategic role, the area suffers from a number of transport issues. These include highway congestion which impacts many corridors, constrained rail capacity and some poor public transport connections, including limited access to Manchester Airport from many parts of the Strategy area.

The refresh of the SEMMM Strategy has considered these problems, with a particular focus on the main movement corridors and east-west orbital connectivity. The Strategy presents a Vision, Objectives and interventions recommended to create a better multi-modal transport system for the future.

Our Vision for the Refreshed SEMMM Strategy is:

“A transport network that creates conditions for sustainable economic growth, improving quality of life and protection of the environment.”

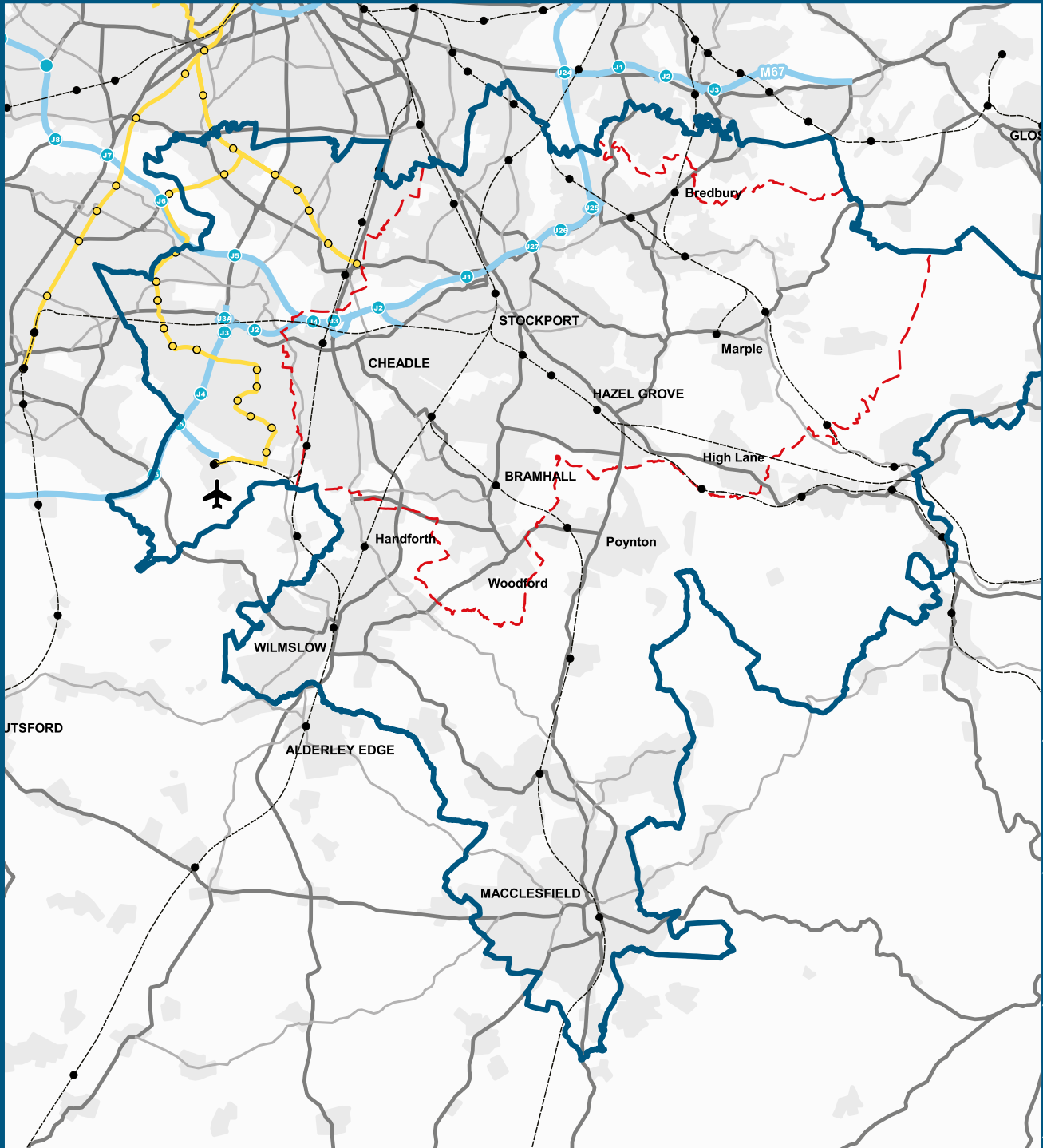


Figure 1 - The South East Manchester Multi-Modal (SEMMM) Strategy area

Context

The refresh of the SEMMM Strategy takes place against a backdrop of increasing investment in transportation infrastructure and challenging growth plans. There are a multitude of different plans, policies and programmes which have informed the Strategy Refresh and will continue to play a role alongside its implementation.

Ambitious development growth plans are set out in the adopted Cheshire East Local Plan, and the January 2019 revised draft of Greater Manchester's new Spatial Framework, whilst growth at Manchester Airport and neighbouring authority areas (such as High Peak and Derbyshire) will also inevitably impact on travel demands within the Strategy area.

Local transport policy is provided by the Greater Manchester 2040 Transport Strategy (published Feb 2017), and the update to the Cheshire East Local Transport Plan which has been developed alongside this SEMMM Strategy refresh and is also due to be published during Summer 2019.

Transport for the North (TfN) has also developed their Strategic Transport Plan and associated Corridors of Opportunity, which seeks to deliver transformational inter-city and pan-Northern connectivity including improved access to Manchester Airport.

The refreshed SEMMM Strategy will support the area's strategic role and improve integration and opportunities with Greater Manchester and the wider North of England. It will also provide important leverage in respect of funding and delivery priorities.

SOME OF THE PLANS, POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES WHICH EXIST ALONGSIDE THIS SEMMM STRATEGY REFRESH



STOCKPORT, CHESHIRE EAST, HIGH PEAK AND THE PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK LOCAL PLANS	ONE PUBLIC ESTATE (OPE) PROGRAMME	CHESHIRE EAST LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 2019 UPDATE
MANCHESTER AIRPORT GROWTH	NORTHERN POWERHOUSE INDEPENDENT ECONOMIC REVIEW	CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN
TFN STRATEGIC TRANSPORT PLAN AND STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT CORRIDORS	GREATER MANCHESTER STRATEGY	DERBYSHIRE LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN
'MADE TO MOVE' AND 'THE BEE NETWORK': WALKING AND CYCLING IN GREATER MANCHESTER	STOCKPORT COUNCIL PLAN	GREATER MANCHESTER SPATIAL FRAMEWORK
GREATER MANCHESTER 2040 TRANSPORT STRATEGY	CHESHIRE & WARRINGTON LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIC ECONOMIC PLAN	DFT - TRANSPORT INVESTMENT STRATEGY
GREATER MANCHESTER DEVOLUTION: BUS REFORM & MANAGED RAIL STATIONS	HIGH SPEED 2	HIGHWAYS ENGLAND AND NETWORK RAIL PROGRAMMES
GREATER MANCHESTER CLEAN AIR PLAN	GREATER MANCHESTER CONGESTION DEAL	GREATER MANCHESTER 'STREETS FOR ALL' STRATEGY

Vision

“A transport network that creates conditions for **sustainable economic growth, improving quality of life and protection of the environment.**”

At a time when there is so much competition to attract investment, we want the south east Manchester transport system to be an enabler for future growth, enhancing the perception of the area as an excellent place to live, invest and visit.

We want our transport system to be based around a public transport system which is efficient, seamless, intelligent and easy to use, as enjoyed by leading world cities.

We also want our urban areas to offer safe, attractive and clean environments, which promote and encourage more active and healthy lifestyles, more walking and more cycling, but also provide excellent links to surrounding employment and services. We must also take action to reduce the harmful pollution caused by motor vehicles which is damaging to residents' health as well as the economy.

These challenges require improvements in the quality and coverage of public transport options, and the provision of more attractive walking and cycling routes to make them more viable choices.

We also need to tackle congestion where it causes the biggest problems. Whilst we can help do this by encouraging more people to travel using other modes, we will also need to add capacity to the road network to help address the worst pinch points.

Improving traffic flow is also critical to key sectors of the region's economy, such as manufacturing and logistics, which rely on road links and motorway access and are impacted by congestion. Investing in highway improvements will help to improve productivity within these industries and attract further investment, as well as making journeys easier for bus passengers and car drivers.

To realise this vision, 3 Strategy Objectives are defined, which closely align with the Transport for Greater Manchester's (TfGM) 2040 Strategy and Cheshire East's draft Local Transport Plan.

3 Strategy Objectives:

SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE
ECONOMIC GROWTH
AND PROMOTE URBAN
REGENERATION



IMPROVE QUALITY
OF LIFE, SAFETY,
HEALTH AND EQUALITY
OF OPPORTUNITIES



CONTRIBUTE TO
PROTECTING THE
BUILT AND NATURAL
ENVIRONMENTS



Strategic priorities

The Strategy update has been guided by a transport evidence base which has informed the development of an interventions package. The package aligns to our Vision and Strategy Objectives.

The Strategic Priorities are part of a wide-ranging package of recommended interventions for all modes of travel. The package addresses the positive changes necessary to deliver the progressive and resilient transport system that is required to support continued growth and prosperity in the Strategy area.



Eight Strategic Priorities are identified for the Strategy area:



Multi-modal **improvements** throughout the A34 corridor



New Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network



Improving the major transport interchanges - Stockport Town Centre, Manchester Airport, and Macclesfield Town Centre



Enhancing the rail network across the area



Continued **development** of the cycling and walking networks



Introducing Tram-Train, better **connecting** Stockport to neighbouring areas



Multi-modal **improvements** to support the A6 corridor



Ensure close **integration** of transport with land use planning

Principal intervention areas

The A34 corridor

Demand for travel in the A34 corridor is a key challenge for the Strategy area, and the existing highways problems are emphasised in the Greater Manchester Congestion Deal.

Taking a multi-modal approach to improving transport in the corridor is identified as a Strategic Priority for the updated SEMMM Strategy (SP1). Recommended interventions include a **new rail station at Cheadle**, **new park and ride rail station at Stanley Green**, a **new Bus Rapid Transit service** linking Wilmslow and Handforth to Metrolink services at East Didsbury, new offline **parallel walking and cycling routes**, as well as a series of **online highway improvements**, including a major remodelling of **Gatley Crossroads**.

These measures would be facilitated by the construction of new offline highways to take traffic off the existing A6, in the form of the **A6 to M60 Relief Road**, with a further single carriageway link recommended to connect Torkington and Newtown, as a **High Lane-Disley Relief Road**. These new routes would deliver additional highway capacity, and re-assign strategic vehicle trips away from existing congestion pinch-points through town and village centres. They also offer opportunities for new walking and cycling infrastructure to be developed as parallel provisions within the same corridor. It is recognised that there are environmental issues associated with road building and detailed consideration of these impacts needs to be undertaken through the design and business case processes.

The A6 corridor

The A6 is the main link between Manchester, Stockport and High Peak, and suffers congestion, including the sections through High Lane, Disley, Hazel Grove and Stockport town centre.

A multi-modal package for the A6 corridor is recommended as a Strategic Priority for the updated SEMMM Strategy (SP7). This includes **new rail stations at High Lane and Chapel-en-le-Frith**, **rail electrification works** and the **extension of Metrolink from East Didsbury to Hazel Grove** through tram-train services (also enabling services to operate between **East Didsbury/Hazel Grove and Stockport town centre**), and additional measures to improve public realm and support walking and cycling in Hazel Grove, High Lane, Disley and Stockport town centre.

The A523 corridor

The A523 corridor suffers from existing safety and congestion issues. The opening of **Poynton Relief Road** will provide relief to the section through Poynton village but will increase traffic movements further to the south. As a part of the planning for that scheme, supporting measures will be developed to help lessen the impact, which could include **restricting HGV movements** through Poynton village.

The Strategy Refresh considers that issues on the A523 south of Poynton Relief Road are most appropriately resolved through **local capacity and safety improvements**. We recognise strong local support for measures to reduce the environmental impact of traffic on the A523.

We do not see a strong case for an A523 bypass, but consider it crucial that appropriate localised improvements are progressed.

We also endorse proposals set out in the Cheshire East A523 Corridor Study and Macclesfield Movement Strategy which seek to enhance the corridor for pedestrians, cyclists, and bus passengers, with a recommendation for an **improved cycle route** between Poynton and Prestbury.

Catering for Orbital Travel Demands

Orbital travel demands are largely reliant on the road network at present. Whilst the opening of the **A6 Manchester Airport Relief Road** has improved connectivity for cars, this Strategy refresh focuses on how we can also transform orbital public transport options.

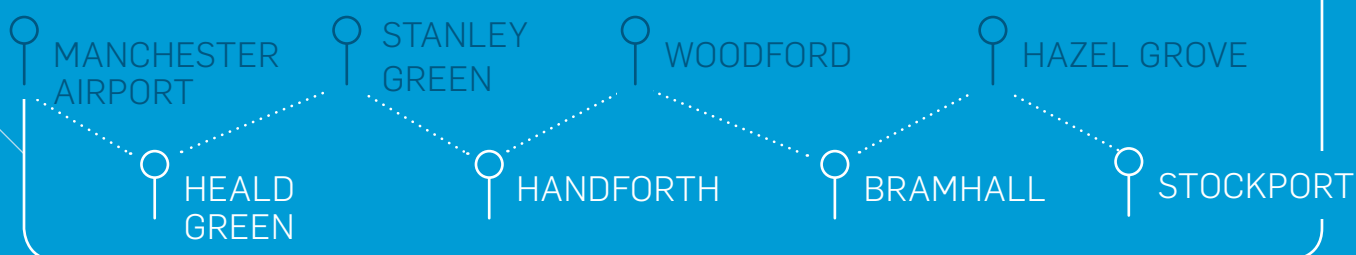
Proposals for a new **Bus Rapid Transit** network operating between Stockport and Manchester Airport are under development by Stockport Council, Cheshire East Council and TfGM, and are identified as a Strategic Priority (SP2).

A new **Tram-Train** connection is also recommended between Stockport and Altrincham, through conversion of the existing rail link, with a link to also run services onto Manchester Airport. **New stations** for rail and/or tram-services could potentially be delivered at Cheadle, Adswold (as well as Timperley and Baguley) for better local accessibility for these communities. This would provide genuine modal choice for east-west movement. East of Stockport town centre, a new tram-train link to Marple would provide better connectivity and mode choice to serve those parts of the Stockport district.

It will also be critical to ensure that existing **bus connections** (which provide the majority of east-west connections currently) are sustained and strengthened wherever possible, although it is recognised that there are short term challenges facing the bus network with some supported services being withdrawn due to a lack of funding.

The Strategy also recommends **widening of the A555** in the longer term to three lanes in each direction between Woodford and Handforth, with the additional capacity to be considered for use as a high occupancy vehicle and/or public transport lane.

THE PROPOSED BRT SCHEME, IDENTIFIED AS A STRATEGIC PRIORITY, WOULD PROVIDE
NEW EAST-WEST LINKS TO CONNECT:



Encouraging Sustainable Travel

Key sustainable transport measures include the aforementioned **Bus Rapid Transit and Metrolink/ Tram-Train** services to better cater for existing and future travel demands. We also recognise that high quality interchanges are critical and recommend upgrades at **Stockport, Manchester Airport and Macclesfield rail stations** as well as the Stockport Bus Interchange (where the planned scheme has secured planning permission). We are also supporting TfGM to develop Rail Corridor Studies which will determine future upgrade requirements for the rail network. This work has already identified investment is needed to upgrade railway infrastructure to the south of Stockport rail station and through the station itself, to enable additional trains to run.

For active travel, we recognise the need for enhancement of walking and cycling facilities, in line with the Greater Manchester Walking and Cycling Commissioner's '**Made to Move**' report and Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plans. The Bee Network is Greater Manchester's long term vision for a comprehensive walking and cycling network, and proposals that will be set within that plan shall include routes throughout Stockport and better linkages with settlements in North Cheshire.

Selected active travel proposals from the Strategy interventions include a **cycle route parallel to the A523**, improved canal path routes, a fully signed **Wilmslow to Manchester Airport cycleway** and new **parallel quiet routes along the A34 and A6**. Various routes which provide **better access into Stockport town centre** from surrounding communities such as Brinnington should also be brought forward.

It is also recommended that Stockport Council should continue to work with TfGM regarding opportunities brought about by **Rail Station Devolution and Bus Reform**, whilst ticketing reforms are also recommended to reduce the cost and impact of **cross-boundary travel**. The Strategy also recommends more local initiatives aimed at improving road safety, access to vehicle and cycle hire schemes, and provision of electric bicycle and vehicle charging points.

Enhancing Centres of Activity

Stockport town centre is one of Greater Manchester's leading centres and is key to the economic prosperity of the Strategy area. It is already receiving significant investment through exciting projects such as Stockport Exchange, Redrock, Stockport Interchange and the Town Centre Access Plan improvements. The investment potential of the town centre will be further enhanced by the creation of the first Mayoral Development Corporation in Greater Manchester, which aims to help unlock development sites and accelerate redevelopment proposals including the Town Centre West area close to Stockport Rail Station.

The Strategy Refresh identifies measures which can further enhance the town centre, including an improved connection between **redeveloped bus and rail stations**, and a **public realm masterplan for the A6**, through Streets for All, as well as improved links across the M60 which addresses the severance barrier it can create for pedestrians and cyclists.

It is strongly recognised that the Strategy area is diverse, and relies on its many local and district centres as much as the more significant town centres. These are the hubs of local communities, providing key local services and facilities.

Further work is recommended to review transport provision and public realm in local and district centres as part of a wider review of their function and environment. Bespoke interventions should be developed with local stakeholders, based around the principles of Streets for All and seeking a finer balance between 'movement and place' functions.

Addressing Air Quality Issues

Air pollution is a significant issue, and the refreshed SEMMM Strategy recommends measures to ease problems for the worst locations, such as **Air Quality Management Areas** in Disley, on the A34 in Gatley, and locations within Macclesfield.

The SEMMM Strategy and partner authorities must align with wider activities to address air quality issues. TfGM are leading the development of a Greater Manchester-wide Clean Air Plan, and the SEMMM Strategy supports the overall principles to reduce traffic volumes and encourage more public transport and active travel. In Cheshire East, the extent of air quality concerns is not as severe, although there are localised problems where high levels of pollutants associated with heavily-trafficked roads exist. Cheshire East adopted a new Clean Air Strategy and Action Plans in December 2018 to respond to these challenges including issues in Disley.

In developing the interventions, it is identified that an **A6 to M60 Relief Road**, and a **High Lane-Disley Relief Road**, could both offer significant congestion relief, and reduce flows in areas which are sensitive to air quality issues on both the A6 and A34. However, it is acknowledged that new road building does not come without environmental issues and further work is required to develop the business case for the schemes.

"The SEMMM Strategy update has been deliberately shaped as a multi-modal approach with an emphasis on sustainable transport, and the recommendation to deliver new highway infrastructure is just one element of the full plan. It is crucial that it is read as a single co-ordinated plan, where the highway capacity upgrades complement and support the substantial focus we are placing on investing in more sustainable and environmentally-friendly travel modes."

STOCKPORT TOWN CENTRE IS ONE OF
GREATER MANCHESTER'S LEADING
CENTRES ALREADY RECEIVING

**A £1BN PROGRAMME
OF INVESTMENT**



Early priorities

The Strategy includes a recommended package of transport interventions and policy implications.

Whilst the plan looks ahead to 2040, it is important to recognise that problems exist today and some actions will bring immediate benefits.

Recommended short term priorities and associated interventions identified overleaf seek to:

- » Improve access to public transport services
- » Promote walking and cycling both for local and longer distance journeys
- » Support the principles of the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan
- » Address highway pinch-points where minor or medium-scale opportunities present themselves

The Strategy also sets out some of the activities which should be undertaken by Stockport and Cheshire East Councils in the early months and years to support the planning and delivery of longer-term measures. These include necessary business case planning for major road scheme proposals (including A6 to M6 Relief Road and an A34/ Gatley Road junction major enhancement scheme), partnership working with Network Rail and TfGM on rail corridor investment plans and new rail station proposals, and the advancement of tram-train proposal business case development.



The funding and delivery of key interventions will require detailed investigations of delivery constraints, evaluation of value for money, and a funding plan.



Improving Opportunities for Rail Travel

- » Increasing parking/ park & ride facilities at selected stations
- » Reviewing the business case for new rail stations including Cheadle and High Lane
- » Implementation of Stockport Rail Station Masterplan
- » Reinstatement of passenger services from Reddish South to Manchester Victoria
- » Ongoing input to TfGM Rail Corridor Studies and support to take forward opportunities that are identified, including the need to invest in improved infrastructure to the south of Stockport rail station, at Slade Lane Junction in Levenshulme, and within Stockport station itself, to increase capacity



Improving Opportunities for Bus Travel

- » Developing the business case for a new Bus Rapid Transit network
- » Delivering Stockport Interchange as an upgraded high-quality bus terminus in the town centre, with a new link to an improved Stockport rail station
- » Delivering improvements to bus stops and facilities
- » Additional promotion of Hazel Grove bus Park & Ride site
- » Explore opportunities for innovative public transport offers



Promoting Walking and Cycling

- » Completion of a high-quality, signed Wilmslow - Airport cycleway
- » Exploration of opportunities to improve public realm, walking and cycling facilities along the A6 corridor, including in Stockport Town Centre
- » Delivery of a Heaton's Link, connecting the Fallowfield Loop and the TransPennine Trail
- » Improvements to routes across the M60 to reduce severance
- » Improvements to A34 parallel cycle routes
- » Improved walking and cycling connections in Wilmslow and improved cycle parking at Macclesfield Rail Station



Targeted Highway Improvements

- » A34 corridor improvements, including junction upgrades to existing pinch points at Gatley Crossroads, Stanley Green and Coppice Way
- » A523 Corridor safety review and local highway improvements including a local Safety Scheme at Well Lane, Butley Town
- » Bredbury Access Improvements including junction improvements and mitigation of bridge height clearance issues
- » Delivery of the Macclesfield Movement Strategy



Addressing Air Quality Issues

- » Continued close engagement with TfGM and partners to develop the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan
- » Delivery of proposals set out in the Cheshire East Clean Air Strategy and Action Plans
- » Expansion of the existing network of electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- » Promotional campaigns for sustainable travel modes

Consultation to inform the Strategy Refresh

Initial public consultation was undertaken through an Issues and Options paper, with the feedback used to inform the content of a complete Draft Strategy.

Public consultation on a Draft Strategy document was undertaken during an 8 week period during Summer 2018. The consultation collected feedback on the 10 key actions, as well as the Strategic Priorities (SP) and Early Priorities (EP). A questionnaire was developed to collect feedback, with 599 completed submissions returned. Further submissions were also received from a range of stakeholders.

A report covering the responses to the consultation is published on the Strategy website - www.semmms.info.



Next steps and delivery strategy

This document sets out the strategic direction for the planning of future transport infrastructure across the SEMMM Strategy area. Stockport Council and Cheshire East Council will work with partners to bring forward the recommended components of the strategy in a timely manner, as opportunities for funding arise.

The funding and delivery of key interventions will require extensive further investigations of delivery constraints, evaluation of value for money, and a funding plan. Nevertheless, as per the original 2001 Strategy, the updated Strategy provides recommended priorities for future development, and an overall package of measures intended to meet the wider Strategy Vision and Objectives. The package will only achieve its full intended impact if delivered in its entirety.

Whilst there will be a wide-range of potential delivery partners, close working with TfGM will be particularly important as they develop their future policy and delivery plans alongside the Greater Manchester Mayor's transport initiatives. It should be noted there is close alignment between this Strategy, and the schemes promoted by TfGM in their 2020-2025 Delivery Plan.

As well as delivering the identified early priorities, other ongoing activities are recommended to facilitate longer-term planning and enable an agile and flexible delivery strategy as funding opportunities arise.

Recommended activities include:

- » Implementation of Greater Manchester Congestion Deal and Bee Network proposals in the Strategy area.
- » Further development of plans and business case material for the Bus Rapid Transit and Tram-Train conversion proposals in conjunction with TfGM.
- » Commencement of early planning and business case preparation for A34 interventions, including the major capacity enhancement scheme at Gatley crossroads.
- » Ongoing analysis of the potential case for the new rail station locations identified.
- » Continued development of the business case for the A6 to M60 Relief Road scheme, including further environmental and technical appraisals, and public consultation.
- » Commencement of planning for a High Lane-Disley Relief Road including early planning of a potential alignment and assessment of deliverability challenges.
- » Commencement of planning and business case preparation for new cycleways to better connect Prestbury and Poynton, and Disley and Poynton.
- » Ongoing engagement with Transport for the North, TfGM and Rail North to advance proposals on Smart Ticketing and associated impacts for cross-boundary ticketing.



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