

Highways and Transport Committee

Agenda

Date:	Thursday, 3rd April, 2025
Time:	10.00 am
Venue:	The Capesthorpe Room - Town Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

The agenda is divided into 2 parts. Part 1 is taken in the presence of the public and press. Part 2 items will be considered in the absence of the public and press for the reasons indicated on the agenda and at the foot of each report.

It should be noted that Part 1 items of Cheshire East Council decision making meetings are audio recorded, and the recordings will be uploaded to the Council's website.

PART 1 – MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED WITH THE PUBLIC AND PRESS PRESENT

1. **Apologies for Absence**

To note any apologies for absence from Members.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To provide an opportunity for Members and Officers to declare any disclosable pecuniary interests, other registerable interests, and non-registerable interests in any item on the agenda.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** (Pages 5 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 23 January 2025.

For requests for further information

Contact: Karen Shuker

Tel: 01270 686459

E-Mail: karen.shuker@cheshireeast.gov.uk with any apologies

4. **Public Speaking/Open Session**

In accordance with paragraph 2.24 of the Council's Committee Procedure Rules and Appendix on Public Speaking, set out in the [Constitution](#), a total period of 15 minutes is allocated for members of the public to put questions to the committee on any matter relating to this agenda. Each member of the public will be allowed up to two minutes each to speak, and the Chair will have discretion to vary this where they consider it appropriate.

Members of the public wishing to speak are required to provide notice of this at least three clear working days' in advance of the meeting.

Petitions - To receive any petitions which have met the criteria - [Petitions Scheme Criteria](#), and falls within the remit of the Committee. Petition organisers will be allowed up to three minutes to speak.

5. **Service Budgets 2025/26 (Highways & Transport Committee) (Pages 15 - 56)**

To consider the report which sets out the allocation of approved budgets for 2025-26.

6. **Greater Bollin Trail (Pages 57 - 210)**

To consider a report on the work undertaken to develop a walking, wheeling, and cycling route within the north of the Borough known as the Greater Bollin Trail.

7. **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 - Part III, S53 - DMMO application CN-7-24: to delete FP19 in the Parish of Audlem (Pages 211 - 244)**

To consider an application to delete public footpath 19 in the Parish of Audlem.

8. **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 - Part III, S53 - DMMO application MA-5-240 Mottram St. Andrew FP26 upgrade (Pages 245 - 268)**

To consider an application to amend the Definitive Map and Statement to upgrade existing public footpath no:26 to a Restricted Byway along Smithy Lane in the parish of Mottram St Andrew.

9. **Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 - Part III, S53 - DMMO application MA-5-244 to add a bridleway and upgrade to bridleway in Parish Disley (Pages 269 - 314)**

To consider an application to modify the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way to add a Bridleway between Buxton Old Road and Footpath 39, Parish of Disley, and upgrade (in part) to Bridleway Public Footpath 39.

10. **Work Programme (Pages 315 - 320)**

To consider the Work Programme and determine any required amendments.

THERE ARE NO PART 2 ITEMS

Membership: Councillors L Braithwaite, C Browne, A Burton, R Chadwick, P Coan, A Coiley, L Crane (Vice-Chair), H Faddes, A Gage, M Goldsmith (Chair), C Hilliard, M Muldoon, M Sewart, S Adams and G Marshall

This page is intentionally left blank

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the **Highways and Transport Committee**
held on Thursday, 23rd January, 2025 in the The Capesthorne Room - Town
Hall, Macclesfield SK10 1EA

PRESENT

Councillor M Goldsmith (Chair)
Councillor L Crane (Vice-Chair)

Councillors L Braithwaite, C Browne, A Burton, A Coiley, H Faddes, A Gage,
M Muldoon, M Sewart, D Brown, L Wardlaw and G Marshall

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Genni Butler, Countryside Access Development Manager
Dom De Bechi, Head of Highways
Mark Greenhough, Public Path Orders Officer
Paul Griffiths, Head of Strategic Infrastructure
Richard Hibbert, Head of Strategic Transport & Parking Services
Tom Moody, Director of Transport, and Infrastructure
Nicola Lewis-Smith, Public Rights of Way Manager
Dominic Proud, Contract Director, Cheshire East Highways
Steve Reading, Principal Accountant
Mandy Withington, Solicitor
Karen Shuker, Democratic Services Officer

47 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R Chadwick, P
Coan and C Hilliard.

Councillors D Brown, G Marshall, and L Wardlaw attended as substitutes.

48 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

During consideration of item 11 - PROW - Town & Country Planning Act
1990 Section 257 - Proposed diversion of public footpath no 12 (Part) in
the Parish of Nether Alderley in the interests of openness and
transparency Councillor C Browne declared that the landowner and the
applicant were known to him.

49 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**RESOLVED:**

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2024 be agreed as
a correct record.

50 PUBLIC SPEAKING/OPEN SESSION

Mr M Bunte, representing Cycling UK addressed the Committee in relation to agenda item 7 – Local Transport Plan - Vision and Objectives. Mr Bunte referenced Appendix 2, the Evidence Base Report which he stated frequently mentioned that cycling infrastructure should be of ‘high quality’. However, Mr Bunte stated that almost always the opposite was the case and that the problem was the local authority’s widespread use of shared footways, in urban areas which were not safe. Mr Bunte stated that three quarters of cyclist collisions happened at or near junctions which was where shared footways stop.

Mr Bunte felt that shared footways were being installed without meaningful consultation or reference to documents like the Sandbach Town Cycling Plan. Mr Bunte referenced the current proposals which were being developed for four locations in Sandbach and stated that they were almost always built sub-standard.

Mr Bunte shared his concerns around the challenges of using shared footways and highlighted the need for better cycling infrastructure and requested that the Local Transport Plan highlighted the problems with shared footways in urban areas and focused instead on road-cycling, supported by speed limits and the ‘close pass’ initiative.

The Chair thanked Mr Bunte for attending and noted that the comments made would be considered when developing the new Local Transport Plan.

51 THIRD FINANCIAL REVIEW 24/25

The Committee considered a report which provided the forecast outturn for the financial year 2024/25 based on income, expenditure, and known commitments as at the end of October 2024. It also identified actions that were being taken to address adverse variances to urgently address the Council’s financial sustainability.

Although the underspend for Highways and Transport had worsened slightly since FR2 this was still a positive position with an underspend of £0.5m being forecast and across the Place directorate an underspend of £4.9m was being forecast.

RESOLVED:

1. Review the factors leading to a forecast adverse Net Revenue financial pressure of £18.3m against a revised budget of £390.5m (4.7%). To scrutinise the contents of Annex 1, Section 2 and review progress on the delivery of the MTFs approved budget policy change items, the RAG ratings and latest forecasts, and to understand the actions to be taken to address any adverse variances from the approved budget.

2. Review the in-year forecast capital spending of £144.7m against an approved MTFS budget of £215.8m, due to slippage that has been re-profiled into future years.
3. Note the available reserves position as per Annex 1, Section 5.
4. Note the Capital Virements above £500,000 up to and including £5,000,000 as per Annex 1, Section 4, Table 4 will be approved in accordance with the Council's Constitution

52 MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY CONSULTATION 2025/26 - 2028/29 PROVISIONAL SETTLEMENT UPDATE (HIGHWAYS & TRANSPORT COMMITTEE)

The Committee considered a report which sought feedback on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2025/26 – 2028/29 for the Corporate Policy Committee to consider at its meeting on 6 February 2025 ahead of the final approval of the 2025/26 budget at full Council on 26 February 2025.

Following a number of suggestions which had been raised previously in respect of selling advertising space in car parks, FlexiLink vehicles, parking tickets and household waste bins and a suggestion to revisit these, officers reported that a work stream had been identified through the transformation programme which included exploring advertising opportunities across different asset types. This would be followed by the launch of soft market testing phase to gauge interest and feasibility, and the project would be routed the transformation work stream.

Officers informed members that as ANSA was being brought in-house this would provide an opportunity to look at commercial elements such as advertising on roundabouts and exploring a different delivery model.

RESOLVED: (By Majority)

a) Recommend to the Corporate Policy Committee, for their meeting on 6 February 2025, all proposals within Appendix A, as related to the Committee's responsibilities, for inclusion on the Council's budget for 2025/26.

(b) Identify any further budget change proposals, as related to the Committee's responsibilities, that could assist Corporate Policy Committee in presenting an overall balanced budget to Council for 2025/26.

(c) Note the capital growth items listed in Appendix B and the revenue implications noted in paragraph 23. These will be reviewed by the Capital Review Programme Board in January before a final list is brought to Corporate Policy committee in February.

(d) Note the contents of Appendix C – Provisional Local Government Settlement 2025/26 (Finance Sub Committee).

(e) Note the contents of Appendix D – Council Tax benchmarking and scenarios (Finance Sub Committee) and consider what the impact of any requests for a change of Council Tax policy would be

53 LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN - VISION AND OBJECTIVES

Councillor A Burton arrived during consideration of this item.

The Committee considered a report which provided an update on the progress of a new LTP (Local Transport Plan) for Cheshire East, which would provide a policy framework for transport across the borough and guide investment in the local transport network.

The report outlined the work undertaken to date and sought approval to undertake public consultation on the draft LTP vision and objectives included in Appendix 1 of the report.

The report also sought to establish a Member Reference Group to support the preparation of the LTP.

The Committee were informed that work over 2024 had focused on defining problems and objectives, including production of a draft evidence base and draft vision and objectives for the next LTP.

An 8-week consultation process in respect of priorities and strategic objectives would commence following the February half-term with the outcomes coming back to committee. Officers were mindful of engaging residents and stakeholders to inform key strategic choices but emphasised that it would not be a 'one size fits all' approach and the plan had to be capable of striking a balance between job creation and homes and the environmental impact.

Officers acknowledged that it had been a struggle to engage with the younger demographic previously so all options for consultation would be considered such as engaging with the Youth Council, colleges and creating a video for social media.

It was acknowledged that there would be challenges in encouraging those people who did not currently use public transport to do so, and officers welcomed engagement with local town and parish councils and community led groups to use their knowledge and experience to help develop the LTP.

The Committee welcomed the proposal to establish a Member Reference Group to support the preparation of the Local Transport Plan. A friendly amendment was supported by the Committee that the proposed Member Reference Group membership (Appendix 5) be expanded to include Councillor R Chadwick as a member of the Highways and Transport

Committee from a rural ward, and the Chair of the Children and Families Committee due to the connection with home to school transport.

Members welcomed the draft plan and thanked the team for the hard work that had gone into the plan so far.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Highways and Transport Committee

1. Note the updated Evidence Base for the next Local Transport Plan.
2. Approve the draft vision, aims and objectives set out at Appendix 1 as a basis for public consultation.
3. Approve the proposed approach to public consultation in line with the Consultation and Engagement Plan at Appendix 3 and Communications Plan at Appendix 4.
4. Delegate authority to the Director of Transport and Infrastructure to finalise the consultation material and undertake the public consultation.
5. Approve that a Member Reference Group is established to support the preparation of the Local Transport Plan with the proposed membership and Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 5 subject to the membership being extended to include Councillor R Chadwick as a member of the Highways and Transport Committee from a rural ward, and the Chair of the Children and Families Committee due to the connection with home to school transport.

54 **HIGHWAYS SERVICE CONTRACT IMPROVEMENT ACTION PLAN**

The Committee considered a report which outlined the progress to date following The Highway Service Contract Peer Review which was undertaken by Future Highway Research Group (FHRG) in Spring 2024.

A comprehensive, independent, and external assessment of the services in the scope of the Council's Highway Service Contract was undertaken. It also compared how the Council's services were rated against other Highway Authorities comprising FHRG's 40 members.

The Council intended to commission FHRG to undertake a further review in two to three years' time to measure progress.

Following the review an action plan had been developed which addressed the recommendations and the actions being taken.

Whilst officers acknowledged that it was a positive that FHRG had placed the Cheshire East Council 14th out of the 40 members they wanted to do better. To improve on this there would be more work conducted in respect of external benchmarking, better engagement with members to help

support them with effectively communicating with residents and a review of current services and adapting those to look at the wider resilience and effectiveness of the service provided.

Officers welcomed the suggestion of using artificial intelligence within the service and informed members that they were using it in some instances, but they were mindful that they needed to build a platform ready for supporting the broader use of the technology across other areas of the service.

Members welcomed the report and action plan and complimented the officers on providing good value for money and good collaborative working.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Highways and Transport Committee

1. Note the progress made with the implementation of the Improvement Action Plan to date.

2. Approve that the Director of Transport and Infrastructure continues to progress implementation of the Improvement Action Plan in Appendix 1.

3. Notes that progress with the plan will be monitored and managed through:

a. the Place Directorate Management Team; and

b. in conjunction with Cheshire East Highways through the Transportation and Infrastructure Partnership Board, with any significant issues reported to the committee.

4. Approve that the Director of Transport and Infrastructure commissions a further peer review before April 2028 to assess progress.

55 MIDDLEWICH EASTERN BYPASS - AUTHORITY TO ENTER INTO CONSTRUCTION CONTRACT

The Committee considered a report which sought approval for officers to enter into a contract with Balfour Beatty to build the Middlewich Eastern Bypass (MEB) but subject to receiving a positive decision by the Department of Transport (DfT) to award the Council grant funding of £46.78 million towards the cost of the scheme.

The possible impacts of any delay to the DfT grant decision on the potential start date and estimated costs of the scheme were highlighted to members along with the consequences of not receiving a positive decision.

Officers reported that they were doing all they could behind the scenes and publicly to make it clear to government the importance of a positive decision by February to allow for works to start on site immediately which would take advantage of summer working and environmental constraints.

In response to a question raised in respect of whether officers were confident that lessons had been learnt from the HS2 project and that they had carried out the maximum amount of preparation for this project officers reported that the revised business case had been shaped and improved following feedback from government and support from civil servants from the DfT. The business case had been submitted and was now just waiting for a decision.

RESOLVED: (by Majority)

That the Highways and Transport Committee

1. Note the previous financial and delivery decisions and delegations in previous reports.
2. Subject to DfT grant approval and that the construction target cost and other scheme cost estimates are in line with the budget and funding arrangements in the 2024/2025 Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and subsequent approved virements, delegate authority to the Director of Transport and Infrastructure to enter into Stage 2 of the construction contract under the SCAPE framework.
3. Delegate authority to the Director of Transport and Infrastructure, in consultation with the S151 Officer, to make all necessary arrangements prior to the DfT decision (for example including, but not limited to, expenditure on preparing the target cost and value engineering design work) to enable the scheme to start on site in Summer 2025. (The Contract Preparation Works)
4. Delegate authority to the Director of Transport and Infrastructure to bring forward appropriate elements of construction (The Early Site Works) into Stage 1 of the existing Scape Contract (This work to be contractually awarded only after a positive decision on the DfT grant award)
5. Note the possible impacts of a delay to a DfT Decision on the start date and estimated cost of the scheme.
6. If any delays or any other factors cause estimated scheme costs to rise above the current approved capital budget, authorise the Director of Transport and Infrastructure to:
 - a. request the Finance Sub Committee and Council make any necessary adjustments to the MTFS and

b. make any minor scope changes to the scheme which may arise as a result of a value engineering exercise to ensure the scheme is affordable.

7. Authorise the Director of Governance, Compliance and Monitoring Officer to take all the remaining steps necessary to obtain all rights required for any land necessary for the construction of the scheme.

The Committee adjourned for a short break. Councillors D Brown and G Marshall left the meeting and did not return.

56 PROW: PROPOSED PUBLIC PATH CREATION AGREEMENT IN THE PARISH OF WARDLE

The Committee considered a report which sought approval to enter into a Public Path Creation Agreement with the owner of land in order to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map and Statement in respect of the Parish of Wardle.

In response to a question asked in relation to whether mitigations would be put in place for the landowner whose land carried the public right of way officers reported that available mitigations were limited, but use of waymarking would be offered along with signage to encourage users to adhere to the public right of way.

The Committee considered the application and evidence as set out within the officer report.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Highways and Transport Committee

1. Decide that a Public Path Creation Agreement should be entered into under Section 25 of the Highways Act 1980 to add a Public Footpath to the Definitive Map and Statement in the Parish of Wardle, as illustrated between points A and B on Plan No. HA/156.

2. Decide that public notice of the making of the Agreement should be given.

57 PROW - TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 SECTION 257 - PROPOSED DIVERSION OF PUBLIC FOOTPATH NO 12 (PART) IN THE PARISH OF NETHER ALDERLEY

The Committee considered a report which outlined the investigation to divert part of Public Footpath No. 12 in the Parish of Nether Alderley following receipt of an application from a local resident in relation to a planning application.

The report included a discussion of the consultations carried out in respect to the proposals and the legal tests to be considered for a diversion order to be made under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

During consideration of this item, in the interests of openness and transparency Councillor C Browne declared that the applicant and landowner were known to him.

The Committee considered the application and evidence as set out within the report and agreed that an order be made under section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 on the grounds that Cheshire East Council was satisfied that it was necessary to do so to enable development to be carried out.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously)

That the Highways and Transport Committee:

1. Decide that a public path diversion order be made under section 257 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 for part of Public Footpath No. 12 in the Parish of Nether Alderley as shown on Plan No. TCPA/080 on the grounds that Cheshire East Borough Council is satisfied that it is necessary to do so to enable development to be carried out.

2. Decide that public notice of the making of the Order be given and in the event of there being no objections within the period specified, and in the event that planning consent has been granted, the Order be confirmed in the exercise of the powers conferred on the Council by the said Act.

3. Note that in the event of objections being received, Cheshire East Borough Council be responsible for the conduct of any hearing or Public Inquiry.

58 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the work programme.

The following items had been added to the work programme:

- Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) was scheduled for April 2025.
- The standard finance items were listed for 2025/26.
- The Lane Rental Scheme was now scheduled for September 2025.

The Chair invited committee members to identify further areas of scrutiny that the committee could be involved in, such as policy development. This would involve a small group of members being involved in the development of any policies at an early stage through a Task and Finish Group, with their recommendations being brought back to the Committee for approval.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and concluded at 12.20 pm

Councillor M Goldsmith (Chair)

OPEN

Highways and Transport Committee

3 April 2025

Service Budgets 2025/26 (Highways & Transport Committee)

Report of: Adele Taylor, Interim Executive Director of Resources (s151 Officer)

Report Reference No: HTC/23/24-25

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report sets out the allocation of the approved budgets for 2025/26 to the Highways and Transport Committee.
- 2 The report contributes to the commitment of being an effective and enabling Council.

Executive Summary

- 3 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for Cheshire East Council for the four years 2025/26 to 2028/29 was approved by full Council on 26 February 2025.
- 4 Service committees are being allocated budgets for 2025/26 in line with the approved MTFS. The financial reporting cycle will provide regular updates on progress on delivery of the budget change items, the forecast outturn position, progress on capital schemes, movement on reserves and details of any supplementary estimates and virements.
- 5 The financial reporting timetable for 2025/26 was approved by Finance Sub-Committee on 10 March 2025 and is included at Annex B.
- 6 Following on from the implementation in 2024/25, in addition to the usual comprehensive reporting at First, Second and Third Financial Reviews (September, November and January cycles) and in recognition of the Council's continuing challenging financial position and the

importance of achieving a balanced outturn, service committee meetings during 2025/26 will continue to receive an update report on the delivery of the approved budget change items. This will be based on the Section 2 items shown in Annex A, for each respective committee, and will include RAG-rating and accompanying commentary in respect of each item.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Highways and Transport Committee is recommended:

1. To note the decision of the Finance Sub-Committee to allocate the approved revenue and capital budgets, related budget changes items and earmarked reserves to the Highways and Transport Committee, as set out in Annex A.
2. To note the financial reporting timetable for 2025/26 set out in Annex B as approved at Finance Sub-Committee on 10 March 2025.

Background

- 7 All councils are legally required to set a balanced budget each year. The MTFS for 2025-29 was approved by full Council on 26 February 2025.
- 8 The MTFS includes a Report from the Chief Finance Officer in line with the Section 25(1) of the Local Government Finance Act 2003. This report confirms that the MTFS is balanced for 2025/26 with the use of Exceptional Financial Support. The report also highlights the factors taken into account in arriving at this judgement including relevant financial issues and risks facing the Council during the medium term.
- 9 Finance Procedure Rules set limits and responsibilities for movement of funds, treating reserves as part of this overall balanced position. Any movement within this balanced position is treated as a virement. To increase the overall size of the MTFS requires a supplementary estimate, which must be backed with appropriate new funding and approved in-line with the Finance Procedure Rules.
- 10 To support accountability and financial control under the committee system the 2025/26 budget is being reported across the service committees based on their associated functions. This report sets out the allocation of the revenue and capital budgets and earmarked reserves to the relevant service committee in accordance with their functions.

- 11 Each committee function has been associated with a Director budget. Budget holders are responsible for budget management. Where a team supports multiple Directorates (most notably in Corporate Services) the budget remains with the Service Director and is not split; for example, Governance and Democratic Services budgets are aligned to the Corporate Policy Committee even though the activities of the team relate to services provided to all Directorates of the Council.
- 12 The financial alignment of budgets to each Committee is set out in Table 1 with further details in Annex A.

Table 1: Revenue and capital budgets allocated to service committees as per the approved MTFS	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Adults and Health	252,154	-92,705	159,449	389	159,838
Children and Families	107,383	-10,095	97,288	37,723	135,011
Corporate Policy	108,802	-66,014	42,788	12,745	55,533
Corporate Policy – Council Wide Transformation	-12,702	-750	-13,452		-13,452
Economy and Growth	38,144	-9,703	28,441	36,081	64,522
Environment and Communities	68,964	-23,263	45,701	19,357	65,058
Highways and Transport	28,370	-11,469	16,901	66,782	83,683
Finance Sub – Central	54,012	-3,492	50,520		50,520
Total Cost of Service	645,127	-217,491	427,636	173,077	600,713
Total Funding		-402,375	-402,375		
Exceptional Financial Support	-25,261		-25,261		
Net Position	619,866	-619,866	-		

- 13 The MTFS 2025-29 includes a net revenue budget of £402.4m and an approved capital programme of £173.0m for the financial year 2025/26. Further details on the schemes within the capital programme are provided in Annex A.
- 14 Annex A sets out the list of budget change items that were approved as part of the MTFS. All budget changes must be successfully delivered during 2025/26 to avoid a further overspend in the coming financial

year. Detailed monitoring of these items will continue at every reporting opportunity and the Council's reporting 'masterplan' and committee work programmes will reflect reporting on the monitoring and delivery of all MTFs change items, including matters requiring consultation and/ or decisions. This will ensure regular reporting to Corporate Leadership Team and all service committees on implementation of the MTFs and achievement of savings, throughout the coming year. In addition to reporting at the formal 'financial review' points in the year, other progress reports will be scheduled for reporting to particular service committees, on their items as appropriate.

- 15 Annex A sets out the capital programme tables by committee. The four-year capital programme includes investment plans of around £0.6bn. It is proposed that it will be funded through a mixture of Government grants, contributions from other external partners and Council resources. During 2024/25 all schemes requiring borrowing as part of their funding have been subject to review with a view to reducing their impact on the revenue budget and this has mainly been achieved through reprofiling and some budget reductions. There remains a significant amount of borrowing required to fund the programme in 2025/26 and the Capital Programme Board will provide review of and challenge to projects with a view to reducing the revenue cost impact.
- 16 The 2025/26 budget was approved at full Council in February 2025 including the use of up to £25.3m of Exceptional Financial Support to balance the overall budget, as expenditure outweighed the income forecast. Further information on this can be found in the MTFs, Appendix A, Section 2.

Transformational savings

- 17 During 2024/25, in developing this MTFs, the Council has worked with an external partner, Inner Circle, to develop a Transformation Plan. The Transformation Plan is designed to ensure that Council can deliver sustainable services and support infrastructure projects that reflect 'whole life' costs. The production and implementation of a Transformation Plan to deliver key Council objectives and secure the medium-term financial position is also a pre-condition of MHCLG approving the Council's bid for Exceptional Financial Support.
- 18 The Transformation Plan will support the delivery of approved/proposed savings, cost avoidance, cost mitigation and identify new savings for the coming years. There are six programmes within the plan agreed in 2024/25, each containing a range of projects and other initiatives across:
 - Workforce

- Social Care
- Place
- Early Intervention and Prevention
- Digital
- Special Projects

The approved Transformation Plan can be accessed here:

<https://modern.gov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s119437/Transformation%20Plan%20V1%20Final%20CPC%20003.pdf>

- 19 The revenue and capital implications for growth, investment and savings associated with the above initiatives have been reflected in the MTFFS 2025-29. For the financial year 2025/26, there are 19 Transformation projects which are also MTFFS approved budget changes; in total these will deliver net budget savings of £24.4m for 2025/26. Within this total budget saving, there are £13.452m of Council wide cross cutting savings which are held centrally; work is continuing to refine how these savings will be delivered in detail and these savings will be allocated to service committee budgets as soon as possible.
- 20 Progress on the delivery of Transformation projects and their associated budget savings will be reported on a monthly basis to the Council's Transformation Board. In addition, all Transformation savings will form an integral part of the Council's existing comprehensive financial reporting process which is set out in paragraph 13.
- 21 The headline reserves table, as included in the MTFFS, is shown below:

	Opening Balance 2024/25 £m	Forecast Closing Balance 2024/25 £m	Forecast Closing Balance 2025/26 £m	Change from closing 2024/25 £m
General Reserves	5,580	3,696	5,000	1,304
Earmarked Reserves**	32,277	11,539	9,386	-2,153
Total Revenue Reserves	37,857	15,235	14,386	-849

* Closing and Opening balances are dependent on outturn at 31 March 2025.

** All remaining Earmarked reserves, excluding those held for ring-fenced purposes or forecast for use in 2025/26, are being transferred into the General Fund reserve during 2024/25 to support the forecast deficit position.

- 22 The detail behind the earmarked reserve balances included in the table above, for the Highways and Transport Committee, is set out in Annex A.

- 23 Further background information on the reserves balances is available in the Reserves Strategy and the S.25 statement which was approved as part of the MTFs for 2025/26 at the Council meeting on 26 February (MTFS - Appendix A, Annex 8 (Reserves Strategy) and Page 42 (S.25 statement)).
- 24 The table below summarises the estimated four-year position, as included in the MTFs. Early work on business planning for 2026/27 and future years will continue, as part of the Transformation Programme.

	Approved Net Budget 2025/26 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2026/27 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2027/28 £m	Estimated Net Budget 2028/29 £m
Total Service Expenditure	377.1	362.6	356.3	366.1
Central Budgets:				
Capital Financing	35.0	38.8	41.9	43.2
Income from Capital Receipts	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0
Bad Debt Provision (change)	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.1
Contingency Budget	16.0	30.9	42.8	55.7
Risk Budget	0.0	3.8	2.0	0.8
Pension adjustment	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7
Use of Reserves	1.3	5.0	8.9	8.9
Total Central Budgets	50.5	76.6	93.7	106.9
TOTAL: SERVICE + CENTRAL	427.6	439.3	450.0	473.0
Funded by:				
Council Tax	-307.3	-325.6	-345.0	-365.5
Business Rates Retention	-57.1	-57.1	-57.1	-57.1
Revenue Support Grant	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8	-0.8
Specific Unringfenced Grants	-37.1	-34.1	-34.1	-34.1
TOTAL: FUNDED BY	-402.4	-417.7	-437.0	-457.6
Exceptional Financial Support - Capitalisation Direction	-25.3			
FUNDING POSITION	0.0	21.6	13.0	15.4

Note – table may not add across/down due to roundings

Consultation and Engagement

- 25 The annual business planning process involves engagement with local people and organisations. Local authorities have a statutory duty to consult on their budget with certain stakeholder groups including the Schools Forum and businesses. In addition, the Council chooses to consult with other stakeholder groups. The Council continues to carry out stakeholder analysis to identify the different groups involved in the

budget setting process, what information they need from us, the information we currently provide these groups with, and where we can improve our engagement process.

- 26 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy has been developed during 2024 and an online budget engagement survey was published on 19 December 2024.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 27 In accordance with the Cheshire East Plan and the Policy Framework the Finance Sub-Committee has the responsibility to co-ordinate the management and oversight of the Council's finances, performance and risk management arrangements.
- 28 The Sub-Committee is responsible for allocating budgets across the service committees. This responsibility includes the allocation of revenue and capital budgets as well as relevant earmarked reserves.
- 29 The Sub-Committee has responsibilities within the Constitution to approve, or recommend for approval, virement and supplementary estimates that will amend the MTFs. Such requests are brought to the Committee as they arise.

Other Options Considered

- 30 Not applicable.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 31 The legal implications surrounding the process of setting the 2025 to 2029 Medium-Term Financial Strategy were dealt with in the reports relating to that process.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 32 Contained within the main body of the report.

Policy

- 33 The Cheshire East Plan sets the policy context for the MTFs and the two documents are aligned. Any policy implications that arise from activities funded by the budgets that this report deals with will be dealt within the individual reports to Members or Officer Decision Records to which they relate.

Commitment 3: An effective and enabling council
--

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 34 Under the Equality Act 2010, decision makers must show ‘due regard’ to the need to:
- 35 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- 36 - Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not share it; and
- 37 - Foster good relations between those groups.
- 38 The protected characteristics are age, disability, sex, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage and civil partnership.
- 39 Having “due regard” is a legal term which requires the Council to consider what is proportionate and relevant in terms of the decisions they take.
- 40 The Council needs to ensure that in taking decisions on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the Budget that the impacts on those with protected characteristics are considered. The Council undertakes equality impact assessments where necessary and continues to do so as proposals and projects develop across the lifetime of the Corporate Plan. The process assists us to consider what actions could mitigate any adverse impacts identified. Completed equality impact assessments form part of any detailed Business Cases.
- 41 Positive impacts include significant investment in services for children and adults (protected characteristics primarily age and disability).
- 42 The Cheshire East Plan’s vision reinforces the Council’s commitment to meeting its equalities duties, promoting fairness and working openly for everyone. Cheshire East is a diverse place and we want to make sure that people are able to live, work and enjoy Cheshire East regardless of their background, needs or characteristics.

Human Resources

- 43 Any HR implications that arise from activities funded by the budgets that this report deals with will be dealt within the individual reports to Members or Officer Decision Records to which they relate.

Risk Management

44 Financial risks are assessed and reported on a regular basis, and remedial action taken if and when required. Risks associated with the achievement of the 2025/26 budget and the level of general reserves were factored into the 2025/26 financial scenario, budget and reserves strategy.

Rural Communities

45 The report provides details of service provision across the borough.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

46 The report provides details of service provision across the borough.

Public Health

47 Public health implications that arise from activities that this report deals with will be dealt with as separate reports to Members or Officer Decision Records as required.

Climate Change

48 Any climate change implications that arise from activities funded by the budgets that this report deals with will be dealt within the individual reports to Members or Officer Decision Records to which they relate.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Adele Taylor Interim Executive Director of Resources Services (Section 151 Officer) adele.taylor@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Annex A - Allocation of revenue and capital budgets, budget change items and earmarked reserves to service committees Annex B – Draft Financial Reporting Timetable 2025/26
Background Papers:	The following are links to key background documents: Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025-2029



Service Budgets 2025/26

Contents

Section 1: Allocation of Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/26	3
Section 2: Approved Budget Change Items 2025/26	8
Section 3: Capital Programme 2025/26	15
Section 4: Reserves 2025/26	24

Section 1: Allocation of Revenue and Capital Budgets 2025/26

Cheshire East Council - Summary	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Adults and Health	252,154	-92,705	159,449	389	159,838
Children and Families	107,383	-10,095	97,288	37,723	135,011
Corporate Policy	108,802	-66,014	42,788	12,745	55,533
Corporate Policy – Council Wide Transformation	-12,702	-750	-13,452		-13,452
Economy and Growth	38,144	-9,703	28,441	36,081	64,522
Environment and Communities	68,964	-23,263	45,701	19,357	65,058
Highways and Transport	28,370	-11,469	16,901	66,782	83,683
Finance Sub – Central	54,012	-3,492	50,520		50,520
Total Cost of Service	645,127	-217,491	427,636	173,077	600,713
Total Funding		-402,375	-402,375		
Exceptional Financial Support	-25,261		-25,261		
Net Position	619,866	-619,866	-		

Adults and Health	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Directorate	515	-8,379	-7,864		-7,864
Adult Social Care Operations	214,610	-47,056	167,554	389	167,943
Commissioning	17,407	-17,648	-241		-241
Public Health	19,622	-19,622	-		-
Total Cost of Service	252,154	-92,705	159,449	389	159,838

Children and Families	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Directorate	6,391	-1,125	5,266		5,266
Family Help and Children's Social Care	61,865	-1,448	60,417	3,061	63,478
Education, Strong Start and Integration	36,365	-7,491	28,874	34,662	63,536
Commissioning, QA and Partnerships	2,762	-31	2,731		2,731
Total Cost of Service	107,383	-10,095	97,288	37,723	135,011

Corporate Policy	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Resources (Finance)	58,887	-47,831	11,056	1,021	12,077
Governance and Compliance Services	15,499	-4,155	11,344		11,344
Resources (People)	6,022	-461	5,561		5,561
Resources (Digital)	24,414	-12,719	11,695	11,724	23,419
Assistant Chief Executive	3,980	-848	3,132		3,132
Total Cost of Service	108,802	-66,014	42,788	12,745	55,533

Corporate Policy – Council Wide Transformation	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Transformation Programme - Council Wide	-12,702	-750	-13,452		-13,452
Total Cost of Service	-12,702	-750	-13,452		-13,452

Economy and Growth	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Directorate	303		303		303
Assets	3,078	-2,587	491	2,250	2,741
Growth and Enterprise Management	147		147		147
Facilities Management	17,702	-270	17,432	5,927	23,359
Farms	437	-785	-348		-348
Economic Development	1,985	-551	1,434	12,854	14,288
Housing	3,996	-414	3,582	6,893	10,475
Rural and Cultural Management	165		165	8,157	8,322
Tatton Park	5,653	-4,445	1,208		1,208
Green Infrastructure	2,124	-302	1,822		1,822
Cultural Economy	1,113		1,113		1,113
Visitor Economy	558	-349	209		209
Pay Inflation	883		883		883
Total Cost of Service	38,144	-9,703	28,441	36,081	64,522

Environment and Communities	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Director of Environmental and Neighbourhood Services	143		143		143
Development Management	4,471	-2,767	1,704		1,704
Building Control	1,222	-918	304		304
Local Land Charges and Planning Support	748	-407	341		341
Strategic Planning	1,436		1,436		1,436
Neighbourhood Planning	283	-220	63		63
Environmental – Commissioning ANSA*	45,037	-1,745	43,292	14,217	57,509
Environmental – Commissioning Orbitas*	2,094	-2,927	-833	600	-233
Environmental – Management Services	2,207	-12,290	-10,083	3,540	-6,543
Regulatory Services	4,050	-1,228	2,822		2,822
Libraries	3,329	-297	3,032		3,032
Leisure Commissioning	948	-420	528	1,000	1,528
Emergency Planning	237	-61	176		176
Head of Neighbourhood Services & ASB/CEO	648	17	665		665
Pay Inflation	2,111		2,111		2,111
Total Cost of Service	68,964	-23,263	45,701	19,357	65,058

*The companies are coming back in house in 2025/26 therefore commissioning budgets will be realigned to the correct service area

Highways and Transport	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Car Parking	2,266	-7,446	-5,180	83	-5,097
Strategic Transport	8,700	-503	8,197	2,964	11,161
ANSA Transport Commissioning (Management Fee)*	1,235		1,235		1,235
Highways	14,625	-2,820	11,805	30,971	42,776
Integrated Rail and Transport (formerly HS2)	450		450		450
Highways and Infrastructure Director	145		145		145
Infrastructure	776	-700	76	32,764	32,840
Pay Inflation	173		173		173
Total Cost of Service	28,370	-11,469	16,901	66,782	83,683

*The companies are coming back in house in 2025/26 therefore commissioning budgets will be realigned to the correct service area

Finance Sub – Central Budgets	Revenue Budget			Capital Budget	Total Revenue and Capital Budget
Service Area	Expenditure £000	Income £000	Net Budget £000	£000	£000
Capital Financing	37,531	-2,492	35,039		35,039
Income from use of Capital Receipts		-1,000	-1,000		-1,000
Pension Cost adjustment	-727		-727		-727
Contingency Budget	15,953		15,953		15,953
Transfer to/(from) Reserves	1,304		1,304		1,304
Bad Debt Provision adjustment	-50		-50		-50
Other Income/Expenditure	1		1		1
Total Cost of Service	54,012	-3,492	50,520		50,520

Section 2: Approved Budget Change Items 2025/26

MTFS Ref No	Detailed List of Approved Budget Changes – Service Budgets	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
	Adults and Health	+21.494	-2.204	+1.516	+1.480
1	Client Contributions	-5.182	-0.879	-1.654	-1.706
2	Revenue Grants for Adult Social Care	-0.220			
3	Pensions Cost Adjustment	-0.517	-1.019	-0.171	-0.184
4	Demand in Adult Social Care	+5.000	+5.000	+5.000	+5.000
5	Pay Inflation	+2.251	+1.142	+1.171	+1.200
6	Funding the staffing establishment	+3.800			
7	Fully Funding current care demand levels 2024/25	+24.500			
8	Remodel extra care housing catering service	-0.270			
9T	Prevent, Reduce, Enable - Older People	-1.500	-2.830	-2.830	-2.830
10T	Learning Disability service transformation	-2.500	-2.500		
11T	Commissioning and brokerage transformation	-0.500	-0.250		
12T	Preparing for Adulthood	-0.868	-0.868		
13T	Health and Social Care Partnership Case Review	-2.500			

MTFS Ref No	Detailed List of Approved Budget Changes – Service Budgets	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
	Childrens and Families	+8.659	-0.064	-0.201	-0.258
14	Pension costs adjustment	-0.537	-0.923	-0.155	-0.167
15	Growth to deliver statutory Youth Justice service, and meet Safeguarding Partnership duties	+0.203	+0.167	+0.031	+0.034
16	Growth in School, SEND and Social Care Transport budget	+1.501	+1.548	+0.476	
17	Pay Inflation	+2.624	+1.096	+1.124	+1.152
18	Fully Funding current care demand levels 2024/25	+3.295			
19	Court Progression Improvement	+0.023			
20	Growth for annual contribution to the Regional Adoption Agency	+0.213	+0.048	+0.048	+0.048
21	Growth for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children due to emerging pressures	+0.500			
22	Reversal of a one year policy change for traded services	+0.120			
23	Schools Improvement	+0.175			
24	Funding the staffing establishment	+2.739		-1.000	-0.600
25	Safe Walking Routes to School	-0.250			
26T	New accommodation with support offer for 16-25 young people	-1.100	-0.700		
27T	Birth to Thrive	-0.500			
28T	Right Child, Right Home	-1.320	-1.300	-0.725	-0.725
29	Extended Rights to Free Transport	+0.388			
30	Children’s Social Care Prevention Grant – Expenditure	+0.905			
31	Children’s Social Care Prevention Grant – Grant Income	-0.905			
32	Foster4	+0.114			
33	Foster Carers uplift of National Minimum Allowance (NMA)	+0.471			

MTFS Ref No	Detailed List of Approved Budget Changes – Service Budgets	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
	Corporate Policy	+1.078	+4.396	+1.890	+1.485
34	Enforce prompt debt recovery and increase charges for costs	-0.077			
35	Pension costs adjustment	-0.396	-0.685	-0.115	-0.124
36	Pay Inflation	+1.494	+1.531	+1.570	+1.609
37	Shared Services Review - Move to Hybrid Model for ICT	-0.733			
38	The achievement of additional Registration Service income, over and above that which is currently identified as required	-0.350			
39	Recognising the annual receipt of £45k of Police and Crime Panel grant income	-0.045			
40	Remove unspent element of phones budgets in corporate services	-0.060			
41T	Digital Acceleration Revenue Growth		+1.150		
42T	Digital Blueprint Revenue Growth		+2.400	+0.435	
43	Transactional Shared Services stabilisation plan	+0.270			
44	Additional cost of External Audit Fees	+0.265			
45	Reduce Members Allowances budget	-0.100			
46	Additional Cost of Bank Charges from 2025/26	+0.120			
47	Reverse reduction in leadership and management costs as posts are being retained	+0.540			
48	Reinstatement of a one-off saving of £150,000 from election budgets for 2024/25	+0.150			
	Council Wide Transformation	-13.452	-20.730	-11.030	-
49T	Digital Customer Enablement Invest to Save	-0.750	-0.750	-0.700	
50T	Digital Acceleration Invest to Save	-0.600	-6.250	-5.250	
51T	Digital Blueprint - Invest to Save	-4.000	-6.000	-4.500	
52T	Target Operating Model (TOM)	-3.000	-7.000		
53T	Agency Staffing	-0.352			
54T	Workforce Productivity	-1.000			
55T	Fees and Charges	-0.750	-0.040	-0.040	
56T	Third Party Spend	-3.000	-0.690	-0.540	

MTFS Ref No	Detailed List of Approved Budget Changes – Service Budgets	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
	Economy and Growth	+0.534	+0.695	+0.432	+0.328
57	Office estate rationalisation	-0.150			
58	Pension Costs Adjustment	-0.164	-0.313	-0.053	-0.057
59	Tatton Park ticketing and EPOS upgrade	+0.001	+0.001	+0.001	+0.001
60	CEC Archives	+0.014	+0.093	+0.004	
61	Rural and Visitor Economy Electricity costs	-0.021			
62	Minimum energy efficiency standards (MEES) - Estates - Revenue Adjustment	+0.023		-0.055	-0.047
63	Pay Inflation	+1.064	+0.429	+0.440	+0.450
64	Maintenance and operation of new assets in Crewe town centre	+0.205	+0.279	+0.118	+0.006
65	Land Fill Site Assessments Revenue Adjustment - Estates – Review and Risk Assessment of Council owned Landfill sites (53 sites) Review and Risk Assessment completions	+0.010			
66	Tatton Park Estate Dwellings Refurbishment	+0.015			
67	Improving Crewe Rented Housing Standards	+0.188	-0.188		
68	Maximise potential of Countryside Access Management System	+0.020	-0.018		
69	Assets - building and operational – Energy	-0.860			
70	Assets - building and operational – Maintenance	+0.465	+0.533		
71	Tatton Park - Increase Fees and Charges	-0.126	-0.021	-0.023	-0.025
72T	Corporate Landlord Model Refresh	-0.050			
73T	Asset Strategy Refresh	-0.100	-0.100		

MTFS Ref No	Detailed List of Approved Budget Changes – Service Budgets	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
	Environment and Communities	-2.741	+3.269	+0.982	+6.792
74	Strategic Leisure Review (Stage 2)	+0.403	-0.203	-0.166	
75	Libraries Strategy - Stage 1	-0.100			
76	Reduce revenue impact of carbon reduction capital schemes	+0.171			
77	Pay Inflation	+2.270	+1.380	+1.409	+1.436
78	Pension Costs Adjustment	-0.159	-0.315	-0.053	-0.057
79	Explore a Trust delivery model for Libraries and other services	-0.150			
80	Land Charge Income Adjustment	+0.147			
81	Local Plan Review	+0.315	-0.090	+0.005	-0.005
82	Review of CCTV service - service efficiencies and income generation from existing services	-0.040			
83	Environmental Services Growth 2025/26 onwards	+3.041	+1.882	+0.690	+0.710
84	Environmental Services Savings 2025/26 onwards	-2.366	-2.580	-1.181	-0.549
85	Environmental Services Growth - Pensions	+0.727	-0.395	-0.066	-0.071
86	Environmental Services – expected income from Extended Producer Responsibility for packaging	-7.000	+3.590	+0.344	+5.328

MTFS Ref No	Detailed List of Approved Budget Changes – Service Budgets	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
	Highways and Transport	+1.061	+0.152	+0.068	+0.030
87	Increase parking charges	-0.450	-0.186	-0.191	-0.197
88	Safe Haven outside schools (Parking)	+0.010			
89	Parking PDA / Back Office System contract - fall out of one off set up cost	-0.030			
90	Parking - Part-year effect of strategy changes	-0.720			
91	Parking - Staff and member parking	-0.250			
92	Transport and Infrastructure Strategy Team – Restructure		-0.150		
93	Local Bus	+1.545			
94	FlexiLink Service Improvement Plan - invest to save	+0.592	+0.294	-0.003	-0.135
95T	Advertising Income. Initial project scoping work being undertaken to understand scale/complexity and resourcing needs	-0.025	-0.075	-0.050	
96	Pension Costs Adjustment	-0.055	-0.108	-0.018	-0.020
97	Pay Inflation	+0.228	+0.111	+0.114	+0.117
98	Flood and Water Management Act 2010 SuDS and SABs Schedule 3 Implementation		+0.050	+0.050	+0.100
99	Highways: Revenue Service	+0.216	+0.216	+0.216	+0.216
100	Highways: Depots			-0.050	-0.051

MTFS Ref No	Detailed List of Approved Budget Changes – Service Budgets	2025/26 £m	2026/27 £m	2027/28 £m	2028/29 £m
	Finance Sub (central budgets)	+35.294	+26.123	+17.082	+13.104
101	Capital Financing - Minimum Revenue Provision	+3.387	+3.719	+3.102	+1.388
102	Creation of Contingency Budget	+15.953	+14.908	+11.922	+12.926
103	Risk of unachievable budget savings or growth demands exceeding estimates		+3.800	-1.840	-1.210
104	Pension adjustment – linked to E&C growth item	-0.727			
105	Use of Earmarked Reserves (reversal of 2024/25 one off use of central EMRs)	+3.723			
106	Top up of Earmarked Reserves			+3.898	
107	Use of General Reserves (reversal of one off use in 2024/25)	+11.654			
108	Top up General Reserves	+1.304	+3.696		
	Finance Sub (funding budgets)	-26.666	-15.285	-19.391	-20.515
109	Council Tax increase % growth	-14.326	-15.290	-16.204	-17.214
110	Council Tax increase base growth	-5.852	-3.037	-3.187	-3.301
111	Business Rates Retention	-0.495			
112	Unringfenced general grants change	-3.012	+3.042		
113	National Insurance increase contribution	-2.981			

Section 3: Capital Programme 2025/26

Adults and Health												CAPITAL	
CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2028/29													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget	Forecast Expenditure					Forecast Funding					Total Funding	
		Prior Years	Forecast Budget 2025/26	Forecast Budget 2026/27	Forecast Budget 2027/28	Forecast Budget 2028/29	Total Forecast Budget 2025-29	Government Grants	External Contributions	Revenue Contributions	Capital Receipts		Prudential Borrowing
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Committed Schemes													
Adult Social Care													
Electronic Call Monitoring System	389	0	389	0	0	0	389	0	0	389	0	0	389
Total Adults Social Care Schemes	389	0	389	0	0	0	389	0	0	389	0	0	389

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26-2028/29

Scheme Description	Forecast Expenditure							Forecast Funding					Total Funding
	Total Approved Budget £000	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Childrens Social Care													
Children's Home Sufficiency Scheme	1,404	904	500	0	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	500	500
Crewe Youth Zone	4,826	2,420	2,406	0	0	0	2,406	1,559	0	0	0	847	2,406
Family Hubs Transformation	236	131	105	0	0	0	105	105	0	0	0	0	105
Foster Carer Capacity Scheme	534	484	50	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50	50
Total Children's Social Care	7,000	3,939	3,061	0	0	0	3,061	1,664	0	0	0	1,397	3,061
Strong Start, Family Help & Integration													
Childcare Capital Expansion	749	449	300	0	0	0	300	300	0	0	0	-	300
Early Years Sufficiency Capital Fund	1,036	957	79	0	0	0	79	79	0	0	0	-	79
Total Strong Start, Family Help & Integration	1,785	1,406	379	0	0	0	379	379	0	0	0	0	379
Education and 14-19 Skills													
Adelaide Academy	903	155	748	0	0	0	748	578	0	0	0	170	748
Basic Need Grant Allocation	7,569	5,127	2,442	0	0	0	2,442	2,442	0	0	0	0	2,442
Congleton Planning Area - Primary (1)	2,209	179	2,030	0	0	0	2,030	764	1,266	0	0	0	2,030
Congleton Planning Area - Primary (3)	7,504	54	0	2,200	5,250	0	7,450	4,250	3,200	0	0	0	7,450
Devolved Formula Grant - Schools	1,533	893	330	310	0	0	640	640	0	0	0	0	640
Energy Efficiency Grant - Schools	672	672	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gainsborough Primary - Flooring	304	50	254	0	0	0	254	254	0	0	0	0	254
Handforth Planning Area - New School	13,002	103	400	4,000	8,499	0	12,899	126	12,773	0	0	0	12,899
Macclesfield Planning Area - Secondary New places	730	5	725	0	0	0	725	725	0	0	0	0	725
Macclesfield Planning Area - New School	4,001	1	0	0	4,000	0	4,000	0	4,000	0	0	0	4,000

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26-2028/29

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure						Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000	Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Mobberley Primary School	1,207	37	609	561	0	0	1,170	870	0	0	300	0	1,170
Nantwich Planning Area - Kingsbourne Primary Academy (New school)	9,061	1,233	7,328	500	0	0	7,828	5,308	2,520	0	0	0	7,828
New AP Free School	500	0	500	0	0	0	500	500	0	0	0	0	500
New Satellite school - 2	9,000	50	950	5,000	3,000	0	8,950	8,950	0	0	0	0	8,950
New SEN places - Springfields Wilmslow /Dean Row Community Centre	1,089	339	750	0	0	0	750	750	0	0	0	0	750
New SEN Free School	998	5	745	248	0	0	993	993	0	0	0	0	993
Poynton Planning Area - Vernon Primary	1,500	113	1,387	0	0	0	1,387	584	803	0	0	0	1,387
Provision of Sufficient School Places - SEND (Springfield Crewe)	7,183	6,861	322	0	0	0	322	0	0	0	0	322	322
Schools Condition Capital Grant	7,828	3,828	2,000	2,000	0	0	4,000	4,000	0	0	0	0	4,000
SEN/High Needs Capital Allocation	4,827	327	2,000	2,500	0	0	4,500	4,500	0	0	0	0	4,500
Shavington Planning Area - Basford New Primary School	8,040	256	1,000	6,784	0	0	7,784	5,449	2,335	0	0	0	7,784
Springfield Satellite Site - Middlewich	6,000	500	5,500	0	0	0	5,500	5,500	0	0	0	0	5,500
Tytherington High School	2,800	272	2,528	0	0	0	2,528	2,528	0	0	0	0	2,528
Wheelock Primary School	2,411	1,201	1,210	0	0	0	1,210	1,210	0	0	0	0	1,210
Wilmslow High School BN	14,179	13,654	525	0	0	0	525	0	477	0	0	48	525
Total Education & 14-19 Skills	115,050	35,915	34,283	24,103	20,749	0	79,135	50,921	27,374	0	300	540	79,135
													0
Total Committed Schemes	123,835	41,260	37,723	24,103	20,749	0	82,575	52,964	27,374	0	300	1,937	82,575
Total New Schemes	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Children and Families Schemes	123,835	41,260	37,723	24,103	20,749	0	82,575	52,964	27,374	0	300	1,937	82,575

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2028/29

Scheme Description	Forecast Expenditure						Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
	Total Approved Budget £000	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
ICT Services													
Accelerate Digital	1,460	760	700	0	0	0	700	0	0	0	0	700	700
Care Act Phase 2	6,314	5,234	1,080	0	0	0	1,080	0	0	0	0	1,080	1,080
ICT Device Replacement	1,912	1,412	500	0	0	0	500	0	0	0	0	500	500
IADM (Information Assurance and Data Management)	19,465	18,065	1,400	0	0	0	1,400	0	0	0	0	1,400	1,400
Infrastructure Investment Programme (IIP)	34,429	31,796	1,804	830	0	0	2,634	0	0	0	0	2,634	2,634
Vendor Management	1,006	788	218	0	0	0	218	0	0	0	0	218	218
Total ICT Services Schemes	64,586	58,054	5,702	830	0	0	6,532	0	0	0	0	6,532	6,532
Finance & Customer Services													
Core Financials	11,317	10,362	662	293	0	0	955	0	0	0	0	955	955
Vendor Management - Phase 2	99	24	25	50	0	0	75	0	0	0	0	75	75
Total Finance & Customer Services Schemes	11,417	10,386	687	343	0	0	1,030	0	0	0	0	1,030	1,030
Total Committed Schemes	76,003	68,440	6,389	1,173	0	0	7,562	0	0	0	0	7,562	7,562
New Schemes													
Finance & Customer Services													
Core Business Systems	1,826	0	334	492	800	200	1,826	0	0	0	0	1,826	1,826
ICT Services													
Accelerate Digital – (Digital efficiencies) Capital	4,259	0	1,532	1,350	1,377	0	4,259	0	0	0	0	4,259	4,259
Digital Blueprint - Capital	6,530	0	3,490	1,663	1,377	0	6,530	0	0	0	0	6,530	6,530
ICT Device Replacement		0	1,000	250	200	400	1,850	0	0	0	0	1,850	1,850
Total New Schemes	12,615	0	6,356	3,755	3,754	600	14,465	0	0	0	0	14,465	14,465
Total Corporate Policy	88,618	68,440	12,745	4,928	3,754	600	22,027	0	0	0	0	22,027	22,027

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2028/29													
Scheme Description	Forecast Expenditure						Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
	Total Approved Budget £000	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Culture & Tourism													
Countryside Vehicles	1,579	790	355	217	217	0	789	0	0	0	0	789	789
Culture & Tourism S106 Schemes	509	97	385	5	5	17	412	0	412	0	0	0	412
Green Infrastructure Structures Investment	384	0	271	113	0	0	384	0	0	0	0	384	384
New Archives Premises CTC1	7,115	442	6,433	240	0	0	6,673	0	0	0	0	6,673	6,673
PROW CMM A6 MARR	103	74	29	0	0	0	29	29	0	0	0	0	29
Talton Park Investment Phase 2	2,843	1,434	684	725	0	0	1,409	0	0	0	0	1,409	1,409
Total Culture & Tourism Committed Schemes	12,533	2,837	8,157	1,300	222	17	9,696	29	412	0	0	9,255	9,696
Economic Development													
Crewe Towns Fund - Mill Street Corridor	4,027	3,229	798	0	0	0	798	798	0	0	0	0	798
Crewe Towns Fund - Crewe Youth Zone non-grant costs	351	188	163	0	0	0	163	163	0	0	0	0	163
Crewe Towns Fund - Repurposing Our High Streets	1,132	625	507	0	0	0	507	507	0	0	0	0	507
Crewe Town Centre Regeneration	32,293	31,293	1,000	0	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000
Connecting Cheshire Phase 3	8,000	928	2,000	2,200	2,000	872	7,072	0	7,072	0	0	0	7,072
Connecting Cheshire 2020	9,250	6,265	0	0	0	2,985	2,985	2,985	0	0	0	0	2,985
Handforth Heat Network	13,219	680	50	450	12,039	0	12,539	1,924	7,428	0	0	3,187	12,539
History Centre Public Realm & ICV (Crewe Towns Fund) CTC1	580	210	370	0	0	0	370	370	0	0	0	0	370
Leighton Green	2,096	1,618	478	0	0	0	478	0	0	0	0	478	478
South Macclesfield Development Area	34,630	3,359	100	0	0	31,171	31,271	10,000	10,000	0	11,271	0	31,271
Macclesfield Indoor Market Refurbishment (MIMR)	2,213	1,713	500	0	0	0	500	500	0	0	0	0	500
Nantwich Town Centre Public Realm Improvements	100	0	100	0	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	100
North Cheshire Garden Village	57,866	12,287	6,588	17,285	21,706	0	45,579	15,044	0	0	21,700	8,835	45,579
Handforth Garden Village s106 Obligations	6,841	0	0	2,740	0	4,101	6,841	0	0	0	0	6,841	6,841
UK Shared Prosperity Fund - Core	1,150	950	200	0	0	0	200	200	0	0	0	0	200
Total Economic Development Committed Schemes	173,748	63,345	12,854	22,675	35,745	39,129	110,403	32,491	24,600	0	32,971	20,341	110,403

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2028/29													
Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Facilities Management													
PSDS - 3B - Lot 1	1,028	904	124	0	0	0	124	124	0	0	0	0	124
PSDS - 3C	1,672	324	1,348	0	0	0	1,348	1,159	0	0	0	189	1,348
Septic Tanks	636	310	75	251	0	0	326	0	0	0	0	326	326
Schools Capital Maintenance	8,315	7,271	1,044	0	0	0	1,044	1,044	0	0	0	0	1,044
Premises Capital (FM)	39,690	36,053	2,488	1,149	0	0	3,637	0	0	0	0	3,637	3,637
Poynton Pool Spillway	1,380	744	636	0	0	0	636	0	0	0	0	636	636
Total Facilities Management Committed Schemes	52,721	45,606	5,715	1,400	0	0	7,115	2,327	0	0	0	4,788	7,115
Estates													
Corporate Landlord - Non-Operational	1,336	0	1,336	0	0	0	1,336	0	0	0	0	1,336	1,336
Malkins Bank Landfill Site	1,360	777	583	0	0	0	583	0	0	0	0	583	583
Farms Strategy	2,910	1,744	331	209	209	417	1,166	0	0	0	1,166	0	1,166
Total Estates Committed Schemes	5,606	2,521	2,250	209	209	417	3,085	0	0	0	1,166	1,919	3,085
Housing													
Crewe Towns Fund - Warm and Healthy Homes	2,126	858	1,268	0	0	0	1,268	1,268	0	0	0	0	1,268
Disabled Facilities	22,025	13,761	2,664	2,800	2,800	0	8,264	8,264	0	0	0	0	8,264
Green Homes Grant	3,105	2,427	339	339	0	0	678	678	0	0	0	0	678
Home Repairs Vulnerable People	1,338	936	402	0	0	0	402	0	0	0	0	402	402
Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2	4,409	2,740	1,669	0	0	0	1,669	1,669	0	0	0	0	1,669
Local Authority Housing Fund	742	433	309	0	0	0	309	309	0	0	0	0	309
Total Housing Committed Schemes	33,746	21,156	6,651	3,139	2,800	0	12,590	12,188	0	0	0	402	12,590
Total Committed Schemes	278,355	135,466	35,627	28,723	38,976	39,563	142,889	47,035	25,012	0	34,137	36,705	142,889
New Schemes													
Culture & Tourism													
Green Structures investment (Public Rights of Way)	512	0	0	126	195	191	512	0	0	0	0	512	512
Housing													
Disabled Facilities	3,360	0	242	106	106	2,906	3,360	3,360	0	0	0	0	3,360
Facilities Management													
Septic Tanks	949	0	0	149	400	400	949	0	0	0	0	949	949
Premises Capital * see note 1	7,163	0	212	1,551	2,700	2,700	7,163	0	0	0	0	7,163	7,163
Total Economic Development New Schemes	11,984	0	454	1,933	3,401	6,197	11,984	3,360	0	0	0	8,624	11,984
Total Economy and Growth Schemes	290,339	135,466	36,081	30,656	42,377	45,760	154,873	50,395	25,012	0	34,137	45,329	154,873

Note 1 : Approval for this scheme is for 2025-26 only. Future years to be considered for approval in 2026-30 MTFS

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26 - 2028/29

Scheme Description	Forecast Expenditure						Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
	Total Approved Budget £000	Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Environment Services													
Booth Bed Lane, Goostrey	140	40	100	0	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	0	100
Bosley Village Play Area	20	10	10	0	0	0	10	0	10	0	0	0	10
Carbon Offset Investment	568	268	75	75	75	75	300	0	0	0	0	300	300
Carnival Fields	42	0	42	0	0	0	42	0	42	0	0	0	42
Closed Cemeteries	152	50	102	0	0	0	102	0	0	0	0	102	102
Fleet EV Transition	6,897	1,596	2,974	327	1,000	1,000	5,301	0	0	0	0	5,301	5,301
Fleet Vehicle Electric Charging	585	305	140	140	0	0	280	0	0	0	0	280	280
Green Investment Scheme (Solar Farm)	4,150	3,944	51	155	0	0	206	0	0	0	0	206	206
Household Waste Recycling Centres	860	270	590	0	0	0	590	0	0	0	0	590	590
Jim Evison Playing Fields	161	0	161	0	0	0	161	0	161	0	0	0	161
Litter and Recycling Bins	208	136	25	25	22	0	72	0	0	0	0	72	72
Macclesfield Chapel Refurbishment	429	29	400	0	0	0	400	0	0	400	0	0	400
Park Development Fund	846	723	36	87	0	0	123	0	0	0	0	123	123
Review of Household Waste Recycling Centres	1,000	100	900	0	0	0	900	0	0	0	0	900	900
Carbon Neutral 2030 Investments	13,980	101	300	300	4,400	8,879	13,879	0	0	0	0	13,879	13,879
The Carrs Improvement Project	61	15	46	0	0	0	46	0	46	0	0	0	46
Weekly Food Waste Collections	2,712	80	2,132	500	0	0	2,632	2,632	0	0	0	0	2,632
Woodland South of Coppice Way, Handforth	89	73	16	0	0	0	16	0	16	0	0	0	16
Wybunbury St Chad's Closed Cemetery	219	0	219	0	0	0	219	0	0	0	0	219	219
Total Environment Services Schemes	33,119	7,740	8,319	1,609	5,497	9,954	25,379	2,632	375	400	0	21,972	25,379
Neighbourhood Services													
Crewe Towns Fund - Valley Brook Green Corridor	3,339	1,699	1,640	0	0	0	1,640	1,640	0	0	0	0	1,640
Crewe Towns Fund - Cumberland Arena	3,093	2,268	825	0	0	0	825	825	0	0	0	0	825
Crewe Towns Fund - Pocket Parks	1,481	1,088	393	0	0	0	393	393	0	0	0	0	393
Strategic Leisure Review	3,400	1,750	1,000	650	0	0	1,650	0	0	0	0	1,650	1,650
Total Neighbourhood Services	11,313	6,805	3,858	650	0	0	4,508	2,858	0	0	0	1,650	4,508
Total Committed Schemes	44,432	14,545	12,177	2,259	5,497	9,954	29,887	5,490	375	400	0	23,622	29,887
New Schemes													
Environment Services													
Weekly Food Waste Collections - Additional Capital Requirement	5,497	0	5,497	0	0	0	5,497	0	0	5,497	0	0	5,497
Macclesfield Cemetery Second Chapel - Additional requirement	200	0	200	0	0	0	200	0	0	200	0	0	200
Parks	1,483	0	1,483	0	0	0	1,483	0	1,483	0	0	0	1,483
Total New Schemes	7,180	0	7,180	0	0	0	7,180	0	1,483	5,697	0	0	7,180
Total Environment and Communities Schemes	51,612	14,545	19,357	2,259	5,497	9,954	37,067	5,490	1,858	6,097	0	23,622	37,067

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26- 2028/29

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Strategic Infrastructure													
A500 Dualling scheme	89,456	11,131	950	0	0	77,375	78,325	74,025	4,300	0	0	0	78,325
A500 Corridor OBC Update	1,705	150	1,555	0	0	0	1,555	1,555	0	0	0	0	1,555
A50 / A54 Holmes Chapel	603	100	0	0	0	503	503	0	503	0	0	0	503
A54 / A533 Leadsmithy Street, Middlewich	563	176	0	0	0	387	387	0	387	0	0	0	387
A6 MARR Technical Design	473	279	194	0	0	0	194	70	124	0	0	0	194
A556 Knutsford to Bowdon	504	417	87	0	0	0	87	0	87	0	0	0	87
Peacock Roundabout Junction	750	52	500	0	0	198	698	0	698	0	0	0	698
Congleton Link Road	83,991	72,837	1,254	1,279	1,000	7,621	11,154	316	10,838	0	0	0	11,154
Crewe Green Roundabout	7,500	7,057	443	0	0	0	443	0	443	0	0	0	443
Flowerpot Phs 1 & Pinchpoint	5,519	1,609	588	336	337	2,649	3,910	3,187	723	0	0	0	3,910
Future High Street Funding - Flag Lane Link	1,558	1,249	309	0	0	0	309	309	0	0	0	0	309
Highways & Infrastructure S106 Funded Schemes	4,701	1,790	1,179	494	0	1,238	2,911	107	2,804	0	0	0	2,911
Transport & Infrastructure Development Studies	350	60	290	0	0	0	290	290	0	0	0	0	290
Middlewich Eastern Bypass	96,599	27,268	22,140	22,876	19,848	4,467	69,331	45,747	14,611	0	0	8,973	69,331
Mill Street Corridor - Station Link Project	1,534	992	542	0	0	0	542	0	242	0	0	300	542
North-West Crewe Package	51,367	50,167	300	300	300	300	1,200	0	1,200	0	0	0	1,200
Old Mill Road / The Hill Junction	1,324	187	1,137	0	0	0	1,137	0	1,137	0	0	0	1,137
Poynton Relief Road	54,848	48,906	1,096	1,146	1,435	2,265	5,942	0	2,751	0	1,000	2,191	5,942
Sydney Road Bridge	10,502	10,137	200	165	0	0	365	0	365	0	0	0	365
Total Strategic Infrastructure Schemes	413,847	234,564	32,764	26,596	22,920	97,003	179,283	125,606	41,213	0	1,000	11,464	179,283
Highways													
Alderley Edge Bypass Scheme Implementation	60,611	60,384	227	0	0	0	227	0	0	0	0	227	227
Integrated Block - LTP	8,012	0	2,003	2,003	2,003	2,003	8,012	8,012	0	0	0	0	8,012
Incentive Fund - LTP	5,800	0	1,450	1,450	1,450	1,450	5,800	5,800	0	0	0	0	5,800
Maintenance Block - LTP	25,275	0	7,878	5,799	5,799	5,799	25,275	23,196	0	0	0	2,079	25,275
Managing and Maintaining Highways	4,712	0	4,712	0	0	0	4,712	0	0	0	0	4,712	4,712
Pothole Funding	23,196	0	5,799	5,799	5,799	5,799	23,196	23,196	0	0	0	0	23,196
Programme Management	1,548	1,515	33	0	0	0	33	33	0	0	0	0	33
Road Safety Schemes Minor Wks	6,423	6,323	100	0	0	0	100	0	0	0	0	100	100
Traffic Signal Maintenance	1,095	835	260	0	0	0	260	260	0	0	0	0	260
Ward Members Local Highway Measures	872	357	515	0	0	0	515	139	0	0	0	376	515
Winter Service Facility	958	772	97	89	0	0	186	0	0	0	0	186	186
Total Highways Schemes	138,502	70,186	23,074	15,140	15,051	15,051	68,316	60,636	0	0	0	7,680	68,316

CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2025/26- 2028/29

Scheme Description	Total Approved Budget £000	Forecast Expenditure					Total Forecast Budget 2025-29 £000	Forecast Funding					Total Funding £000
		Prior Years £000	Forecast Budget 2025/26 £000	Forecast Budget 2026/27 £000	Forecast Budget 2027/28 £000	Forecast Budget 2028/29 £000		Grants £000	External Contributions £000	Revenue Contributions £000	Capital Receipts £000	Prudential Borrowing £000	
Committed Schemes													
Strategic Transport & Parking Services													
Active Travel Fund	3,100	1,680	1,420	0	0	0	1,420	1,420	0	0	0	0	1,420
LEVI Capital Fund 23/24	2,172	0	543	543	543	543	2,172	2,172	0	0	0	0	2,172
Sustainable Travel Access Prog	2,438	2,238	200	0	0	0	200	200	0	0	0	0	200
Local Access - Crewe Transport Access Studies	400	188	212	0	0	0	212	212	0	0	0	0	212
Local Access - Macclesfield Transport Access Studies	300	161	139	0	0	0	139	139	0	0	0	0	139
LTP Development & Monitoring Studies	901	480	200	221	0	0	421	421	0	0	0	0	421
Digital Car Parking Solutions	140	113	27	0	0	0	27	0	0	0	0	27	27
Car Parking Improvements (including residents parking)	322	266	56	0	0	0	56	0	0	0	0	56	56
Total Strategic Transport & Parking Services Schemes	9,773	5,126	2,797	764	543	543	4,647	4,564	0	0	0	83	4,647
Total Committed Schemes	562,122	309,876	58,635	42,500	38,514	112,597	252,246	190,806	41,213	0	1,000	19,227	252,246
New Schemes													
Highways													
Highways Maintenance Capital	41,846	0	7,340	11,502	11,502	11,502	41,846	27,773	0	0	0	14,073	41,846
Highways: Depots (Macclesfield)	2,386	0	411	750	1,225	0	2,386	0	0	0	0	2,386	2,386
Highways: Depots (Wardle)	696	0	146	458	92	0	696	0	0	0	60	636	696
Strategic Transport & Parking Services													
Strategic Transport Model	750	0	250	250	250	0	750	0	0	0	0	750	750
Total New Schemes	45,678	0	8,147	12,960	13,070	11,502	45,679	27,773	0	0	60	17,845	45,679
Total Highways & Transport Schemes	607,800	309,876	66,782	55,460	51,584	124,099	297,925	218,579	41,213	0	1,060	37,072	297,925

Section 4: Reserves 2025/26

Adults and Health Reserve Account	Opening Balance 01 April 2024 £000	Transfers to General Fund - MTFS Feb 2024 £000	2024/25 Net Movement on Reserve £000	Transfers to General Fund Feb 2025 £000	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2025 £000	2025/26 Net Movement on Reserve £000	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2026 £000
PFI Equalisation - Extra Care Housing	2,857	(2,795)	0	(62)	0	46	46
Public Health Reserve	2,369	0	9	0	2,378	(1,025)	1,353
Adults and Health Reserves Total	5,226	(2,795)	9	(62)	2,378	(979)	1,399

Children and Families Reserve Account	Opening Balance 01 April 2024 £000	Transfers to General Fund - MTFS Feb 2024 £000	2024/25 Net Movement on Reserve £000	Transfers to General Fund Feb 2025 £000	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2025 £000	2025/26 Net Movement on Reserve £000	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2026 £000
Domestic Abuse Partnership	131	0	(131)	0	0	0	0
Troubled Families Initiative	1,593	0	(1,593)	0	0	0	0
Children and Families Reserves Total	1,724	0	(1,724)	0	0	0	0

Corporate Policy and Central Reserves	Opening Balance 01 April 2024	Transfers to General Fund - MTFS Feb 2024	2024/25 Net Movement on Reserve	Transfers to General Fund Feb 2025	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2025	2025/26 Net Movement on Reserve	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2026
Reserve Account	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Corporate Directorate Reserve	1,164	(935)	0	(229)	0	0	0
Collection Fund Management	8,154	(1,235)	(2,933)	0	3,986	3,469	7,455
Capital Financing Reserve	4,530	0	(4,530)	0	0	0	0
MTFS Reserve	2,914	(741)	255	(2,428)	0	0	0
2025/26 Transformation	0	0	3,500	0	3,500	(3,500)	0
Brighter Futures Transformation Programme	490	(470)	(20)	0	0	0	0
Section 31 Revenue Grants	14	0	0	(14)	0	0	0
Insurance Reserve	3,098	(3,098)	0	0	0	0	0
Elections General	132	0	0	0	132	0	132
Brexit Funding	13	(13)	0	0	0	0	0
HR	59	(59)	0	0	0	0	0
Pay Structure	54	0	0	(54)	0	0	0
Digital Solutions Architect	150	0	(150)	0	0	0	0
Corporate Policy and Central Reserves Total	20,772	(6,551)	(3,878)	(2,725)	7,618	(31)	7,587

Economy and Growth	Opening Balance 01 April 2024	Transfers to General Fund - MTFS Feb 2024	2024/25 Net Movement on Reserve	Transfers to General Fund Feb 2025	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2025	2025/26 Net Movement on Reserve	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2026
Reserve Account	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Place Directorate Reserve	1,164	0	(612)	(306)	246	(246)	0
Investment (Sustainability)	610	0	(21)	(40)	549	(549)	0
Legal Proceedings	212	0	(104)	0	108	(108)	0
Investment Portfolio	534	(534)	0	0	0	0	0
Homelessness & Housing Options - Revenue Grants	129	0	(129)	0	0	0	0
Tatton Park Trading Reserve	128	(128)	0	0	0	0	0
Economy and Growth Reserves Total	2,777	(662)	(866)	(346)	903	(903)	0

Environment and Communities	Opening Balance 01 April 2024	Transfers to General Fund - MTFS Feb 2024	2024/25 Net Movement on Reserve	Transfers to General Fund Feb 2025	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2025	2025/26 Net Movement on Reserve	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2026
Reserve Account	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Strategic Planning	568	(281)	(287)	0	0	0	0
Trees / Structures Risk Management	139	(55)	(30)	0	54	(54)	0
Air Quality	36	0	(5)	0	31	(31)	0
Licensing Enforcement	8	0	0	0	8	(8)	0
Flood Water Management (Emergency Planning)	2	0	(2)	0	0	0	0
Neighbourhood Planning	82	(41)	0	0	41	(41)	0
Spatial Planning - revenue grant	13	(13)	0	0	0	0	0
Street Cleansing	22	0	(4)	0	18	(18)	0
Environment and Communities Reserve Total	870	(390)	(328)	(0)	152	(152)	0

Highways and Transport Reserve Account	Opening Balance 01 April 2024	Transfers to General Fund - MTFS Feb 2024	2024/25 Net Movement on Reserve	Transfers to General Fund Feb 2025	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2025	2025/26 Net Movement on Reserve	Closing Balance Forecast 31 March 2026
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Rail and Transport Integration	385	(185)	(200)	0	0	0	0
Flood Risk and Adverse Weather Events	400	0	0	0	400	0	400
Highways Procurement Project	104	(20)	(15)	0	69	(69)	0
LEP-Local Transport Body	19	0	0	0	19	(19)	0
Highways and Transport Reserve Total	908	(205)	(215)	0	488	(88)	400

This page is intentionally left blank

Annex B - Draft Financial Reporting Timetable

Report	Financial Cycle	Committee	When
Service Budgets 2025/26	Planning	All Service Committees	March/April 2025
Cheshire Pension Fund update	Reporting	Finance Sub Committee	March 2025 (available on Members hub)
Medium Term Financial Strategy Assumptions and Reporting Cycle for 2026-30	Planning	Finance Sub Committee	June 2025
Financial Management Code update	Reporting	Finance Sub Committee	June 2025
Financial Outturn 2024/25	Reporting	All Committees / Council	June 2025 July 2025 (Council)
Final Outturn and Draft Statement of Accounts 2024/25	Reporting	Audit and Governance	July 2025
Companies Draft Statements of Accounts 2024/25	Reporting	Audit and Governance / Finance Sub Committee	July 2025 September 2025
First Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	All Committees / Council	September / October 2025 October 2025 (Council)
ECW (Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington) First Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	September 2025
Companies First Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	September 2025
Cheshire Pension Fund update	Reporting	Finance Sub Committee	June 2025 (available on Members hub)

Annex B - Draft Financial Reporting Timetable

Report	Financial Cycle	Committee	When
Medium Term Financial Planning Assumptions - update	Planning	Finance Sub Committee	September 2025
Cheshire Pension Fund update	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	September 2025
ECW (Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington) 2024/25 Accounts - Audit & Governance Committee	Reporting	Audit and Governance / Council	September 2025 October 2025 (Council)
Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation for 2026/27-2029/30 - launch	Planning	Corporate Policy Committee	October 2025
Second Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	All Committees / Council	November 2025 December 2025 (Council)
ECW (Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington) Second Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	November 2025
Companies Second Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	November 2025
Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2026/27-2029/30 - committees to review their respective Service proposals	Planning	All Committees	November 2025
Final Statement of Accounts 2024/25	Reporting	Audit and Governance / Council	December 2025
Audit of Accounts 2024/25 - report from A&G Committee to Council on main items from the external auditors report	Reporting	Audit and Governance / Council	December 2025
Companies Audited Financial Statements 2024/25	Reporting	Audit and Governance / Council	December 2025

Annex B - Draft Financial Reporting Timetable

Report	Financial Cycle	Committee	When
Council Tax Base 2026/27	Reporting	Corporate Policy Committee / Council	November 2025 December 2025 (Council)
Financial Management Code – In Year update	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	January 2026
Cheshire Pension Fund update	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	January 2026
Third Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	All Committees / Council	January / February 2026 February 2026 (Council)
ECW (Enterprise Cheshire & Warrington) Third Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	January 2026
Companies Third Financial Review 2025/26	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	January 2026
Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2026/27 to 2029/30 plus Provisional Settlement update	Planning	All Committees	January / February 2026
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026/27-2029/30 - including any supplementary updates	Reporting	Corporate Policy Committee / Council	February 2026
Cheshire Pension Fund update	Monitoring	Finance Sub Committee	March 2026
Service Budgets 2026/27	Planning	Finance Sub Committee	March 2026

This page is intentionally left blank

OPEN

Highways & Transport Committee

3 April 2025

Greater Bollin Trail

Report of: Tom Moody, Director of Transport and Infrastructure

Report Reference No: HTC/42/24-25

Ward(s) Affected: Mere, Little Bollington with Agden, Millington and Rostherne, Ashley, Mobberley, Pott Shrigley, Prestbury, Styal, Handforth, Adlington, Poynton with Worth, Wilmslow, Mottram St Andrew, Disley, Kettleshulme and Lyme Handley

For Decision or Scrutiny: Decision

Purpose of Report

- 1 This report highlights the recent work undertaken to develop a walking, wheeling and cycling route within the north of the Borough known as the Greater Bollin Trail.

Executive Summary

- 2 The Council's new corporate plan is centred on enabling prosperity and wellbeing for all. Commitment 1 includes connecting communities with Active Travel. The Local Transport Plan also puts walking and cycling at the heart of its planning and design of the Borough.
- 3 On 9 March 2021 Cabinet approved the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for Crewe, Congleton, Macclesfield and Wilmslow, The LCWIPs set out the Council's plans for high quality walking and cycling networks and how the infrastructure should be planned and delivered across the Borough. The LCWIPs identified several schemes that could be delivered in the short-medium, and medium- long term. This work prompted key stakeholders to work together to develop a longer term, ambitious plan, to improve active travel links across North Cheshire.
- 4 In 2024 technical work has been undertaken to investigate a Greater Bollin Trail (GBT). This would provide a high-quality multi-use and

primarily traffic-free walking, cycling, and wheeling connection providing east-west connectivity across the north of the Borough, and linking into Greater Manchester. The initial work has identified a route corridor that could be taken forwards subject to the Committees approval and subject to appropriate funding being available. This will be a long-term endeavour.

- 5 The route corridor identified will be subject to further detailed development and design work, with public consultation necessary before sections of the route are developed and implemented. There is a need to work with stakeholders to further develop the route and resolve any land and property agreements required, as the proposed route crosses the boundary of a number of neighbouring local authorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Highways & Transport Committee is recommended to:

1. Support the concept and objectives of the Greater Bollin Trail, noting the indicative phasing approach as set out in Appendix 1 and that the general route corridor is included in the Council's Statutory Plans, including the newly emerging Local Transport Plan and Local Plan.
2. Delegate to officers to work with neighbouring authorities to ensure aspects of the route outside of Cheshire East are incorporated into their relevant statutory plans.
3. Delegate that the Head of Infrastructure works with key stakeholders to identify, develop and submit external funding bids to take forward to delivery elements of the route.
4. Delegate to the Head of Infrastructure and Head of Estates authority to enter into agreements, licences, easements for the acquisition of land or other rights required for the scheme, in consultation with the S151 Officer and the Executive Director of Place.

Background

- 6 On 9 March 2021 Cabinet approved the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) for Crewe, Congleton, Macclesfield and Wilmslow. The LCWIPs set out the Council's plans for high quality walking and cycling networks and how the infrastructure should be planned and delivered across the Borough. The LCWIP identified a number of schemes that could be delivered in the short-medium, and medium- long term. In developing the LCWIP it considered the following policies, the Cheshire East Local Transport Plan 4 (2019-2024), Cheshire East Local Plan, Cheshire and Warrington LEP transport strategy, Public Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, Cheshire East Local Air Quality Strategy and Sustainable Modes of Travel to school strategy.

- 7 Building on the adopted LCWIPs, stakeholders identified potential for a longer-term east-west trail and the need to provide some mitigation for (at the time) proposed HS2 construction routes.
- 8 In 2024, technical work has been undertaken to investigate a GBT. The GBT would provide a high-quality multi-use and primarily traffic-free walking, cycling, and wheeling connection providing a connection across the north of the Borough, and linking into neighbouring authorities. The initial work has identified a route corridor that could be taken forwards subject to the Committees approval and subject to appropriate funding being available.
- 9 The route would provide connections between established trails, such as the Middlewood Way, Bridgewater Way and the Trans Pennine Trail, to public transport nodes and links to towns, villages and their communities and places of interest including Lyme Park, Quarry Bank Mill, the proposed Tatton Services, Tatton Park and Dunham Massey. In doing so, the trail will attract visitors to the area, boosting spend in the local economy while also providing connections to key trip attractors for local populations to walk, cycle and wheel to work, school or to enjoy the outdoors in addition to equestrian use. The route would also provide links to key employment connections such as to Manchester Airport, the proposed Tatton Services, Adlington Business Park and Altrincham. The route would also link into the Handforth Garden Village and, in part, relies on this development coming forward.
- 10 There is an ambition to deliver the GBT as it will improve the attractiveness of the region which will encourage inward investment and enable businesses to prosper, it will also support local decongestion, thus improving air quality and the local environment. The Trail will also provide accessibility to rural areas and will provide access to the associated health benefits of walking and cycling. The route would also encourage sustainable development should developments in the vicinity of the route come forward.
- 11 The technical work, documented in an Options Assessment Report (OAR) in Appendix 1, outlines the preferred route corridor. It also explains the technical work undertaken to come to this conclusion which involved site visits, workshops, evidence gathering, setting a vision and objectives and assessment of various route options.
- 12 The Objectives of the GBT are:
 - (a) Provide east-west connectivity across the borough as well as linking to other surrounding districts and boroughs where possible, including links to/ with local communities and job

opportunities, key public transport nodes, providing both leisure and utility use of the trail

- (b) Provide a high-quality route, accessible to all, which considers the impact of potential major infrastructure schemes e.g. NPR on walking, wheeling, equestrians, runners and cycling.
 - (c) Improve access to leisure routes, green space and the countryside that enhances the natural environment including green/ blue infrastructure where possible.
 - (d) Increase the number of walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys, supporting decarbonisation across the borough and improving health and wellbeing.
 - (e) Increase the value of the borough's visitor economy, attracting additional users and supporting the growth of new and existing businesses.
- 13 The route is a long-term strategic aim and will take many years for the full route to be completed. With the route covering a sizeable distance, it is necessary to provide the route corridor in phases into the short, medium and long-term. The priority short-term section has been identified as the central section between Manchester Airport and the Middlewood Way. This section utilises some existing infrastructure and provides key links to leisure, tourism and employment opportunities. Further detail on the remainder of the phasing can be found in Appendix 1.
- 14 It is important to recognise that progression of this route is not funded at this stage. Initial work to date has been funded by the Shared Prosperity Fund. Acknowledging this ambition within statutory plans would mean the Council is more likely to receive Department for Transport (DfT) funding in future years, as part of national funding programmes. Funding to deliver the Greater Bollin Trail could be drawn from external sources such as DfT specific grants or developer contributions or from mitigation because of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR).
- 15 Previous HS2 plans had a significant construction impact on the local highway network, particularly along Ashley Road, that would have been mitigated by the GBT proposals. There remains the potential for the route to overlap with the proposed NPR construction plans, although NPR plans remain under development. This will need to be further reviewed when the proposals are known.

Consultation and Engagement

- 16 Stakeholder engagement has been integral to the development of route options. Through site visits and workshop sessions, stakeholders

supported development of the vision, objectives and route principles as well as emerging route options, and were engaged throughout to provide feedback as the routes progressed. Stakeholders included representatives from neighbouring Local Authorities, the National Trust, Tatton Estates, British Cycling, Sustrans, Manchester Airports Group (MAG), Transport for Greater Manchester, National Highways and the British Horse Society.

- 17 Further stakeholder engagement was held with key organisations across Autumn-Winter 2024. This included online briefings with Town and Parish Councils, neighbouring Local authorities and transport organisations such as Sustrans. A summary of feedback is included in Appendix 2 which shows support for the route.
- 18 When the route progresses to more detailed design stages, wider consultation will be required.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 19 Technical work has been undertaken in 2024 to determine a preferred corridor for the Greater Bollin Trail – the Options Assessment Report can be found in Appendix 1. It is recommended that the Council support the concept, objectives and route corridor and seek to include this in policy going forward to provide a strategic approach when any grant funding opportunities arise.
- 20 Noting the above, to progress this ambition, officers need to both work with key stakeholders to develop and seek external funding opportunities that may arise to progress the route, including developers and, if applicable, Northern Powerhouse Rail.

Other Options Considered

- 21 The Greater Bollin Trail is not a mandatory route however development of walking, wheeling and cycling ambitions and infrastructure is important, and local authorities with plans in place are well placed to make the case for future investment that is coordinated and integrated. Having the plan as adopted Policy will strengthen the Council’s negotiating position if NPR has similar construction impacts to the previous HS2 scheme.

Option	Impact	Risk
Do not include route in policy	Reduced chance of gaining external funding	Route does not progress

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 22 As the local highway and transport authority, Cheshire East Council has a legal duty to maintain a safe and efficient highway network and develop and maintain a Local Transport Plan. Developing a coordinated, high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling network will contribute to fulfilling this legal duty.
- 23 If the Greater Bollin Trail is included as is suggested in any future Council policies and plans, they will be subject to future consultation and formal decision making by the appropriate Council committee.
- 24 In developing this route further, the appropriate legal processes will need to be followed for the implementation of specific schemes e.g. Traffic Regulation Orders. This will be completed for specific schemes as they come forward for development and implementation.
- 25 Subject to agreement with landowners, there may in the future be a need to update the Council's Definitive Map and Statement that records details of all public rights of way to include the new routes created so that they can be formally used by the public.
- 26 To progress the scheme, it will be necessary for the Council to apply for grant funding when / if it becomes available, currently there is no budget set aside for this project. If grant funding does become available officers should follow the Financial Procedure Rules detailed within the Constitution as to who should make the application and what reporting mechanisms need to be put in place.
- 27 The scheme will require the acquisition of land, this should be carried out initially by negotiation, should the negotiations fail the Council may need to consider if it should use its compulsory powers of purchase ensuring that the powers are only used when necessary, that they are used in the public interest and that the purposes for which the compulsory purchase order is made justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected, and that the purposes for which the compulsory purchase order is made justify interfering with the human rights of those with an interest in the land affected. In addition, the Council needs to ensure that there are no legal, financial or other impediments to the enable the scheme to be brought forwards.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 28 Feasibility funding was authorised by a decision delegated to the Executive Director in October 2024 following an expression of interest

from the Council’s Active Travel team. Work to date has been funded by a grant from the Shared Prosperity Fund.

- 29 There are no direct finance implications arising from this committee report, however, recognising the proposed route corridor in policy will put the Council in a stronger position to gain external funding for taking this forward.
- 30 This report adopts a preferred corridor, not a preferred route, and therefore there are no blight implications associated with this.
- 31 The Greater Bollin Trail would become part of the approved Capital Programme for Transport and Highways once a funding stream has been formally agreed and the necessary financial approvals are in place. In order to ensure that the Council’s capital programme is affordable and sustainable in the long term any scheme requiring Council resources will require review by the Capital Programme Board before going forward for appropriate approval in line with the constitution.

Policy

- 32 Supporting the concept and objectives of the Greater Bollin Trail, and including it in the Council’s Statutory Plans, including the newly emerging Local Transport Plan and Local Plan, will ensure a joined-up policy approach. The new Corporate Plan priorities this reports supports are set out below.

Unlocking Prosperity for all	Improving health and wellbeing	An effective and enabling Council
Communities connected through an improved, accessible rural and urban transport network including active travel	Reduce health inequalities across the borough through access to Active Travel and the Countryside	Service delivery and new ideas are shaped by consultation and engagement

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 33 The Council will fully evaluate the equality implications of the proposed Greater Bollin Trail through an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) when the route gets taken forward to the next stage of delivery. The EqIA will focus on the protected characteristic groups (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and marriage and civil partnership). It is not

anticipated that there will be any equality impacts as the route will be designed to relevant national standards where possible.

Human Resources

34 There are no direct implications for Human Resources.

Risk Management

35 Risk registers and risk assessments will be produced as part of the Council's standard approach to project management and governance as sections of the route come forward for delivery.

Rural Communities

36 The Greater Bollin Trail route passes through and connects rural areas. The route should be integrated into Statutory Plans going forward, including the newly emerging Local Transport Plan and Local Plan to ensure policy is joined up and coordinated with other transport improvements in rural areas.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

37 The Greater Bollin Trail would aim where possible to be in line with Local Transport Note 01/20 – Cycle Infrastructure Design and therefore aimed to be suitable for a competent 12-year-old. Pedestrian infrastructure should follow best practice including guidance set out in the Manual for Streets 1 & 2. Parts of the Greater Bollin Trail in the vicinity of schools could be considered as part of the Council's Sustainable Modes of Travel to School programme.

Public Health

38 The public health benefits of active travel are well established. Travelling actively helps people meet the recommended physical activity targets, improves physical and mental health, whilst reducing the risks of poor health and premature death.

Climate Change

39 Cheshire East Council have Carbon neutral council with minimum offset by 2030, influencing carbon reduction and green energy production across the borough by 2045. The Greater Bollin Trail would enhance active travel infrastructure and help encourage walking, wheeling and cycling as a mode of travel and support carbon reduction and more sustainable travel.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Paul Griffiths Head of Infrastructure Paul.Griffiths@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	1 – Greater Bollin Trail Options Assessment Report 2 – Stakeholder Engagement Summary 3 – Proposed corridor / route
Background Papers:	None

This page is intentionally left blank

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

Document no: 1
Version: 4

Cheshire East Council

Greater Bollin Trail



Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

Client name: Cheshire East Council

Project name: Greater Bollin Trail

Client reference:

Project no: BRJ10676

Document no: 1

Project manager: LP

Version: 4

Prepared by: OH

Date: 19.02.2025

File name: BRJ10677_GBT OAR_v4

Document status: Final

Document history and status

Version	Date	Description	Author	Checked	Reviewed	Approved
0	01.05.24	Draft for comment	OH	LP	ES&EH	LP
1	03.06.24	Final	OH	LP	ES	LP
2	06.06.24	Final	OH	ES	LP	LP
3	16.10.24	Draft	OH	LP	OH	LP
4	19.02.25	Final	OH	LP	OH	LP

Distribution of copies

Version	Issue approved	Date issued	Issued to	Comments
0	01.05.24	01.05.24	CEC	Draft for comment
1	03.06.24	03.06.24	CEC	Final, addressing comments
2	06.06.24	06.06.24	CEC	Final, addressing minor comments
3	16.10.24	16.10.24	CEC	Draft, minor changes
4	19.02.25	19.02.25	CEC	Final

Jacobs U.K. Limited

5 First Street
Manchester M15 4GU
United Kingdom

T +44 (0)161 235 6000

F +44 (0)161 235 6001

www.jacobs.com



without the written permission of Jacobs Group constitutes an infringement of copyright. Jacobs, the Jacobs logo, and all other Jacobs Group trademarks are the property of Jacobs Group.

NOTICE: This document has been prepared exclusively for the use and benefit of Jacobs Group client. Jacobs Group accepts no liability or responsibility for any use or reliance upon this document by any third party.

Executive Summary

The Greater Bollin Trail will stretch east-west across the Cheshire Plains to the Peak District Fringe and provide a high-quality multi-use and primarily traffic-free walking, cycling, and wheeling connection to the Trans Pennine Trail at both the eastern end in Stockport and western end north of Dunham Massey. The route would provide connections between established trails, such as the Middlewood Way, Bridgewater Way and the Trans Pennine Trail, to public transport nodes and links to towns, villages and their communities and places of interest including Lyme Park, Quarry Bank Mill, the proposed Tatton Services, Tatton Park and Dunham Massey. In doing so, the trail will attract visitors to the area, boosting spend in the local economy while also providing connections to key trip attractors for local populations to walk, cycle and wheel to work, school or to enjoy the outdoors in addition to equestrian use. The route would also provide links to key employment connections such as Manchester Airport, the proposed Tatton Services, Adlington Business Park and Altrincham. The initial Business Case was positive with a benefit cost ratio of 3.5 and the total benefits were estimated at £49.3m for the entire route, made up of combined Active Mode Appraisal Tool (AMAT) and tourism benefits of £10.1m and £39.2m. There is an ambition to deliver the GBT as it will improve the attractiveness of the region which will encourage inward investment and enable businesses to prosper, it will also support local decongestion, thus improving air quality and the local environment. The Trail will also provide accessibility to rural areas and will provide access to the associated health benefits to walking and cycling. This Options Assessment Report (OAR) has been prepared on behalf of Cheshire East Council (CEC) to assess the feasibility of providing this multi-use trail, referred to as the 'Greater Bollin Trail (GBT)' due to its location in the River Bollin catchment.

A detailed evidence base was established to provide a foundation for development of the trail alignment, including consideration to where the trail may link to and through, including key elements such as existing amenities and trails, public transport and active travel networks as well as health, deprivation and disability data. Stakeholder engagement has been integral to the development of route options. Through site visits and workshop sessions, stakeholders supported development of the vision, objectives and route principles as well as emerging route options, and were engaged throughout to provide feedback as the routes progressed. Stakeholders included representatives from Local Authorities, the National Trust, Tatton Estates, British Cycling, Sustrans, Manchester Airports Group (MAG), Transport for Greater Manchester, National Highways and the British Horse Society.

The vision for the GBT has been established as:

To deliver a trail that provides a much-needed east-west connection between established trails and public transport nodes, directly linking towns, villages and their communities to tourist centres and key attractors. The trail will draw in visitors to the local area, boosting the economy and elevating the active travel offer of Cheshire East. The trail will be direct and attractive and primarily traffic-free for walkers, wheelers, equestrians, runners and cyclists; providing directional signage and barrier free sections to promote active travel and creating sustainable travel options which is accessible for all. There will also be health and wellbeing benefits for those who utilise the route.

Defining the Route

A two-stage approach was adopted to develop the proposed route alignment. Initially, route corridors were established based upon the route principles, key origins and destinations and likely use. These corridors were then split geographically into the western, central and eastern corridors due to differing characteristics.

The route corridors were assessed using a Multi-Criteria Assessment Framework (MCAF), which was developed in consultation with CEC and stakeholders. Corridors were scored based on their strategic fit and effectiveness, based

on a number of sub-criteria within each main category. The highest scoring options from each of the western, central and eastern corridors were taken forward for further assessment.

The second stage of assessment looked at sections within the corridors which reflected more specific alignments within the corridor area. The sections were identified through a number of methods including workshops, 1-2-1 meetings, site visits, previous work undertaken and desktop research. For the route sections identified, part of the investigative process was to note the key information and conditions of each section. For example, the opportunities and challenges each section presented were detailed, as was the ability for the section to meet LTN 01/20 compliance. Also noted were the existing routes and Public Rights of Way (ProW), the propensity to cycle within the area, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, land ownership and links to the public transport network. Each section was scored for deliverability, adopting a similar MCAF.

The outcome of the MCAF resulted in a preferred route. A map of the preferred route is shown in Figure 0-1, with Figure 0-2 providing a visualisation of what the GBT alongside the River Bollin could look like, east of Wilmslow.

The Preferred Route

Western:

The route within the western corridor utilises the existing Manchester Airport tunnel, leaving the option open to link along Ashley Road or Marsh Lane. It is anticipated that Marsh Lane would be more desirable for users due to the quieter nature of the road and is part of the Cheshire Cycleway, however both options would benefit from being explored further and could require significant investment. The route provides connections from Manchester Airport to the Trans Pennine Trail, providing links to Tatton Park, the proposed Tatton Services and Dunham Massey. The route would mainly provide support to leisure use trips due to the rural nature of the area. The route would also provide some support to commuter usage for trips between Wilmslow, Handforth and Manchester Airport.

Central:

Two alignments through the central section of the route have been identified. The northern route section could be delivered as a standalone project, providing day trip opportunities that can be accessed by public transport from Handforth and Styal railway stations (as well as local buses). The northern route section would provide for utility trips as well as leisure trips as it connects to key businesses such as Handforth Dean retail park and Waters, local communities and a link to Quarry Bank Mill and Manchester Airport. Further to this, the northern route section would likely be a lower cost solution due to utilising existing infrastructure of the A555, Handforth Dean retail park or the future Handforth Garden Village. There is an option to link through Handforth Dean retail park, or through the Handforth Garden Village, which would be the preference if timescales for delivery of the GBT and Handforth Garden Village allowed.

The southern route section within the central corridor would be more suited for leisure use trips, providing a higher-quality solution, though would require significant infrastructure improvements and land acquisition or the agreement of access rights. Depending on funding available, the southern route section within the central corridor is preferred as it is more likely to draw in regional and national visitors to the local area, boosting the economy and elevating the active travel offer of Cheshire East. This would also be primarily traffic-free for walkers, wheelers, equestrians, runners and cyclists; promoting active travel and creating sustainable travel options which are accessible for all.

Eastern:

The route section within the eastern corridor connects Disley to the Middlewood Way through the National Trust site of Lyme Park, providing benefits to the community of Disley. This route section is largely functional in its existing state, subject to landowner agreements and/ or changes to the legal status of ProW, however, has a

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

challenging topography and surfacing in parts, and therefore would require investment to bring it up to an accessible offer that is suitable for users of all ages.

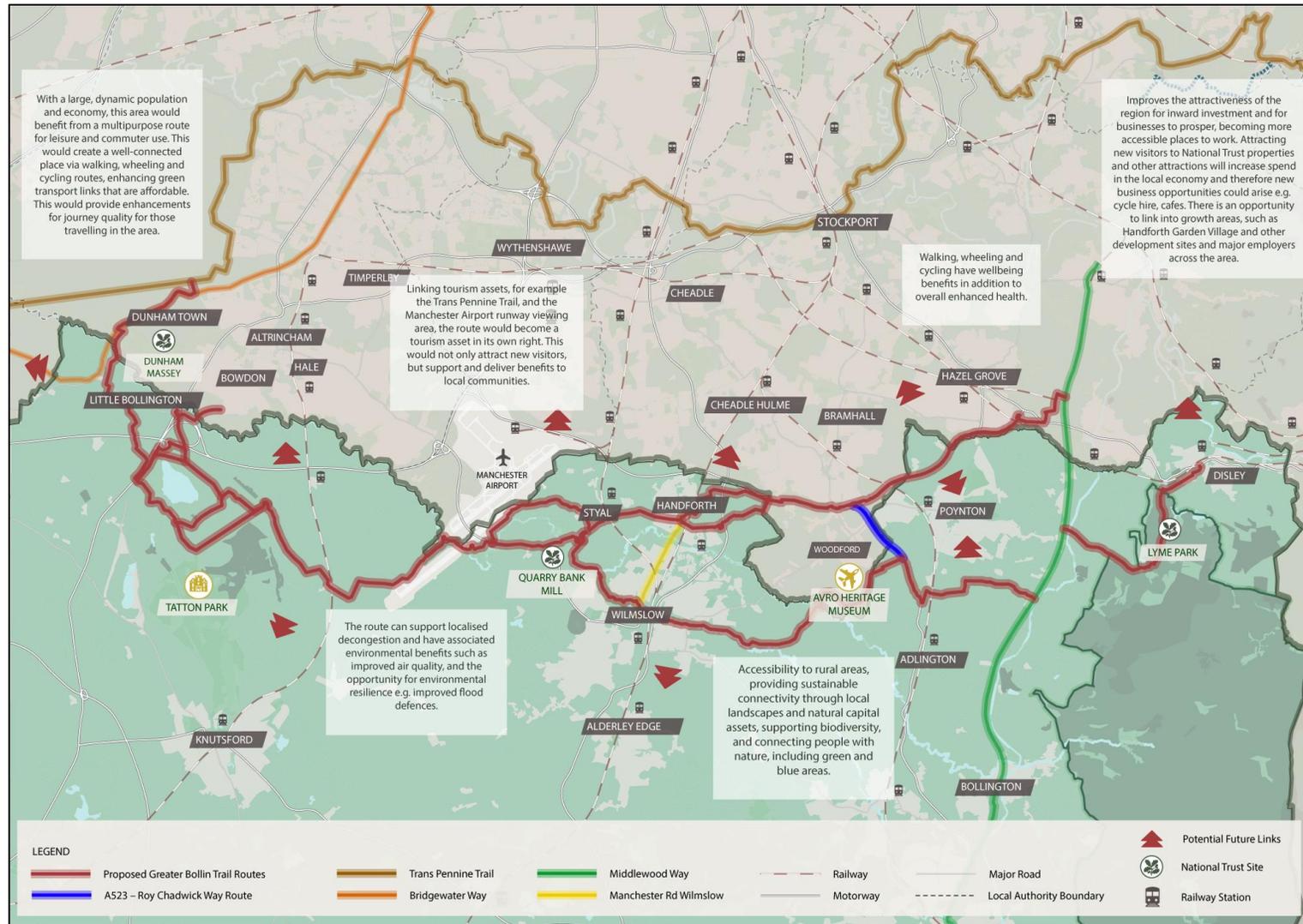


Figure 0-1 – GBT preferred route



Figure 0-2 – GBT indicative visualisation

Phasing

Phasing of the preferred route has been undertaken to establish which elements could be delivered in the short-term, medium-long term and long-term. The short-term phasing reflects the northern section option of the Central Corridor, utilising existing infrastructure and providing key links to leisure, tourism and employment opportunities. An initial high-level assessment of the anticipated benefits of this short-term phase has been undertaken. This is estimated to be approximately £12.4 million. The medium-term phasing reflects the Western and Eastern Corridors, with the Western Corridor ideally being delivered before the main construction phase of Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR). Both corridors would be subject to funding and land/ access rights. The long-term phasing reflects the southern section of the Central Corridor as further investigations into necessary infrastructure would be required, though, technical work and land access/ negotiations could be progressed during the short/medium-term to work towards the delivery of this corridor.

Next Steps

Recommended next steps include the securing of funding to further develop the scheme and scheme designs, as well as to integrate the ambitions for GBT into the next Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Local Plan via potential funding through the Local Infrastructure Plan. CEC should also continue to work alongside partners, including other Local Authorities, to deliver the preferred route and link into networks outside of Cheshire East as well as continuing the established Steering Group to work with stakeholders and progress the vision for a route.

Contents

Executive Summary	iv
Contents	x
1. Introduction.....	1
1.1 Purpose of the Report	1
1.2 Background and Project History.....	1
1.3 Structure of the report	6
2. Policy Review.....	7
3. Evidence Base.....	11
3.1 Introduction and Data Sources	11
3.2 Amenities and Existing Trails.....	11
3.3 Public Transport and the Active Travel Network	13
4. Vision and Objectives	16
4.1 Introduction.....	16
4.2 Vision.....	16
4.3 Objectives	17
4.4 Route Principles	17
4.5 Design Principles	21
5. Options Development.....	28
5.1 Introduction.....	28
5.2 Route Corridors	28
5.3 Route Sections.....	30
6. Options Assessment	32
6.1 Introduction.....	32
6.2 Multi-Criteria Assesment Framework (MCAF)	32
6.3 Corridor Sift	33
6.4 Route Sift.....	38
7. Phasing	60
8. Potential Funding Sources.....	64
9. Recommendations and next steps	67

Appendix A – Policy Review

Appendix B – Evidence Base

Appendix C – MCAF Scoring Matrix

Appendix D – Environment Technical Note

Appendix E – Route Sections

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Report

This OAR documents the work undertaken as part of the project feasibility stage for the development of a multi-use trail broadly following the River Bollin in Cheshire East. The aim of the feasibility stage was to identify a preferred route alignment for the GBT that can be taken forward to the next stage of project development.

This study (stage 1 identified in Figure 1-1) was commissioned by CEC in November 2023 following a successful bid to undertake this stage of work using Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF) monies. Potential future stages of project development are shown in the flowchart below.

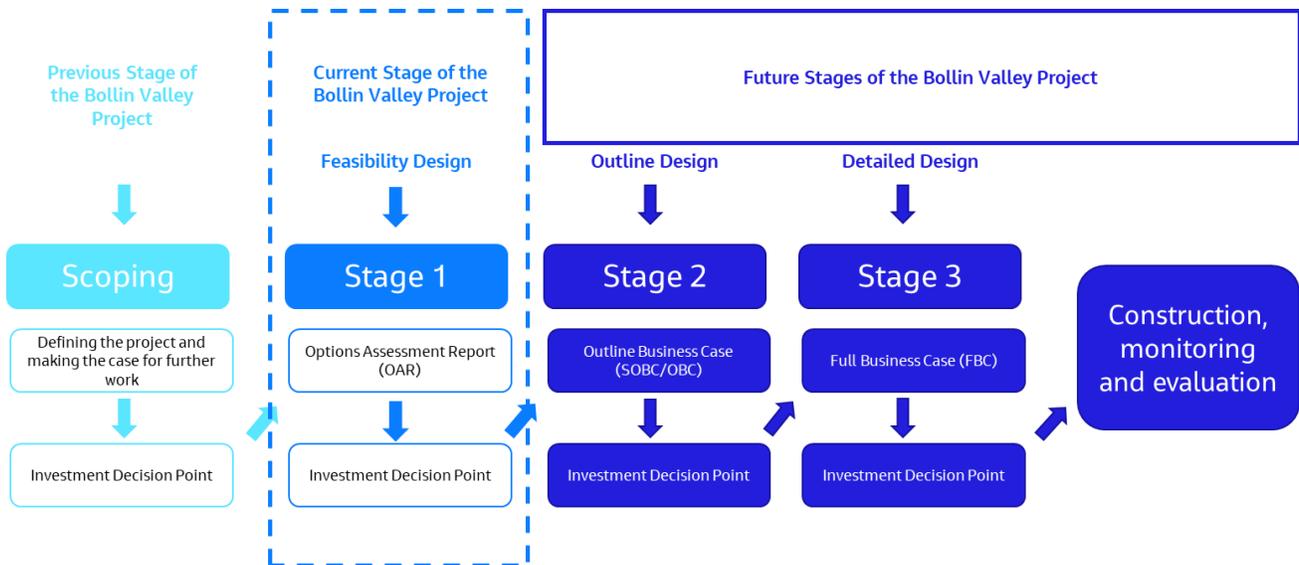


Figure 1-1: Work stages

In order to determine a preferred route alignment, various stages of work have been undertaken. This has included gaining an understanding of the existing policy context and data and evidence relevant to the GBT. Further, this included setting a vision and associated objectives to guide the GBT. Following this, various route corridors and route sections have been considered, which have been taken through an agreed MCAF where the highest scoring route section across each route corridor determined the preferred route. The route sections have then been prioritised and phased into the short-term, medium-term and long-term timescales.

1.2 Background and Project History

A desire for a high-quality walking, wheeling and cycling trail broadly following the River Bollin is not new. A scoping stage of work undertaken in Spring 2023 brought together initial development work undertaken by local stakeholders as well as information from existing routes in the area (e.g. the existing Bollin Valley Way and associated cycle trail). To aid the scoping stage, suggestions were captured from key stakeholders, complemented by a site visit and an interactive workshop. The project history is summarised below and visualised in Figure 1-2.



Figure 1-2: Project background

In recent years, the Tatton Group in partnership with the National Trust and a local volunteer/ regular cyclist have undertaken route optioneering work and tabled a potential route option, this is shown in Figure 1-3 overleaf. The scheme was known as the 'Bollin Cycle Way' and focussed on progressing a route that was considered to be deliverable, noting that significant sections of the route are to some degree already in place. The scheme was proposed to be located in the north of Cheshire East, close to the boundary with Greater Manchester. It ran between Dunham Massey in the west, past Manchester Airport and Handforth, and Lyme Park in the east.

As noted previously, in Spring 2023, Jacobs was commissioned by CEC to undertake a scoping stage of work, supported by a technical note, to draw together a summary of work undertaken to date for the development of a multi-use trail within the Bollin Valley area of Cheshire East. The aim of the scoping stage was to identify the strategic case for the scheme, including the need for intervention, the type of route and its audience, and the potential value that an active travel route could bring to the local economy. For example, across the route the combined Active Mode Appraisal Tool (AMAT) and tourism benefits for different the sections have been estimated to have a value of between £12 million and £50 million. A set of indicative route options were developed; this is shown in Figure 1-4. As part of this work, a site visit was undertaken in March 2023. Attendees included representatives from Jacobs, CEC, the National Trust, Tatton Group and British Cycling. The site visit helped determine the objectives and quality of a proposed route. A subsequent workshop was undertaken in March 2023 with various stakeholder groups including CEC, Manchester Airport, Tatton Group, Sustrans, the National Trust and local volunteers. The objectives of the meeting were to determine views on who the target audience is, what type of route is desired, key places the route could connect and why the route is needed.

The work concluded that that there are significant tourism benefits from providing the full route linking into the Trans Pennine Trail, and there are benefits to local employers such as Manchester Airport and that will prosper and become more accessible places to work. There will also be new business opportunities along the route such as cycle hire and cafes as well as rural diversification, both will attract new visitors to the area whilst supporting and delivering benefits to existing local communities. The initial Business Case was positive with a benefit cost ratio of 3.5 and the total benefits were estimated at £49.3m for the entire route, made up of combined Active Mode Appraisal Tool (AMAT) and tourism benefits of £10.1m and £39.2m. This calculation made no account of trips generated by major proposed changes such as the NPR proposal.

Following the technical note produced by Jacobs in April 2023, CEC commissioned Cheshire East Highways (CEH) to conduct a feasibility study into an improved walking and cycling route across two identified crucial sections of the planned 'Bollin Valley Way': Section 1 – Ashley Road from its junction with Rostherne Lane to the access point for Birtles Farm and Section 2 – From Birtles Farm, along Mobberley Public Footpath No.70 to Kell House Equestrian Centre, and continuing onto Smith Lane. These were chosen due to their interface with the proposed HS2 alignment. The objective of the report was to inform discussions with HS2 Limited at the time regarding measures to mitigate construction traffic and to analyse each of the sections and identify the most suitable options for the provision of a new walking, wheeling and cycling route which will ultimately provide a fundamental link in the Bollin Valley Way.

The above work and route alignments were the starting point for this OAR (stage 1).



Figure 1-3: Indicative Bollin Cycle Way

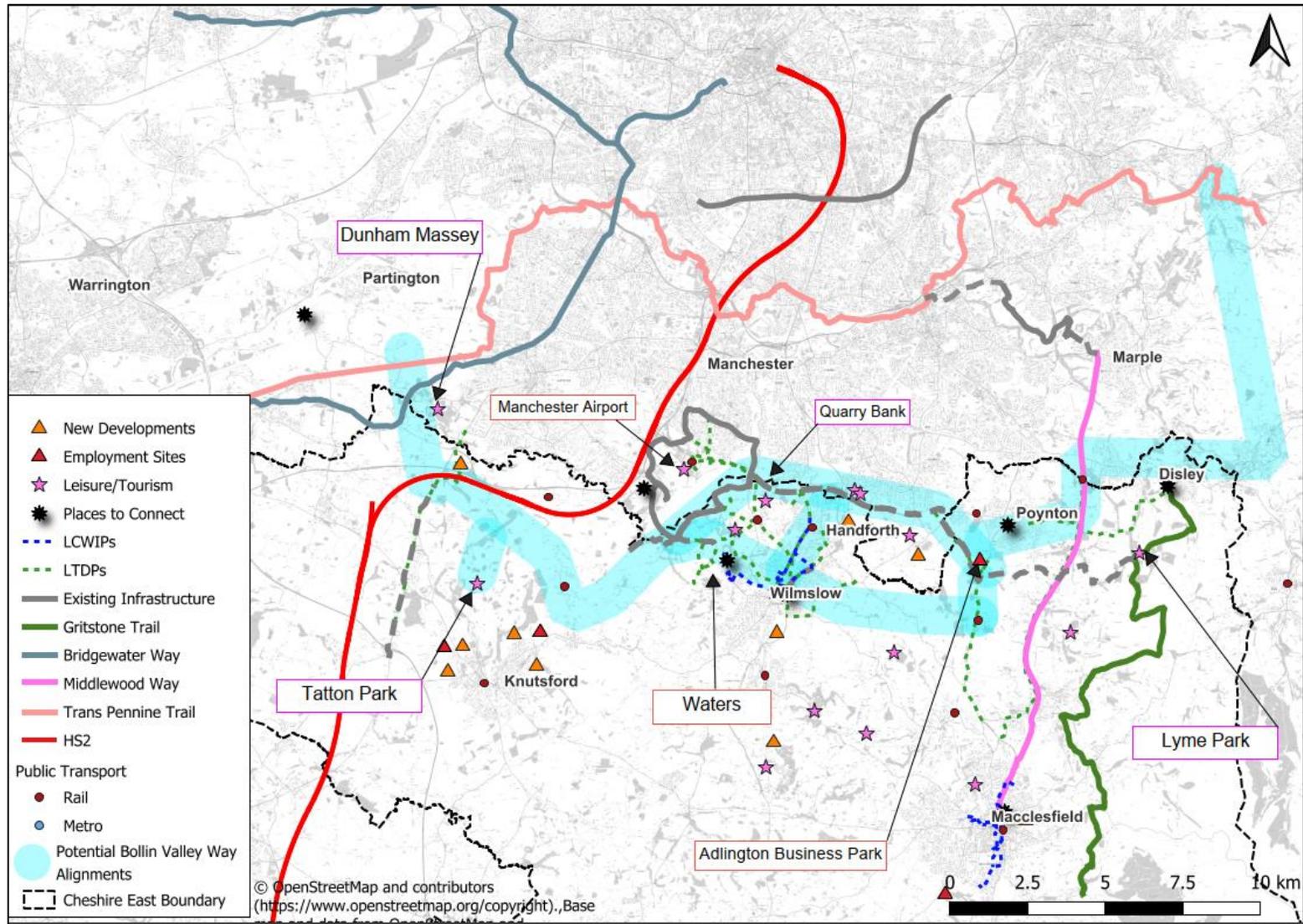


Figure 1-4 Scoping stage alignment of the GBT

1.3 Structure of the report

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2 – Policy Review:** reviews relevant national, regional and local policy and guidance documents to gather an understanding of how the scheme would align with policy ambitions.
- **Section 3 – Evidence Base:** reviews baseline data across Cheshire East and surrounding Local Authorities to understand the area surrounding the GBT.
- **Section 4 – Vision and Objectives:** sets out the vision, objectives, and route principles of the GBT.
- **Section 5 – Options Development:** outlines the route corridors and route sections considered in each of the corridors.
- **Section 6 – Options Assessment:** sets out the Multi Criteria Assessment Framework (MCAF) and explains the results of the corridor sift and route sift to determine a preferred route.
- **Section 7 – Phasing:** establishes which elements of the route sections identified in the route sift could be delivered in the short-term, medium-long term and long-term.
- **Section 8 – Potential Funding Sources:** sets out options for future funding.
- **Section 9 – Recommendations and next steps:** details what the next steps should be regarding the preferred route and the way forward.

2. Policy Review

It is important that a strong evidence base for the project is created. As such, a review of relevant national, regional and local policy and guidance documents has been undertaken to gather an understanding of how the scheme would align with policy ambitions. As a result of this review, it is evident that this project and its objectives contribute towards several national, regional and local strategies set out below. The policy review is summarised in Table 2-1 below and the full policy review can be found in Appendix A.

Table 2-1: Policy review summary

Geography	Policy Title	Summary	Relevance
National	Department for Transport, Gear Change (2019)	Released in 2019 by the Department for Transport (DfT), this document outlines the plans to make England 'a great walking and cycling nation'. This is defined by the following quote from the document: <i>'Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit'</i> . Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030.	This policy is relevant as the GBT would create a safe, attractive and well-connected route for walking and cycling. The proposed route could be used by people to exercise and improve their health as well as support local businesses along the route as a result of increased footfall.
	Department for Transport, Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 01/20) (2020)	The Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 01/20) policy document provides guidance and good practice for the design of cycle infrastructure, in support of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS). The standards set out in this document aim to help cycling become a form of mass transit in many more places and for it to be seen as a means of everyday transport.	This policy is relevant to the GBT as the route aims to comply with LTN 01/20 guidance. The guidance on off-carriageway routes is particularly relevant and will guide how the scheme is designed. The five core design principles and 22 summary principles will also be considered.
	The British Horse Society, Advice on Surface for Horses (July 2021)	Natural low growth vegetation and beaten earth with some stone embedded into the surface is the ideal multi-use surface for equestrian use. Drainage is also very important; the soil must drain well. To make it a good surface for equestrian use, it is important to understand horses, their physiology and the effect horses may have on a surface when choosing a surface for multi-use routes.	The route will be a multi-use scheme that could include equestrian use; therefore, this policy document is relevant to the GBT.
	The Combined Environmental Land Management Offer (January 2024)	The Combined Environmental Land Management Offer will contribute to the outcomes set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan released in January 2024 by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The range of actions within the plan will be more attractive to farmers and land managers and will help to achieve objectives such as 65% to 80% of landowners and farmers adopting nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030. The plan will also contribute to DEFRA's environmental outcomes on habitat restoration and creation, water quality and water demand, net zero, and farming in protected landscapes.	This scheme is relevant as Section 22b of the plan provides an action to "provide and maintain new permissive bridleways or cycle paths". The scheme considers improvements to existing PRow as part of the route which is in line with this action.
Regional	Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission (2022)	The Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission was set up by the Subregional Leaders' Board in November 2020. Their aim is to build on previous progress to help Cheshire and Warrington realise its ambition of becoming 'the most sustainable and inclusive sub region in the UK'. This has led to a final report called 'Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Cheshire and Warrington' being released which includes ambitious recommendations to reach this target.	This policy is relevant as the recommendations published by the commission touch on improving active travel and targeting opportunities with public investment, both of which the GBT will aim to do.
	Cheshire and Warrington LEP, Transport Strategy (2021)	The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Transport Strategy is part of the sub regions Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) which covers the period up to 2040. The SEP identifies the need for growth, transport and connectivity as being central to Cheshire and Warrington's aspirations and for supporting economic development. The strategy highlights how effective transport networks will be crucial in continuing the success of the subregion's attractiveness as a place to live and do business.	This policy is relevant as the GBT will improve the attractiveness of the region and help with rural connectivity and movement across the region and boundaries. The scheme also aims to increase the levels of cycling and walking in the region all of which are objectives within the policy.
	Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership, Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 (2021)	Consulted on in 2015, this strategy, led by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership (GMLEP), focuses on the long term challenges that Greater Manchester faces to strategise the best way forward to meet the Greater Manchester Strategy vision "to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old" and help create a successful resilient city region. The strategy highlights how transport is crucial to these plans and how an evidence based, long term	This policy is relevant to the scheme as some GBT route corridors could be within Greater Manchester's boundary. It also sets out how Greater Manchester will become pedestrian and cycle friendly - two modes of transport which the GBT is aiming to improve access to.

Geography	Policy Title	Summary	Relevance
Regional		vision has been used to come up with a 'right-mix' of transport modes for the network. This 'right-mix' includes 50% of journeys being made by sustainable transport and no net increase in motor vehicle journeys by 2040.	
	Manchester Airports Group, Sustainable Development Plan 2016 (2016)	The Manchester Airports Group (MAG) Sustainable Development Plan 2016 "sets out the strategic context for the long term development of Manchester Airport". It identifies the growth opportunities the airport has as well as the challenges it faces. This involves responsibly managing the environment and the impacts the airport has on communities nearby. The Plan also details MAG's Transformation Programme. This is its investment to create a world class airport with high quality facilities and services.	This policy is relevant as the GBT could be located nearby to Manchester Airport; therefore, it may impact upon the communities that are mentioned in the policy.
	TfGM, Bee Network (2023)	The Bee Network aims to make it easier to get around Greater Manchester by bus, tram, train, walking, wheeling or cycling. Greater Manchester buses are being franchised so that they will be controlled under the Bee Network framework which TfGM hope will improve the service and increase patronage.	The Bee Network is relevant to the scheme as the network is trying to improve cycling, wheeling and walking links in Greater Manchester. The GBT also intends to achieve this and with parts of the GBT route corridors could be within Greater Manchester, which could connect into the wider Bee Network.
	Warrington Council, Warrington Local Plan 2021/22 – 2038/39 (2023)	The Warrington Local Plan, adopted in December 2023, provides a statutory planning framework for the entire borough between 2021/22 and 2038/39. Within the plan is a vision, range of objectives and an overall strategy for development. Part of this is transport safeguarding.	This policy is relevant to the scheme as the proposed route could help to improve transport links towards Warrington.
Local	CEC, Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030 (2017)	Adopted in July 2017, the CEC Local Plan is the most important tool the Council has for shaping development in Cheshire East. It is an overall vision for shaping strategy for development for the period until 2030. With this plan, the Council hope to maintain its reputation as the best place to live in the North West. The plan's functions include setting planning policy, allocating sites for development and providing guidance on making decisions on planning applications.	This policy is relevant to the GBT as a majority of the route will be in Cheshire East. The policy also helps to make decisions on planning applications and addresses protecting and improving important open areas. As a result, the GBT will need to be guided by this plan.
	CEC, Local Transport Plan 2019-2024 (2019)	Adopted in October 2019, the Local Transport Plan (LTP) considers all forms of transport for the five-year period between 2019-2024. It provides a framework for how 'transport will support wider policies to improve Cheshire East's economy, protect its environment and make attractive places to live, work and play'. It also outlines how transport will support the long-term goals of Cheshire East. As part of the LTP, the Council is taking a range of actions. To complement this, Local Transport Development Plans (LTDPs) have been developed which set out a range of potential schemes to improve the transport network to support towns and surrounding areas. The current LTP was prepared pre-Covid and prior to many recent changes in transport policy, numerous non-transport policies have also come forward which impact transport. CEC is now well placed to undertake a significant update of the LTP to maintain a document that is robust and relevant to national, regional and local priorities.	This policy is relevant to the scheme as the route will be located predominantly in Cheshire East, the scheme is also part of the transport network which will cover walking and cycling as potentially equestrian, and therefore the GBT will need to be developed in line with the LTP. The scheme will also hopefully increase the attractiveness of Cheshire East which links to the aims of the LTP.
	CEC, Cheshire East Council Environment Strategy 2020-2024 (2020)	The policy details how Cheshire East are committed to reducing emissions and becoming carbon neutral by 2025. Cheshire East set out a number of goals which they hope to achieve between the period 2020-2024. Since this pledge, the target year has been revised and reset for 2027, however the Council still aim for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2045.	This policy is relevant to the GBT as the proposed scheme is looking to increase active travel numbers along the route which is largely located in Cheshire East. This will directly contribute to one of the goals within the Environment Strategy to improve the availability and use of sustainable transport and increase active travel use. Increased active travel use will also in turn help to reduce emissions and create an improved environment.
	CEC, The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the population of Cheshire East 2023 – 2028 (2023)	The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy has three main roles. It is a recommitment to the priorities of the previous strategy which in some cases have been exacerbated by the pandemic. It has a new commitment to address challenges that have emerged since the pandemic and finally it is a pledge to different, more effective and sustainable ways of working in Cheshire East for the long-term.	This strategy is relevant to the GBT as aims to meet the visions and aspirations of the strategy. Particularly, improving physical and mental health and helping people to have a good quality of life, to be healthy and happy.
	CEC, Cheshire East UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Overview (2022)	The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a "central pillar" of the governments Levelling Up agenda. It aims to "advance pride in place and increase life chances across the UK" by investing in communities and place, supporting local businesses as well as people and skills. The UKSPF allocation for Cheshire East is ~£12.4 million with a further ~£1.5 million for Adult Numeracy programme (Multiply). This funding must be spent by March 2025.	This policy is relevant as the GBT stage 1 work has been funded by the SPF and further work could be done to explore any future funding rounds. Investing in community and place and will support local businesses along the route. It may also help to improve the pride in place of the area.

Geography	Policy Title	Summary	Relevance
Local	CEC, Cheshire East Visitor Economy Strategy 2023 – 2028 (2023)	The strategy details the ambitions for Cheshire East’s visitor economy to grow to over £1 billion, with CEC playing an important role to meet this ambition. CEC will need to ensure there is a rich cultural offer in Cheshire East to attract visitors. This is supported by Marketing Cheshire who are the local Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) and are a part of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).	This strategy is relevant as the GBT can be viewed as a visitor attraction and developing an improved sense of place and can be viewed as strengthening the pull of the area. Along the route there are also various opportunities for businesses to thrive and incentives for investment.
	CEC, Cheshire East Green Space Strategy Update 2020 (2020)	The Cheshire East Green Space Strategy Update takes the aspirations set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan and seeks to make them a reality. The strategy focuses on the provision of good quality green space and proactive management of existing green space to leave an important legacy for Cheshire East’s communities.	This strategy is relevant as the GBT is intended to enable people to access the green spaces within Cheshire East. The route will also be a good space for people to improve their health and wellbeing through active travel, and within green spaces which has further benefits.
	CEC, Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2026 (2011)	Closely integrated to the LTP, the Cheshire East Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) strategy builds on the work of the previous ROWIP in partnership with many stakeholders both internal and external to CEC. Externally these include landowners, Parish Councils, community groups and the Cheshire Local Access Forum.	The policy is relevant as PRoWs are integral to encouraging people to walk, cycle and horse ride. The GBT will consider utilising and improving the PRoW network.
	CEC, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (Wilmslow) (2021)	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) provide a strategic approach to identify walking and cycling improvements at a local level, CEC are utilising them to achieve a “step change” in the levels of walking and cycling across Cheshire East. The plan sets out ambitious plans for a high-quality walking and cycling network in Wilmslow, it sets the standards for how walking and cycling should be planned and delivered in Cheshire East in line with LTN 01/20.	This policy is relevant to the GBT as the route could provide access to Wilmslow and will contribute to the high-quality cycling and walking infrastructure of the area. The scheme aims to be designed to the standard of LTN 01/20 in parts, which is a requirement of any infrastructure relevant to the LCWIP.
	CEC, Cycling Strategy 2017-2027 (2017)	The cycling strategy sets out an ambitious vision for “a network of high quality strategic cycle routes which connect local communities and key growth areas”, leisure opportunities and the natural environment will also be better connected.	This policy is relevant to the GBT as the trail will aim to encourage cycling in Cheshire East by providing a safe and high-quality cycle route which can better connect communities and key growth areas. The route can be used to attract more people to cycle and with a high quality design can improve the public perception of cycling.
	CEC, Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2020-2025 (2020)	In May 2019, CEC committed to becoming carbon neutral as a Council by 2025, with a further pledge made in January 2022 to make Cheshire East a carbon neutral borough by 2045. Since this pledge, the target year has been revised and reset for 2027, however the Council still aim for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2045. Following the Notice of Motion relating to Climate Change which was agreed by Elected Members of CEC in May 2019, the CEC Carbon Neutrality Plan was commissioned and released in response. The Carbon Neutral Action Plan was approved in May 2020 which sets out the actions that should be considered to support the Council’s carbon neutrality target.	This policy is relevant as reducing the number of car journeys and increasing the number of journeys by foot and cycle can help reduce Cheshire East’s emissions. The scheme can provide a route with which cycling and walking are made easier and a more attractive option, which may increase the number of people using these modes.
	CEC, Local Transport Development Plans (LTDP) - Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow (2022)	Following adoption of the Cheshire East Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) in October 2019, work began on developing 11 LTDPs across the borough. This included Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow which the GBT could connect. For all four areas, the respective LTDP identifies transport challenges and opportunities, provides a package of transport schemes to be developed and gives a framework for the Council to seek funding for the packages of schemes that have been detailed.	This policy is relevant to the GBT as it will look to address some of the objectives within each area, for example it will look to improve transport corridors for walking and cycling and support access to certain areas. It will also improve leisure routes and access routes for rural communities.
	Town Centre Vitality Plans for Wilmslow, Knutsford, Handforth and Poynton	CEC is committed to supporting the vitality and viability of all towns in the borough, if the opportunity for funding arises CEC have proposals agreed within their Town Centre Vitality Plans (TCVPs).	This policy is relevant to the scheme as the GBT could connect these towns which can attract people to the towns and support their vitality and viability.

3. Evidence Base

3.1 Introduction and Data Sources

To progress the GBT OAR, a review of baseline data across Cheshire East and surrounding Local Authority areas including Manchester, Trafford, Salford, High Peak, Warrington and Stockport has been gathered and analysed. This analysis of data provides a useful baseline to understand the area surrounding the GBT, which has been taken forward in the subsequent stages of work. To provide context and an understanding of the area being looked at, the 'previously proposed trail' corridor (as shown in Figure 1-4 as the scoping stage alignment) has been included on the maps throughout this section.

A majority of the data used in the evidence base is taken from the 2021 Census, which is the latest data available, noting its limitations due to this taking place during COVID-19.

This section provides a summary of the review of the baseline data; the full review includes the data listed below and analysis can be found in Appendix B.

- Trails
- Travel to Work
- Indices of Multiple Deprivation
- Health, Deprivation and Disability
- Propensity to Cycle Tool (PCT)
- Strava Metro
- Amenities
- Identification of Desire Lines
- Public Transport
- Road Network
- Public Rights of Way

3.2 Amenities and Existing Trails

Throughout the Local Authorities surrounding the GBT, there are multiple existing trails. The GBT also passes through many key areas such as Handforth, Wilmslow, Poynton and Styal and could provide links into development sites such as Handforth Garden Village and Woodford Garden Village, as well as amenities such as National Trust properties, Adlington Business Park and Manchester Airport. Figure 3-1 outlines the existing and proposed trails and which key areas, infrastructure, development sites and amenities the GBT could connect into.

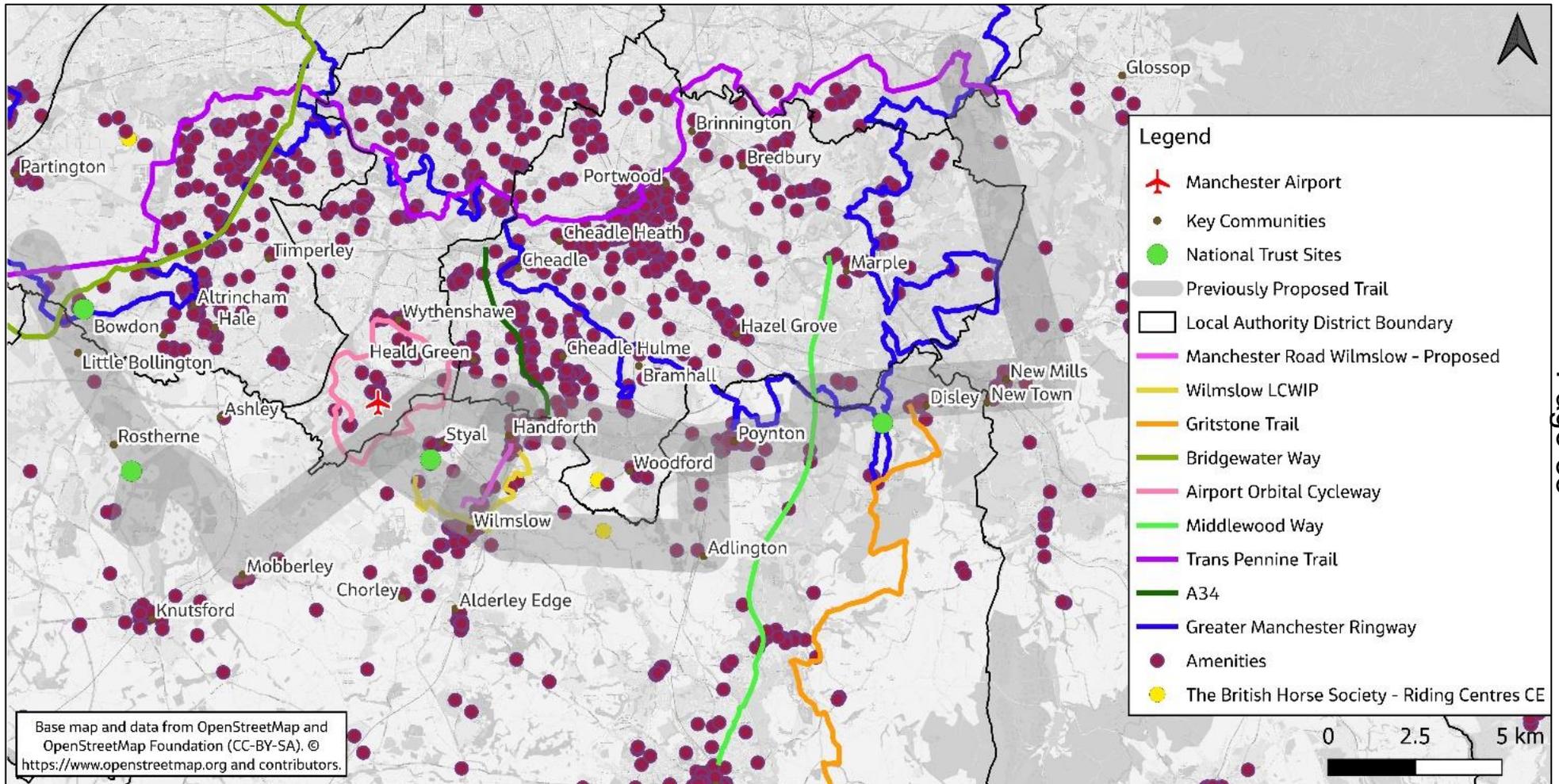


Figure 3-1: Existing and proposed trails, infrastructure, key areas, development sites and amenities

Figure 3-1, illustrates five existing trails (Gritstone Trail, Airport Orbital Cycleway, Middlewood Way, GM Ringway and Trans Pennine Trail) and one proposed infrastructure improvement (A34) alongside two proposed active travel infrastructure schemes (Manchester Road Wilmslow and Wilmslow LCWIP) within the area that the GBT could link into. The Bridgewater Way is being completed in sections, however the section of the route associated with the GBT has not yet been completed. There are also numerous key areas, and a high concentration of development sites and amenities along the route which are labelled. These include but are not limited to:

- Educational establishments;
- Healthcare facilities;
- Leisure facilities;
- Local services;
- Key businesses – such as AstraZeneca, Manchester Airport, Waters, as well as many located at Adlington Business Park;
- Development sites – such as Tatton Services, Handforth Garden Village, Timperley Wedge and Woodford Garden Village; and
- Tourist attractions - such as National Trust properties (Quarry Bank Mill, Tatton Park, Lyme Park, Dunham Massey Park), the Carrs Park, Avro Heritage Gardens and Adlington Hall and Gardens.

Therefore, it would be beneficial for the GBT to link into the existing trails and proposed schemes, and potentially provide an alternative link through Cheshire and south Manchester from the Trans Pennine Trail and the other existing trails such as the Middlewood Way. The number and variety of amenities that the proposed GBT could link into would also improve connectivity across Cheshire, both for utility and leisure users. This would create a network of routes for walking, wheeling and cycling, enhancing both the active travel and active leisure offers.

3.3 Public Transport and the Active Travel Network

Figure 3-2 below visualises the public transport and active travel network within the study area. For public transport, this includes Cheshire East bus stops and railway stations and TfGM Metrolink stops. For active travel, the map includes the National Cycle Network (NCN) and PRow alongside cycling levels from the PCT for government target (near market). It will be important to link north into Greater Manchester, one way this can be done is through linking into the Beeways which are part of the TfGM Bee Network.

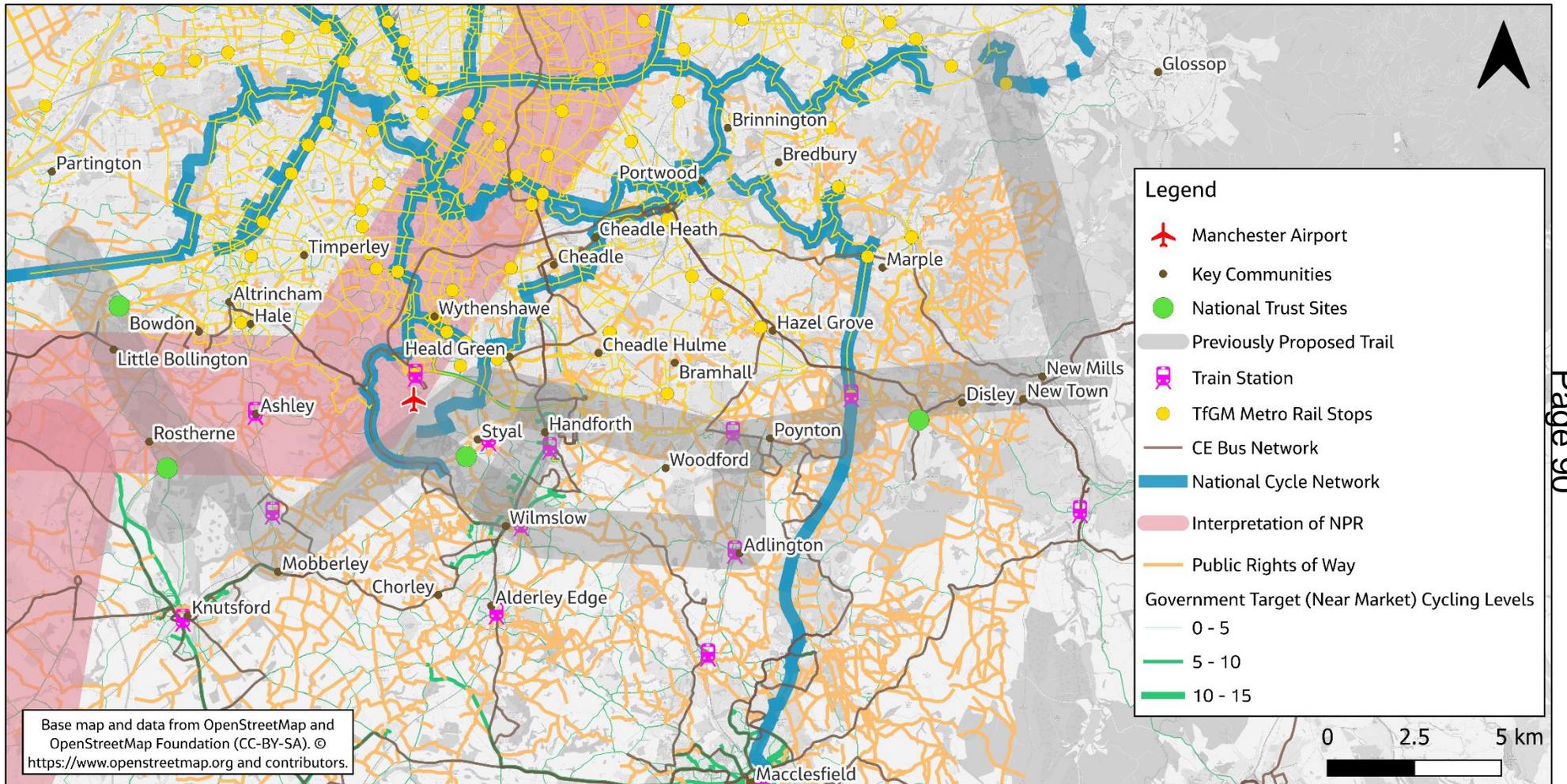


Figure 3-2: Public transport and active travel network around the GBT

Cheshire East has a public transport network that serves the area through bus and rail services. The Cheshire East bus network connects neighbouring towns to each other, including Macclesfield, Knutsford, Wilmslow, Poynton and Disley, as well as providing cross border connections between Cheshire East, Greater Manchester, Warrington, and Derbyshire. Although these Cheshire East towns all have rail stations, there is limited east to west rail connectivity. The GBT could support east to west connectivity in the borough.

TfGM have a Metrolink network that connects areas across Greater Manchester. As shown, there are various Metrolink stops in the vicinity of the GBT corridor. If progressed, it would be beneficial for the GBT to connect into public transport nodes such as Metrolink Stops, railway stations and bus stops. This would provide greater accessibility to the GBT, enabling a wider reach of people to access the trail for leisure trips.

The NPR corridor is an interpretation of the NPR corridor of interest of a possible route which has not yet been approved or confirmed as shown on Figure 3-2. However, this shows that an NPR route could interface with the GBT, therefore, consideration will need to be given to this route and CEC should work with NPR to come to a solution on the GBT alignment in its vicinity.

The National Cycling Network (NCN) is a UK-wide network of signed paths and routes for walking, wheeling and cycling. As shown in Figure 3-2 there is an opportunity for the GBT to link into the NCN and potentially become part of the NCN in the future. This link would provide greater access south further into Cheshire, north into Manchester and west towards Warrington and Cheshire West.

The PCT is a web-based mapping tool that was designed to help prioritise investments and interventions to promote cycling. Cycling potential is calculated using a function based on trip distance (people are likely to cycle a shorter trip compared to a longer trip) and the hilliness (people are more likely to cycle on flatter routes and be discouraged by trips involving slopes). Figure 3-2 shows the greatest propensity to cycle can be seen within some of the key towns within Cheshire East that are close to the proposed GBT such as Poynton, Wilmslow, Adlington and Handforth. This suggests that linking into these communities are potentially the best places to focus investment in, as they are likely to experience the greatest uptake in cycling and therefore unlock the most benefits.

PRoW are routes that allow the public to walk, cycle and ride along, depending on the legal status of the route. As shown in Figure 3-2, there is a vast network of PRoW within the area, and, whilst the majority of PRoW have the legal status of public footpath and are therefore only available to walkers and wheelers, this may present an opportunity for the GBT to link into this network and potentially upgrade the PRoW network or change the status of the type of PRoW that currently exists.

4. Vision and Objectives

4.1 Introduction

This section sets out the vision, objectives, and route principles of the GBT. Agreeing the vision, objectives and route principles early on in the project provided a foundation for the work going forward, and helped to gain a consensus around what the GBT would aim to achieve. Stakeholders were engaged on the vision, objectives and route principles at a virtual workshop held on the 7th February 2024, where stakeholders were invited to share their feedback. This feedback was considered and taken into account where appropriate.

4.2 Vision

The vision for the GBT is:

To deliver a trail that provides a much-needed east-west connection between established trails and public transport nodes, directly linking towns, villages and their communities to tourist centres and key attractors. The trail will draw in visitors to the local area, boosting the economy and elevating the active travel offer of Cheshire East. The trail will be direct and attractive and primarily traffic-free for walkers, wheelers, equestrians, runners and cyclists; providing directional signage and barrier free sections to promote active travel and creating sustainable travel options which is accessible for all. There will also be health and wellbeing benefits for those who utilise the route.

Some of the potential benefits that the trail could deliver locally include the following. These would contribute to a significant number of CEC strategies as identified in Section 2 of this report.

Accessibility to rural areas, providing sustainable connectivity through **local landscapes and natural capital assets**, supporting biodiversity, and **connecting people with nature**, including green and blue infrastructure.

Walking, wheeling and cycling have **wellbeing benefits** in addition to overall **enhanced health**.

With a large, dynamic population and economy, this area would benefit from a **multipurpose route for leisure and commuter use**. This would create a **well-connected place** via walking, wheeling and cycling routes, enhancing green transport links that are affordable. This would provide **enhancements for journey quality** for those travelling in the area.

Linking tourism assets, for example the Trans Pennine Trail, and the Manchester Airport runway viewing area, the route would become a **tourism asset** in its own right. This would not only **attract new visitors**, but support and deliver benefits to local communities.

Improves the attractiveness of the region for **inward investment** and for **businesses to prosper**, becoming more accessible places to work. Attracting new visitors will increase spend in the local economy and therefore new business opportunities could arise e.g. cycle hire, cafes. There is an opportunity to **link into growth areas**, such as Handforth Garden Village and other development sites and major employers across the area.

The route can **support localised decongestion** and have associated **environmental benefits** such as improved air quality, and the opportunity for environmental resilience e.g. improved flood defences.

4.3 Objectives

A number of objectives have been developed for the GBT which are set out below. The starting point for developing these objectives were those identified in the scoping stage of work. These have since been updated in light of the evidence base as well as discussions with CEC and stakeholders to understand the outcomes they would want to see from the GBT.

Provide east-west connectivity across the borough as well as linking to other surrounding districts and boroughs where possible, including links to/ with local communities and job opportunities, key public transport nodes, providing both leisure and utility use of the trail.

Provide a high-quality route, accessible to all, which considers the impact of potential major infrastructure schemes e.g. NPR on walking, wheeling, equestrians, runners and cycling.

Improve access to leisure routes, green space and the countryside that enhances the natural environment including green/ blue infrastructure where possible.

Increase the number of walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys, supporting decarbonisation across the borough and improving health and wellbeing.

Increase the value of the borough's visitor economy, attracting additional users and supporting the growth of new and existing businesses.

During a virtual workshop (7th February 2024), stakeholders were encouraged to share their feedback on a set of draft objectives. This feedback was analysed and fed into revised objectives above, where appropriate. Some feedback from the workshop was:

- Utility use of the trail should be considered as there is a need to connect communities with leisure and employment.
- The trail needs to be accessible to a mixture of abilities and communities. Examples to consider include multisensory sections and different hire schemes for different abilities.
- Some people may only want to do use shorter routes, providing shorter loops around communities within the overall route would be beneficial.

As a result of this feedback, the objectives were updated to consider utility use of the trail, providing connectivity to/ with local communities and job opportunities and key public transport nodes, as well as reflecting potential use of the trail by runners and equestrians.

4.4 Route Principles

The purpose of identifying the route principles was to provide a clear direction for the GBT options identified and the work going forward. Agreement of the route principles provided a consensus on the purpose of the route. The route was split into western, central and eastern sections to acknowledge differences across the geography of the route. A number of key aspects were considered, as listed below:

- Where would the route connect?

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

- What is its purpose?
- What is the target audience?
- What standard are we aiming for?
- What are we trying to deliver?
- Initial issues (challenges)
- Opportunities identified

The route has been identified to be family-friendly, high-quality and multipurpose for both leisure and commuting, however as discussed in the in-person workshop it is important to understand that different sections of the route may have different purposes and different target markets. Whilst it will be difficult to make the whole trail accessible for all abilities, the importance of accessible sections to accommodate for all users of all ages and mobilities was highlighted. Whilst walking, cycling and wheeling are the primary audience for the trail, horse riding is a popular local leisure pursuit, so for particular sections, the requirements of horse riders should be considered and integrated into the design where possible. It should be noted however that it could be difficult to achieve a route for both cyclists and horse riders unless there is sufficient space for both surfaces, as this would require a footprint of at least a width of 7-8 metres. There is potential for conflicting needs and requirements between users irrespective of national guidance and standards.

The design must also be sensitive to the local environment and surrounding area as there are currently areas which are less pleasant to use due to their proximity to busy highways such as the A555. Within the LTN 01/20 guidance, quiet ways are outlined as lanes with fewer than 1,000 vehicles per day, and these may be appropriate in some areas of the route, subject to further investigation. Incorporating lighting into the route is also preferred where feasible to provide guidance and comfort to users 24/7, though there are areas where this could not be accommodated, such as in proximity to Manchester Airport and sensitive rural countryside locations.

To develop the route principles, several datasets and documentation were utilised. This included best practice such as LTN 01/20, previous work undertaken during the scoping stage and discussions with both the client and key stakeholders. By understanding all of these principles, it provided the necessary information to gain a consensus on what the purpose of the route should be and the direction for work going forward. Table 4-1 sets out the route principles separated into the three different sections of the route: Western, Central and Eastern.

Table 4-1: Route principles

		Western (Dunham Massey to west of Manchester Airport)	Central (West of Manchester Airport to Woodford)	Eastern (Woodford to Trans Pennine Trail)
Where would the route connect?	Town/ Employment/ Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manchester Airport Altrincham (via proposed Tatton Services near to Bowdon Roundabout) Wythenshawe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waters, Manchester Airport, Amazon Wilmslow or Handforth Styal Handforth Garden Village Cheadle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adlington Business Park Poynton/ Woodford Disley Stockport
	Leisure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dunham Massey Tatton Park Manchester Airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarry Bank Mill Styal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lyme Park
	Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trans Pennine Trail Bridgewater Way Manchester Airport Orbital Cycleway GM Ringway - Greater Manchester's Walking Trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manchester Airport Orbital Cycleway GM Ringway - Greater Manchester's Walking Trail 	
What is its purpose?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure and access to employment (Manchester Airport) Mitigation for NPR 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equally leisure and commuter Access to employment (Manchester Airport, Waters, Amazon, employment areas in Wilmslow/ Handforth) Travel to school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily leisure, with some commuter Access to employment (Adlington Business Park) Travel to school
What is the target audience?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking/ running / wheeling/ cycling / equestrians (where possible) Families (including young people of all ages) Accessible inclusive route for all types of cycle including e-bikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking/ running / wheeling/ cycling / equestrians (where possible) Families (including young people of all ages) Accessible inclusive route for all types of cycle including e-bikes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walking/ running / wheeling/ cycling / equestrians (where possible) Families (including young people of all ages) Accessible inclusive route for all types of cycle including e-bikes
What standard are we aiming for? What are we trying to deliver?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of the five core design principles (coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive) and to be LTN 01/20 compliant where possible, however it may be appropriate to relax requirements in some areas given the nature of the area, noting elements such as lighting Standards from BHS may differ to LTN 01/20 – these will also need to be taken into consideration if the trail is able to provide surfacing for horses and their riders Off-road / away from the road for as much of the route as possible Route to include complementary features such as benches, interpretation boards, cycle parking etc. and improve nature along the way (considering biodiversity and potential impacts on current ecosystems) Route to connect to play spaces and picnic areas Route to consider conservation issues, especially in terms of industrial history Route to feel safe for a variety of users, especially those most vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of the five core design principles (coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive) and to be LTN 01/20 compliant in built up areas, however it may be appropriate to relax requirements in some areas given the nature of the area, noting elements such as lighting Standards from BHS may differ to LTN 01/20 – these will also need to be taken into consideration if the trail is able to provide surfacing for horses and their riders Off road where possible, but some will likely be alongside roads Route to include complementary features such as benches, interpretation boards, cycle parking etc. and improve nature along the way (considering biodiversity and potential impacts on current ecosystems) Route to connect to play spaces and picnic areas Route to consider conservation issues, especially in terms of industrial history Route to feel safe for a variety of users, especially those most vulnerable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consideration of the five core design principles (coherent, direct, safe, comfortable and attractive) and to be LTN 01/20 compliant in built up areas, however it may be appropriate to relax requirements in some areas given the nature of the area, noting elements such as lighting Standards from BHS may differ to LTN 01/20 – these will also need to be taken into consideration if the trail is able to provide surfacing for horses and their riders Off road where possible, but some will likely be alongside roads. Route to include complementary features such as benches, interpretation boards, cycle parking etc. and improve nature along the way (considering biodiversity and potential impacts on current ecosystems) Route to connect to play spaces and picnic areas Route to consider conservation issues, especially in terms of industrial history Route to feel safe for a variety of users, especially those most vulnerable
Initial issues identified at this early stage (challenges)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spodegreen Lane to Reddy Lane - Surface, permissive use Bridgewater canal - Surface, permissive use of towpath Bridgewater Way to Trans Pennine Trail - Surface, permissive use Topography/ route legal status / land ownership unknowns/ engineering challenges/ maintenance/ lack of complementary facilities such as cycle storage and cycle parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A555 – busy route and not aimed at leisure uses/high standard route Airport service road east of A538 - Access permission around gate Crossing of A538 - Safe crossing of dual carriageway Airport service road west of A538 - Access permission around barrier Fire station path - Surface and width (footpath) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Link from Macclesfield canal to Shrigley Road - Existing steps are too steep/narrow. Topography/ route legal status / land ownership unknowns/ engineering challenges/ maintenance/ lack of complementary facilities such as cycle storage and cycle parking

	Western (Dunham Massey to west of Manchester Airport)	Central (West of Manchester Airport to Woodford)	Eastern (Woodford to Trans Pennine Trail)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If equestrian use is considered, difference in surfacing requirements and widths available may cause challenges and additional cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Path beyond landing system field - Surface (footpath), access past gate Kell House Farm to Birtles Farm – Surface Birtles Farm to South Lodge - Surface, permissive use South Lodge to Birkinheath Lane - Surface, permissive use Mereside Farm to Hope Cottage - Surface (footpath) Topography/ route legal status / land ownership unknowns/ engineering challenges/ maintenance/ lack of complementary facilities such as cycle storage and cycle parking If equestrian use is considered, difference in surfacing requirements and widths available may cause challenges and additional cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If equestrian use is considered, difference in surfacing requirements and widths available may cause challenges and additional cost
Opportunities identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trans Pennine Trail Bridgewater Way A new bridge over the River Bollin at the Swan with Two Nicks in Little Bollington GM Ringway - Greater Manchester's Walking Trail Sustrans' aspiration to create the Greater Manchester Circular route (Route 601) New business opportunities along the route Potential additional spend in the local economy along the route Localised decongestion – cultural shift Personal affordability to travel Promotion of cycle hire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New bridge structure over the A34 connecting the Handforth Garden Village development and Handforth railway station (S106 funding) High-quality cycle route from Handforth town centre alongside the B5358 Wilmslow Road connecting to the cycle network in Stockport (SEMMMS complementary measures funding). Stockport has plans to connect this to Cheadle within Greater Manchester An upgraded crossing point on the A538 Altrincham Road at Manchester Airport fire station access road The quiet road along the B5569 (previously A556 Chester Road), which is a lower speed lower traffic road with segregated facilities for walking and cycling The Greenway along A538 Altrincham Road from Waters Roundabout to Nansmoss Lane Sustrans' aspiration to create the Greater Manchester Circular route (Route 601) GM Ringway - Greater Manchester's Walking Trail Handforth Garden Village Manchester Airport is a driver for regional growth Localised decongestion – cultural shift Personal affordability to travel Promotion of cycle hire Potential to be a key attractor overlooking the runway at the airport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Middlewood Way Gritstone Trail Poynton Relief Road cycle path Segregated walking and cycling facilities along the A523 Roy Chadwick Way, Poynton Bypass which link to equivalent facilities on the A555 into Greater Manchester Sustrans' aspiration to create the Greater Manchester Circular route (Route 601) GM Ringway - Greater Manchester's Walking Trail New business opportunities along the route Potential additional spend in the local economy along the route Localised decongestion – cultural shift Personal affordability to travel Promotion of cycle hire

4.5 Design Principles

The route widths will be designed where possible in accordance with LTN 01/20 for cycling infrastructure as shown in Table 4-2 and Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) for equine infrastructure as shown in Table 4-3.

Table 4-2 LTN 01/20 Guidance (sourced from LTN 01/20 guidance¹)

Cycle Route Type	Direction	Peak hour cycle flow (either one way or two-way depending on cycle route type)	Desirable minimum width* (m)	Absolute minimum at constraints (m)
Protected space for cycling (including light segregation, stepped cycle track, kerbed cycle track)	1 way	<200	2.0	1.5
		200-800	2.2	2.0
		>800	2.5	2.0
	2 way	<300	3.0	2.0
		>300-1000	3.0	2.5
		>1000	4.0	3.0
Cycle lane	1 way	All – cyclists able to use carriageway to overtake	2.0	1.5

*based on a saturation flow of 1 cyclist per second per metre of space. For user comfort a lower density is generally desirable.

Type of edge constraint	Additional width required to maintain effective width of cycle track (mm)
Flush or near-flush surface including low and splayed kerbs up to 60mm high	No additional width needed
Kerbs 61mm to 150mm high	200
Vertical feature from 151mm to 600 mm high	250
Vertical feature above 600 mm high	500

¹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ffa1f96d3bf7f65d9e35825/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf>

Table 4-3 DMRB Guidance (sourced from DMRB guidance – Designing for walking, cycling and horse-riding²)

Minimum 2-way width (where horses are expected to pass each other)		3.0 metres
Minimum single file width		2.0 metres
Coherence	Link trip origins and destinations, including public transport access points. Routes are continuous and easy to navigate.	
Directness	Serve all the main destinations and seek to offer an advantage in terms of distance and journey time.	
Comfort	Infrastructure meets design standards and caters for all types of user, including children and disabled persons.	
Attractiveness	Aesthetics, noise reduction and integration with surrounding areas are important.	
Safety	Dedicated networks and facilities not only improve pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian safety, but also their feeling of how safe the environment is. This includes access to adjacent areas, sightlines, fencing, lighting, landscaping and surveillance. It also includes avoiding opportunities for assailants to conceal themselves.	

² [9b379a8b-b2e3-4ad3-8a93-ee4ea9c03f12 \(standardsforhighways.co.uk\)](https://standardsforhighways.co.uk/)

The horizontal and vertical alignment of the cycle routes will be designed where possible in accordance with LTN 01/20 these are shown in Table 4-4. Existing routes that are non-compliant will be assessed and improvements and modifications will be identified.

Table 4-4 Minimum horizontal radii (left), Maximum length for gradients (centre), Stopping sight distances (right) (sourced from LTN 01/20 guidance³)

Design speed (kph)	Minimum horizontal radius (m)	Gradient %	Desirable maximum length of gradient (m)	Design speed (kph)	Minimum stopping sight distance (m)
40	40	2.0	150	40	47
30	25	2.5	100	30	31
20	15	3.0	80	20	17
10	4	3.5	60		
		4.0	50		
		4.5	40		
		5.0	30		

³ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ffa1f96d3bf7f65d9e35825/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf>

The construction and finishing details will be designed in accordance with the CEC Standard Details, with reference to LTN 01/20, Sustrans, Manual for Streets and existing and adjacent schemes. These are shown in Figure 4-1.

Accessibility for all				
Coherent	Direct	Safe	Comfortable	Attractive
				
DO Cycle networks should be planned and designed to allow people to reach their day to day destinations easily, along routes that connect, are simple to navigate and are of a consistently high quality.	DO Cycle routes should be at least as direct – and preferably more direct – than those available for private motor vehicles.	DO Not only must cycle infrastructure be safe, it should also be perceived to be safe so that more people feel able to cycle.	DO Comfortable conditions for cycling require routes with good quality, well-maintained smooth surfaces, adequate width for the volume of users, minimal stopping and starting and avoiding steep gradients.	DO Cycle infrastructure should help to deliver public spaces that are well designed and finished in attractive materials and be places that people want to spend time using.

Figure 4-1 Accessibility LTN 01/20 (sourced from LTN 01/20 guidance⁴)

⁴ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ffa1f96d3bf7f65d9e35825/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf>

The cross section palette of the route will need to be agreed and applied, this could utilise the Sustrans design specification - example cross sections from Sustrans are shown in Figure 4-2 and Figure 4-3.

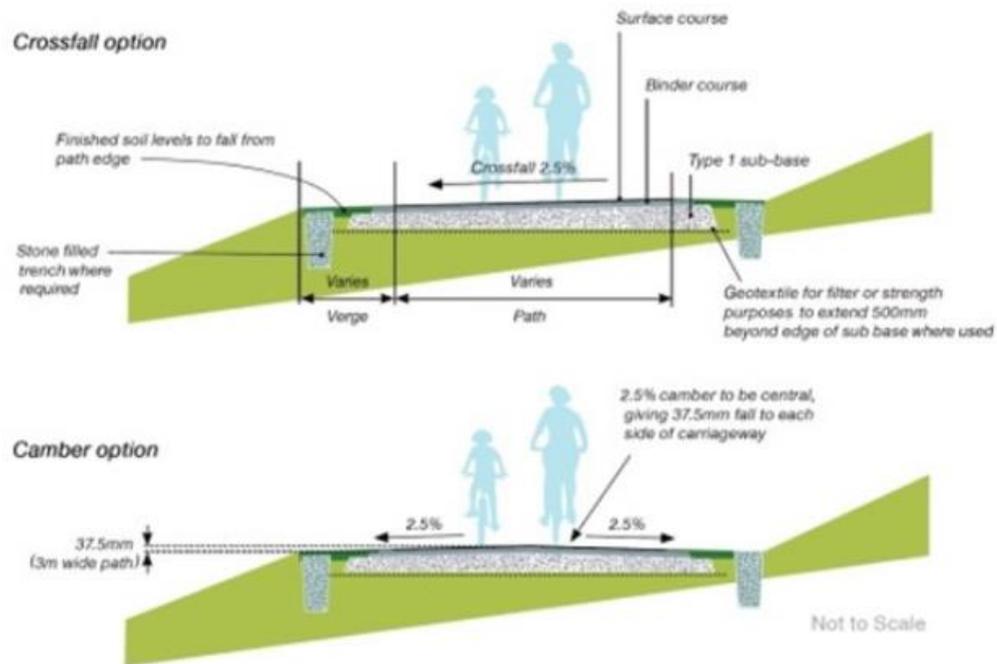


Figure 4-2 Sustrans cross section palette example (sourced from Sustrans⁵)

⁵ Path specification details - Sustrans.org.uk

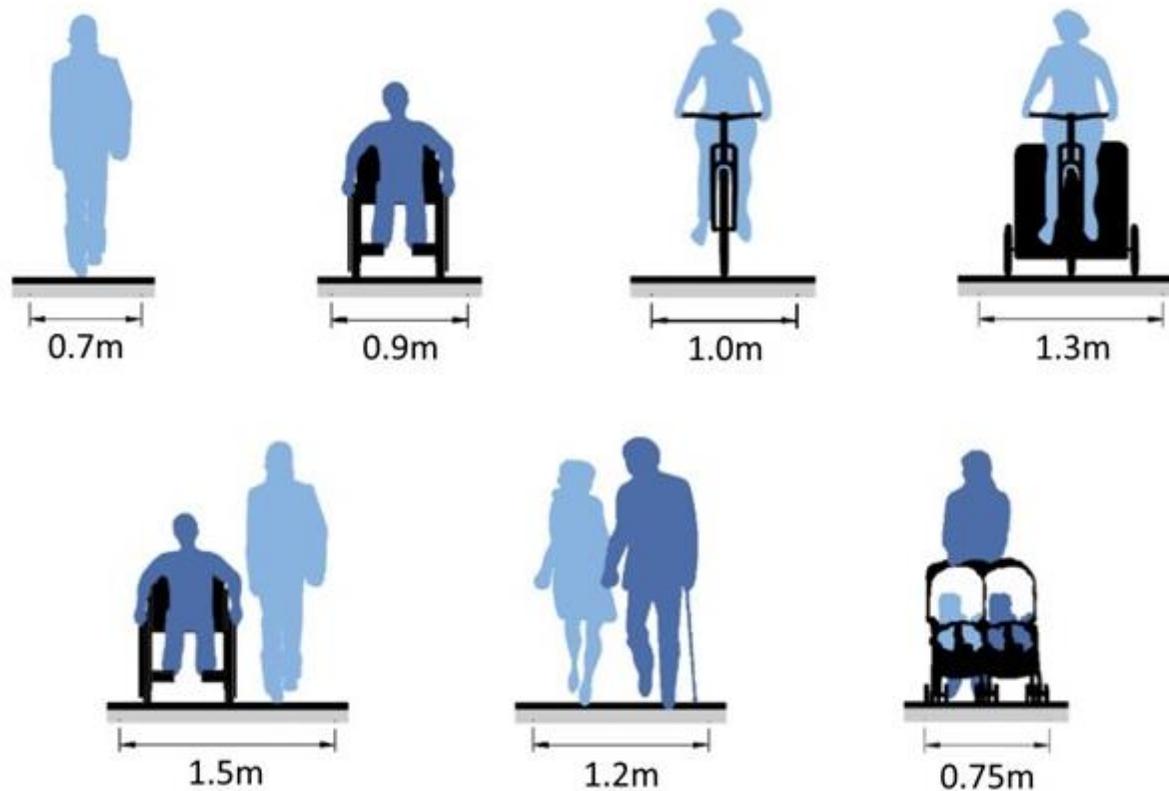


Figure 4-3 Sustrans widths required for people walking and wheeling (sourced from Sustrans⁶)

⁶ [Space requirements - Sustrans.org.uk](http://Space%20requirements%20-%20Sustrans.org.uk)

The material palette for the route will also need to be agreed. Site specific design solutions may also be required, this includes 'off the shelf' products or bespoke solutions.

The existing character of the route is to be retained while providing an improved and desirable route, examples of some of the existing character along the route is shown in Figure 4-4.



Figure 4-4 Existing route (source – site visit, January 2024)

5. Options Development

5.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the route corridors and route section options considered in each of the corridors. The area considered for the GBT is extensive, with the east-west being approximately 32km in width. Therefore, there were many initial route sections identified.

5.2 Route Corridors

Before specific routes were identified, broader corridors reflecting key connections were developed. These were based on the route principles, key areas to connect, and key movements along the route that should be considered. The route corridors connect into key communities as well as key services and amenities such as National Trust sites, Manchester Airport, and businesses. Figure 5-1 visualises the route corridors and the key areas they could connect. The route corridors have been split into three sections: west, central, and east. These sections and key areas and attractions in each section are set out in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1: Section descriptions

Section	Definition	Description
West	Partington to east of Manchester Airport	Manchester Airport is one of the key employment centres and attractions, another attraction is the Trans Pennine Trail which the route aims to link to. Dunham Massey and Tatton Park are two National Trust parks within the section which provide an attraction to visitors.
Central	East of Manchester Airport to east of Poynton at the Middlewood Way	Waters is a key employment centre that the corridor links to, the corridor also links to the key development site of Handforth Garden Village as well as other key residential and employment areas including Wilmslow and Handforth.
East	East of the Middlewood Way to Disley and Glossop	The east section connects to the key employment centre of Adlington Business Park as well as other amenities including Lyme Park and trails such as the Middlewood Way.

The corridors identified in Figure 5-1 provided a basis for investigating specific routes within the route corridors.

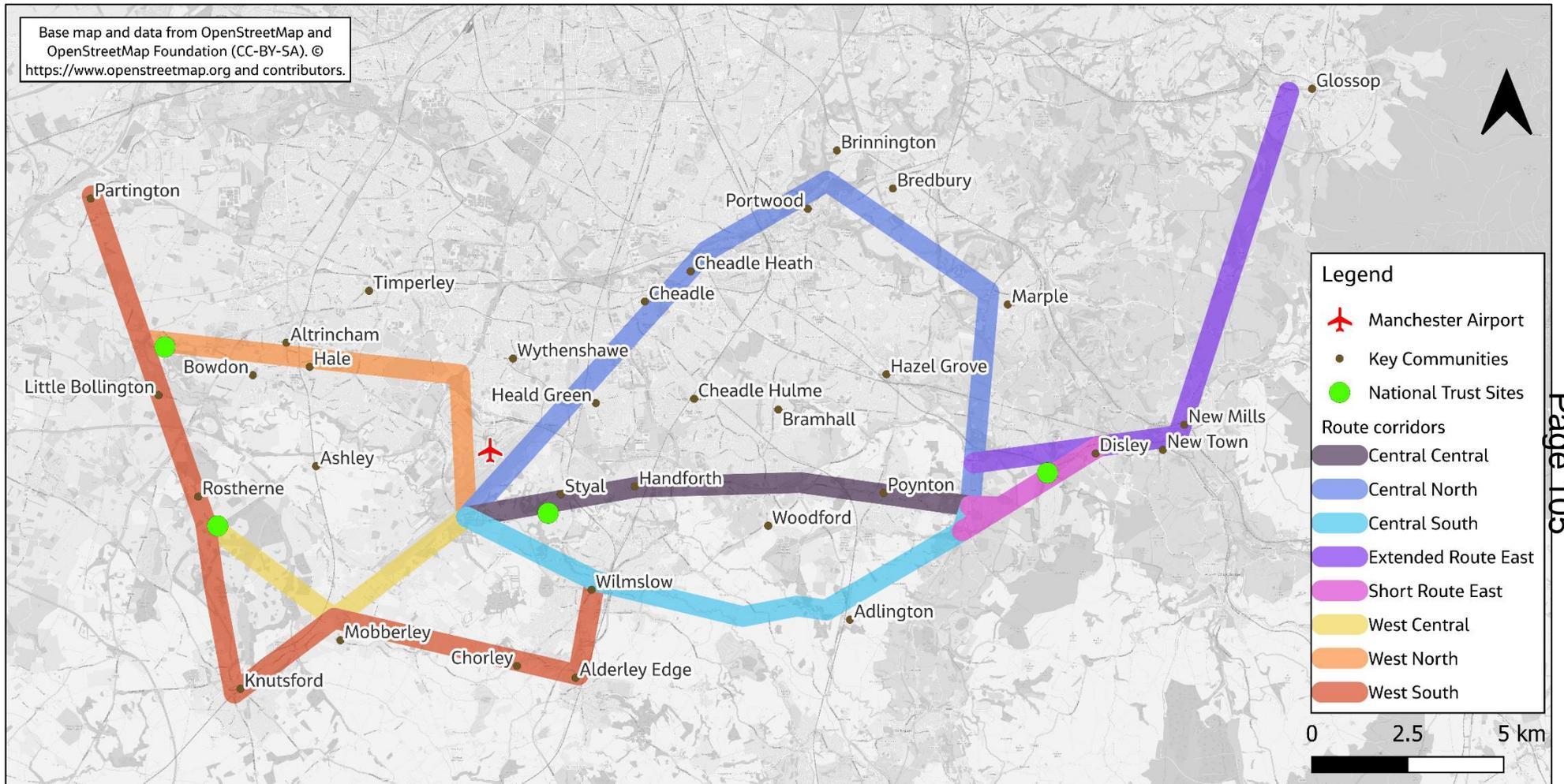


Figure 5-1: Route corridors

5.3 Route Sections

Based on the route principles and route corridors identified in Section 5.2, route sections were identified and explored. Options considered within each of the route corridors were identified through a number of methods:

- **Previous work undertaken** – as set out in section 1.2.
- **1-2-1 meetings** – Meetings have taken place with stakeholders and partners of CEC to inform potential options to consider including Tatton Group, the National Trust and Manchester Airport.
- **Desktop research** – Google Maps and Google Street View were utilised to identify route sections. They were also used to understand the existing conditions of route sections. Research into the location of nearby amenities and key service centres which the route sections could provide access to was also undertaken. Understanding the connections the route options could create as well as the existing conditions of these options, helped to understand the feasibility of different route sections. Research was also undertaken to find relevant policy documents and upcoming and recently completed active travel schemes in the area. This helped in creating route principles and locating existing infrastructure which could be utilised.
- **Site visits** – Two site visits were conducted on the 25th and 30th January 2024. These were used to visit route sections, in attendance with stakeholders, to understand the feasibility and condition of certain route sections which could not be viewed on Google Maps. Stakeholders were invited to provide local knowledge and their views on the route sections. Additional route sections were also identified on site.
- **Workshops** – On the 15th February 2024, an in-person workshop was held with the client, key stakeholders and Local Authority representatives to discuss emerging route options and obtain views on the identified route sections to date, and further local knowledge of the study area. Stakeholders were also encouraged to suggest any additional route section options that had not been explored.

For the route sections identified, part of the investigative process was to note the key information and conditions of each section. For example, the opportunities and challenges each section presented were detailed, as was the ability for the section to meet LTN 01/20 compliance. Also noted were the existing routes and PRow, the propensity to cycle within the area, the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, land ownership, links to the public transport network, and any running or cycling clubs in the vicinity of each route section.

The route sections developed are shown in Figure 5-2 below. During an in-person workshop on the 15th February 2024, stakeholders were invited to discuss the routes sections shown. The stakeholder's local knowledge and understanding of the area were considered when it came to deciding on which route sections should be taken forward to be scored within the MCAF. There was particular discussion around the southern route section and central route section within the central corridor from Wilmslow to Adlington and Styal to Handforth, as well as the impact the potential NPR route may have on the western section.

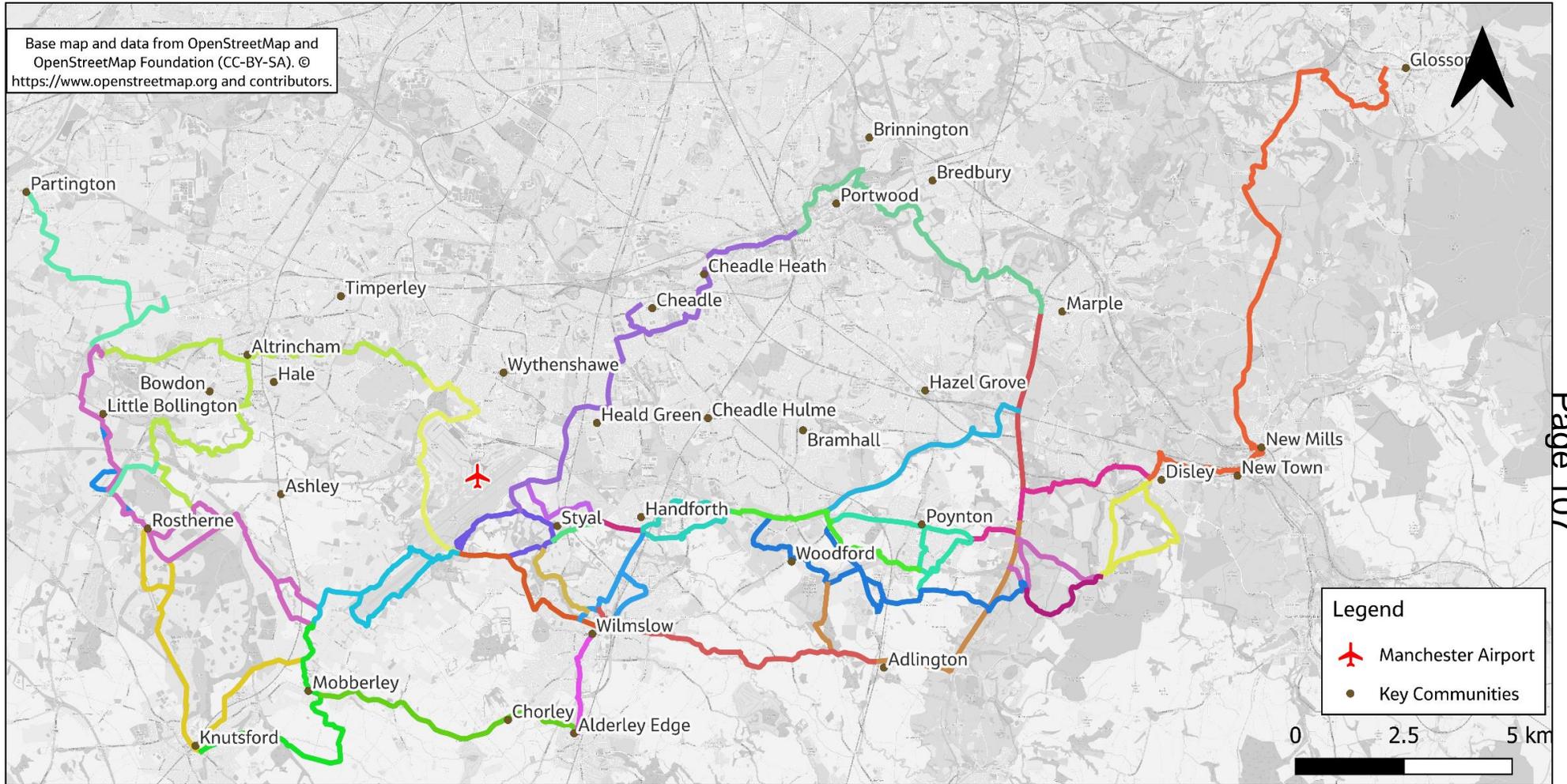


Figure 5-2: Identified route sections discussed with stakeholders

6. Options Assessment

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this section is to set out the MCAF and the results of the route corridor sift and route section sift. At the end of this section, the preferred route is identified.

6.2 Multi-Criteria Assessment Framework (MCAF)

In order to determine the preferred route, the route corridors and route sections have been assessed against an agreed set of criteria using a MCAF. The MCAF has been developed in consultation with CEC and stakeholders via the virtual workshop undertaken on 7th February 2024, where views were taken into consideration to understand what is most important to the route and thus how it should be scored.

Within the MCAF there are three main categories and 19 subcategories. The three main categories are as follows:

1. Strategic Fit;
2. Effectiveness; and
3. Deliverability.

The three categories are summarised below, detail on how each category has been scored is set out in more detail in Appendix C.

Route corridors were scored based on their strategic fit and effectiveness as it was expected that there would be limited variation between individual route sections across these two main categories. It also filtered out any route corridors that would not work towards a coherent east-west route. The route sections were then scored for deliverability, and ultimately the route sections within each route corridor which scored highest overall form the preferred route.

In addition, input has been sought from disciplines in relation to land and environment that has also fed into the scoring. An Environmental Technical Note can be found in Appendix D.

Stage 1 - Strategic Fit

Within the strategic fit category there are six subcategories, five of which are aligned to the project objectives set out in Section 4.3 of the report. These consider whether the section will provide east to west connectivity as well as connecting to surrounding areas including links to key services, amenities and businesses. Also, whether the section would provide a high-quality route which is accessible to all and considers the impact of major infrastructure schemes on walking, wheeling, equestrians, runners and cycling. The third sub-category enquires whether the section would improve access to leisure routes, green space and countryside that enhances the natural environment. The fourth subcategory questions whether the option would increase the number of people walking, wheeling, and cycling for everyday journeys, and the fifth questions whether the section would increase the value of the borough's visitor economy by attracting additional users and supporting the growth of new and existing users. Finally, the sixth subcategory questions the sections alignment to local policy. The strategic fit of the routes was scored at a corridor level only.

Stage 2 - Effectiveness

Within the effectiveness category there are four subcategories which look at the number of residents, employment areas and visitors / leisure users expected to benefit from the intervention. The fourth subcategory looks at the number of existing trails the intervention links with. The effectiveness category was scored at a corridor level only.

Stage 3 - Deliverability

In the deliverability category there are nine subcategories which look at the design challenges, potential benefits, costs for comparison, funding/ affordability, acceptability, land, environmental considerations, existing facilities, and the ability to have a phased delivery. Unlike the other two categories, deliverability was scored at a route specific level.

A majority of the criteria have been scored on a 0-5 basis, where 5 is the best score. Weighting has also been applied to the criteria: design challenges, potential benefits and acceptability where scores have been doubled as they provide a key differentiator between the routes. The full MCAF scoring matrix and criteria can be found in Appendix C.

6.3 Corridor Sift

As set out in section 6.2, the corridor sift was undertaken for strategic fit and effectiveness categories. Following the corridor sift, the highest scoring corridors were taken forward to the next stage. The route corridors are shown in Figure 6-1 below and the corridor sift results are shown in Table 6-1.

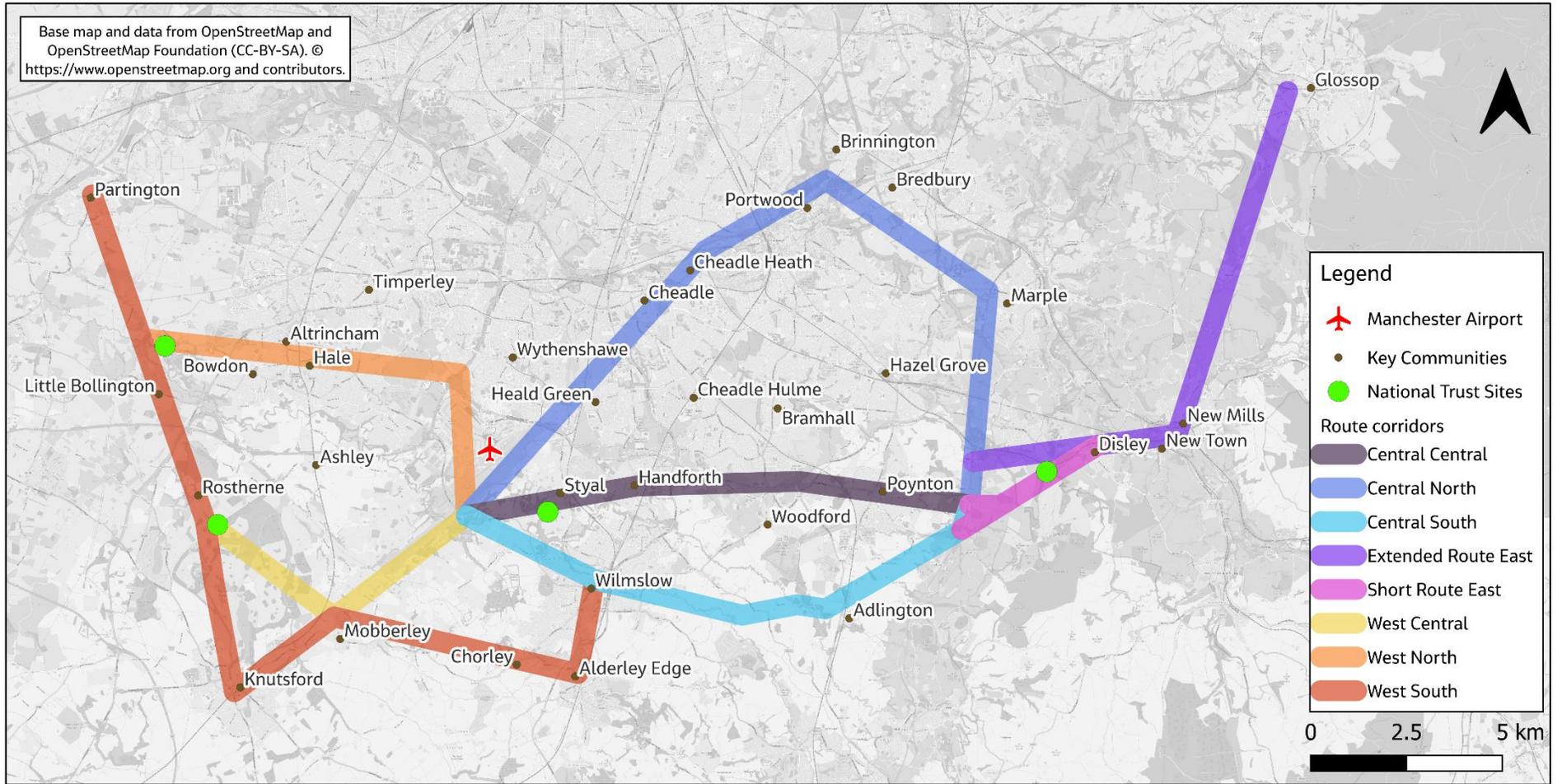


Figure 6-1: Route corridors

Table 6-1: Corridor sift results

Section	Ref	Strategic fit						Effectiveness				Outcome	
		Provide east-west connectivity across the borough as well as linking to other surrounding districts and boroughs where possible, including links to/ with local communities and job opportunities, key public transport nodes, providing both leisure and utility use of the trail	Provide a high-quality route, accessible to all, which considers the impact of potential major infrastructure schemes on walking, wheeling, equestrian, runners and cycling	Improve access to leisure routes, green space and the countryside that enhances the natural environment including green/ blue infrastructure where possible	Increase the number of walking, wheeling and cycling for everyday journeys, supporting decarbonisation across the borough and improving health and wellbeing	Increase the value of the borough's visitor economy, attracting the additional users and supporting the growth of new and existing businesses	Local Policy alignment	Number of residents expected to benefit from the intervention	Number of employment areas expected to benefit from the intervention	Number of visitors/ leisure users expected to benefit from the intervention	Number of existing trails the intervention links with	Corridor Total Score	Corridor Rank
West	WN	4	3	3	4	2	4	5	5	2	5	37	2
	WC	4	3	5	3	5	4	3	3	5	3	38	1
	WS	3	3	4	2	4	3	4	4	4	4	35	3
Central	CN	2	3	1	4	1	4	5	5	1	4	30	3
	CC	4	3	3	3	2	4	4	3	3	4	33	2
	CS	4	3	5	2	5	4	2	3	5	4	37	1
East	ER	3	2	3	2	4	4	3	2	3	3	29	2
	SR	4	2	4	2	4	4	1	2	5	3	31	1

Western

In the western section there were three corridors, the northern (WN), central (WC), and southern (WS) alignments as shown in Figure 6-1.

It was agreed that the central corridor of the western section (WC) would progress to the next stage as it was the highest scoring out of the three corridors. This is due to WC providing both a utility service, connecting key employment sites and communities such as Partington, Rostherne and Mobberley and Manchester Airport, and a leisure service as the corridor passes predominantly through green space and countryside with links to other trails such as the GM Ringway and Bridgewater Way. The north and south corridor scored lower as they were better located to provide a utility service through key towns, however this reduced how effective they would be as attractive leisure routes.

Central

In the central section, there were also three corridors that were scored, the northern (CN), central (CC) and southern (CS) alignments as shown in Figure 6-1.

In this case, the highest scoring corridor was the southern corridor of the central section (CS), this was because it has good connections to communities such as Wilmslow and Adlington and also provides access to green and blue spaces in Cheshire East. CS is also attractive as a leisure route as it mainly follows the River Bollin. Whilst this corridor is very attractive, it has a large risk associated with it due to the significant amount of investment and land acquisition or access rights (including landowner agreements and legal status changes) that would be required to provide the infrastructure needed to create a route.

Given the risks associated with CS, it was decided that the second highest route corridor would also be taken forward, this was the central corridor (CC) of the route. CC provides access to key employment sites, and some leisure attractions such as Quarry Bank Mill and the Avro Heritage Museum. However, it is more limited in its attractiveness as a leisure route as it would largely follow the road network, and therefore it would likely not provide as significant contributions to the visitor economy. The northern corridor of the central section (CN) scored low and was ruled out as it had poorer access to leisure routes and the countryside.

Eastern

In the eastern section there are two corridors, an extended route (ER), and a short route (SR) as shown in Figure 6-1.

The SR corridor was taken forward as there were more positives associated with the SR corridor compared to the ER corridor. Negatives associated with the ER corridor included the length of the corridor which may deter users such as families with younger children, and the lack of off-road walking and wheeling infrastructure further along the route. The majority of the SR corridor also runs through green space such as Lyme Park which is more attractive to visitors using the route as a leisure route. In the absence of the ER there is also the opportunity to connect to the Trans Pennine Trail in Stockport via the Middlewood Way.

In summary, corridors WC, CC, CS and SR were taken forward to the route sift stage. These corridors are shown below in Figure 6-2.

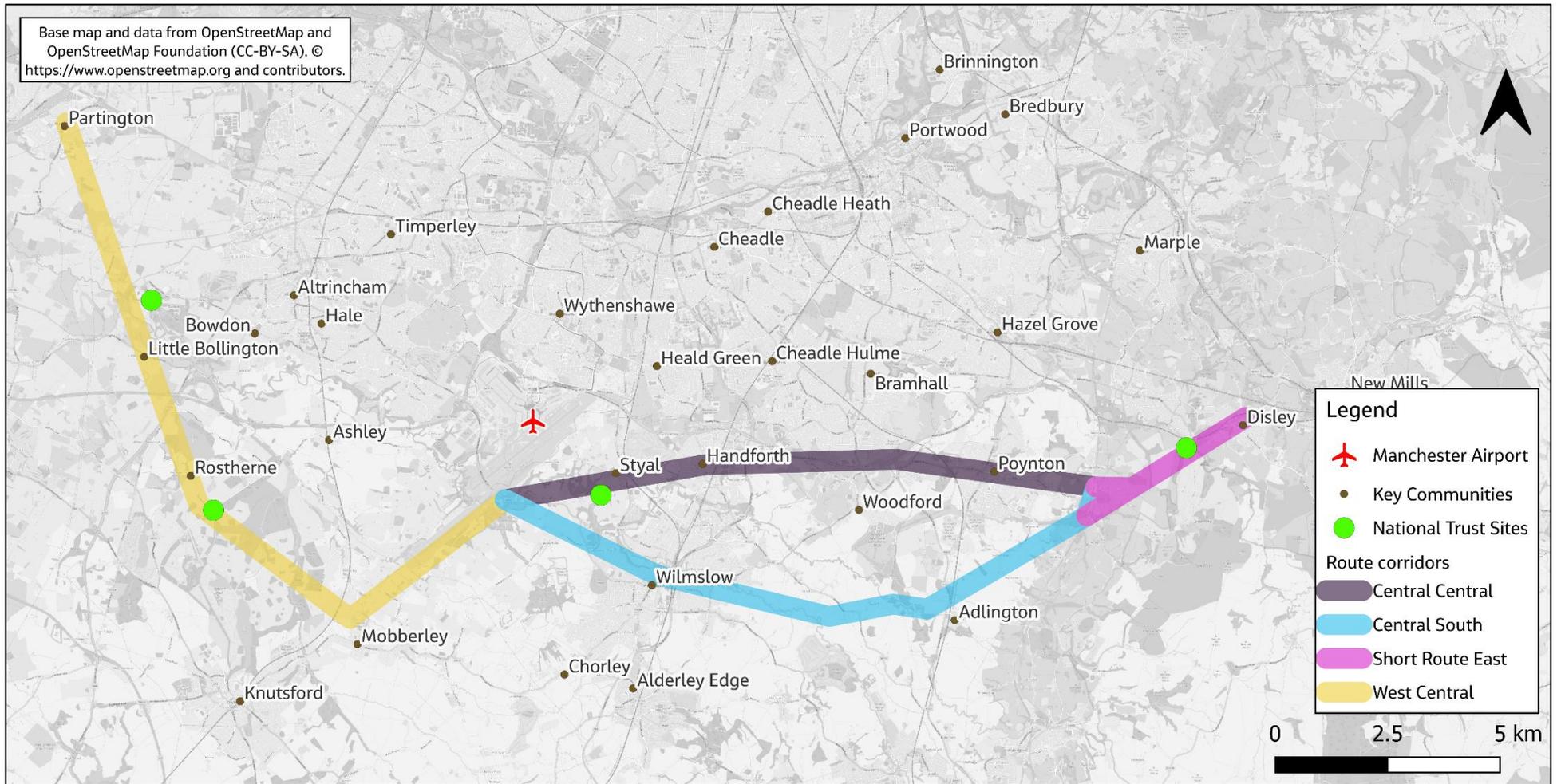


Figure 6-2: Highest scoring corridors

6.4 Route Sift

6.4.1 Route Options Considered

Following the corridor sift, the route sections were developed. Any route sections that fell outside of the highest scoring route corridors, and any smaller route sections that did not form part of a coherent route were ruled out at this stage. The route sections that have been considered are shown in Figure 6-3 below. Figure 6-4 shows the six options considered in the western section, Figure 6-5 shows the 10 options considered in the central section and Figure 6-6 shows the four options considered in the eastern section. Table 6-2, Table 6-4 and Table 6-7 explain where each route connects to.

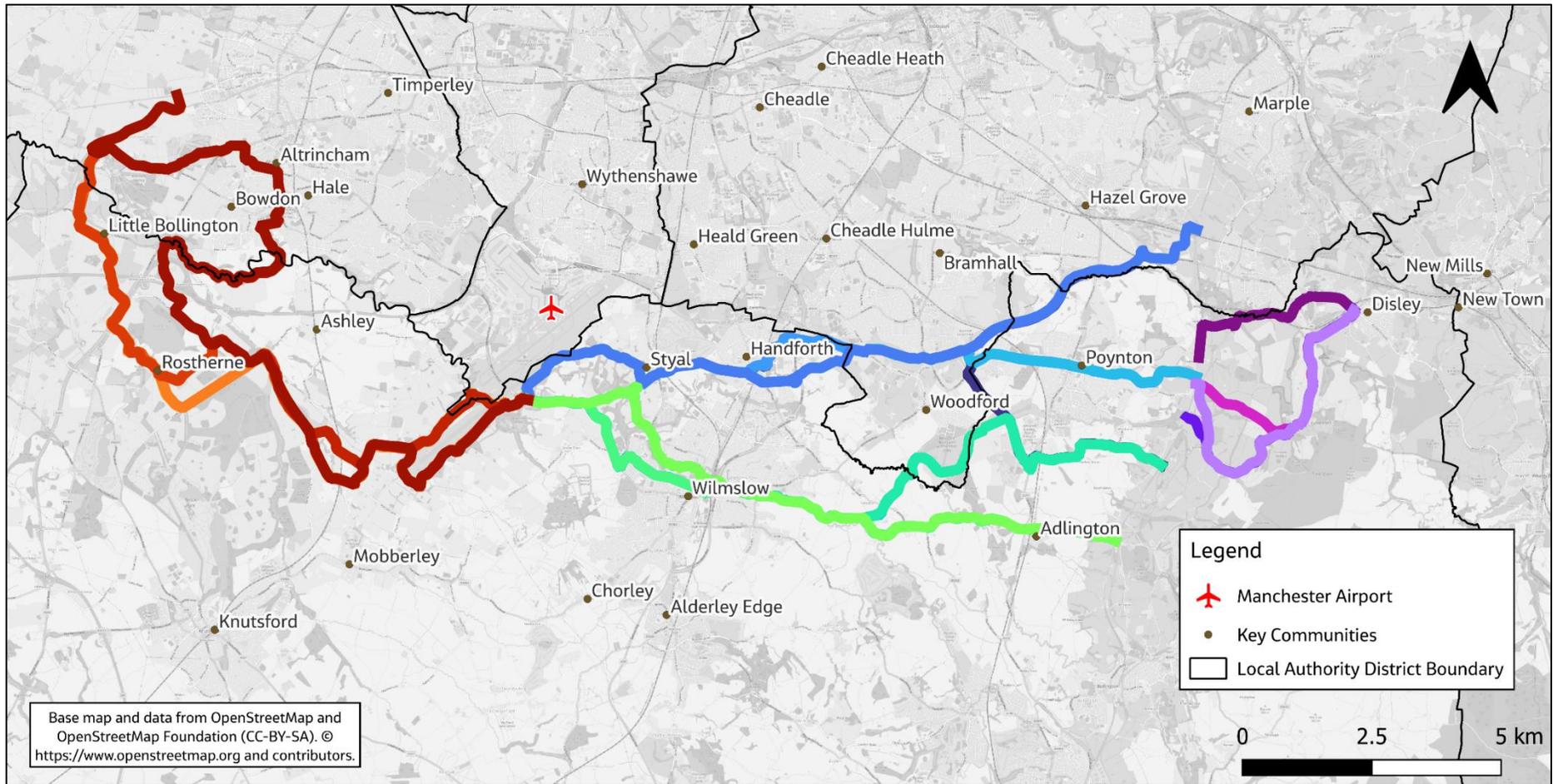


Figure 6-3: Route sections scored within the MCAF

6.4.2 Western

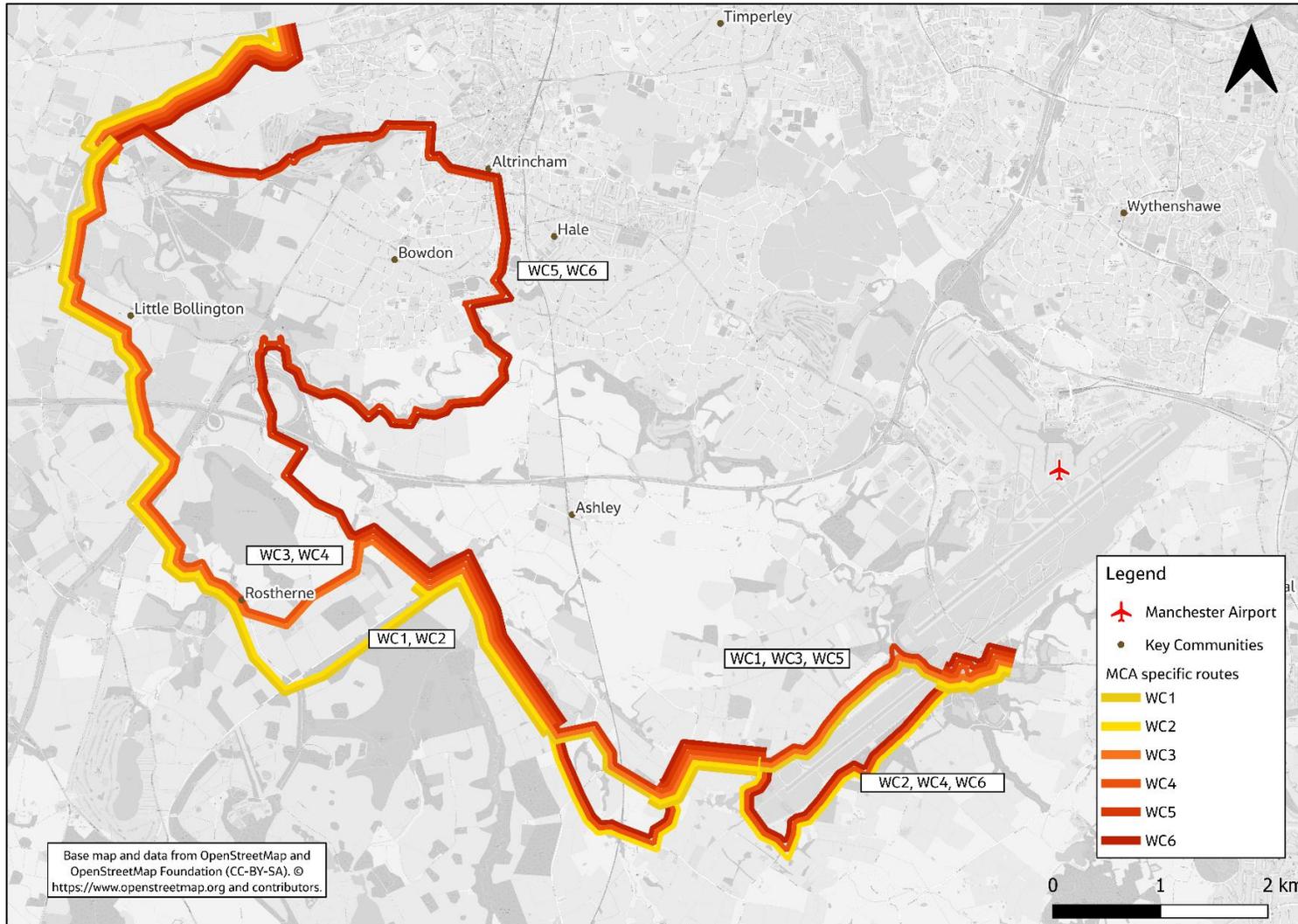


Figure 6-4: Western route sections

Table 6-2: Western route section descriptions

Route reference	Route description
WC1	This option begins by connecting to the Trans Pennine Trail, Bridgewater Way and Greater Manchester Ringway before connecting south past the National Trust site Dunham Massey and through Little Bollington, over the M56 towards Rostherne. From here the route connects to the CEC-managed National Trust site Tatton Park entrance and routes along Ashley Road before heading southeast past Birtles Farm. Past Mobberley, it routes to the north of the airport runway and utilises the walking and cycling tunnel underneath the airport runway where it connects to the National Cycle Network and the Airport Orbital Cycleway at the A538.
WC2	This option begins by connecting to the Trans Pennine Trail, Bridgewater Way and Greater Manchester Ringway before running south past the National Trust site Dunham Massey and through Little Bollington, over the M56 towards Rostherne. From here the route connects to the CEC-managed National Trust site Tatton Park entrance and travels along Ashley Road before heading southeast past Birtles Farm. Past Mobberley, it routes along the southern perimeter of the airport runway, past the Southside Viewing Area, where it connects to the National Cycle Network and the Airport Orbital Cycleway at the A538.
WC3	This option begins by connecting to the Trans Pennine Trail, Bridgewater Way and Greater Manchester Ringway before running south past the National Trust site Dunham Massey and through Little Bollington, over the M56 towards Rostherne. From here the route follows Marsh Lane before heading southeast past Birtles Farm. Past Mobberley, it routes to the north of the airport runway and utilises the walking and cycling tunnel underneath the airport runway where it connects to the National Cycle Network and the Airport Orbital Cycleway at the A538.
WC4	This option begins by connecting to the Trans Pennine Trail, Bridgewater Way and Greater Manchester Ringway before running south past the National Trust site Dunham Massey and through Little Bollington, over the M56 towards Rostherne. From here the route follows Marsh Lane before heading southeast past Birtles Farm. Past Mobberley, it routes along the southern perimeter of the airport runway, past the Southside Viewing Area, where it connects to the National Cycle Network and the Airport Orbital Cycleway at the A538.
WC5	This option begins by connecting to the Trans Pennine Trail, Bridgewater Way and Greater Manchester Ringway before running east past the National Trust site Dunham Massey. From here, the route connects into Altrincham, then south through Bowdon and Hale before connecting to the proposed Tatton Services at the M56. Routing south, the route crosses Ashley Road and runs past Birtles Farm and past Mobberley. The route then links north of the airport runway and utilises the walking and cycling tunnel underneath the airport runway where it connects to the National Cycle Network and the Airport Orbital Cycleway at the A538.
WC6	This option begins by connecting to the Trans Pennine Trail, Bridgewater Way and Greater Manchester Ringway before running east past the National Trust site Dunham Massey. From here, the route connects into Altrincham, then south through Bowdon and Hale before connecting to the proposed Tatton Services at the M56. Routing south, the route crosses Ashley Road and runs past Birtles Farm and past Mobberley. The route then runs along the southern perimeter of the airport runway, past the Southside Viewing Area, where it connects to the National Cycle Network and the Airport Orbital Cycleway at the A538.

The results of the sift for route sections within the western corridor are shown in

Table 6-3 below and refer to routes shown in Figure 6-4. The table shows that route sections WC1 and WC3 scored the highest, ranking first, and WC6 scored the lowest, ranking sixth. Below is an analysis of each route and how they scored within each criterion.

Table 6-3: Western sift results

Ref	Deliverability									Outcome	
	Design challenges	Potential Benefits	Costs for comparison	Funding / Affordability	Acceptability	Land	Environmental considerations	Existing Facilities	Ability to have a phased delivery	Route Section Total Score	Route Section Rank
WC1	6	10	1	2	8	2	3	3	2	75	1
WC2	6	10	1	2	6	2	3	2	2	72	3
WC3	6	10	1	2	8	2	3	3	2	75	1
WC4	6	10	1	2	6	2	3	2	2	72	3
WC5	4	10	0	3	6	2	2	3	3	71	5
WC6	4	10	0	3	4	2	2	2	3	68	6

Design Challenges

WC1, WC2, WC3 and WC4 scored higher than WC5 and WC6 for design challenges as they have fewer challenges associated with them. WC5 and WC6 connect through Altrincham and Hale, which provides an additional design challenge as there are existing residential properties and likely on-street parking, which could cause challenges in terms of achieving suitable widths. WC5 and WC6 also indicatively link into Dunham Forest Golf and Country Club, which could be challenging and would require discussions with the landowner.

Key challenges that all the routes face includes the topography which is steep in places and poor existing surfacing around the Manchester Airport runway, in particular to the south. In addition, having a route that is lit may be a challenge, for discussion with Manchester Airport, as this may not be possible so close to the Airport’s runways. Another security element which needs considering across the western route sections is the potential use of drones in close proximity to Manchester Airport. Another challenge associated with all of the route options is the security risk associated with users being close to Manchester Airport and the runway. Whilst this is an existing path, this would need to be investigated further with Manchester Airport especially given the anticipated increased usage post investment. If NPR is introduced, this development could interface with the route sections in this area, however the impact of this is not fully understood at time of writing. In addition, the canal towpath is poorly surfaced along the Bridgewater Way towards the Trans Pennine Trail which would need to be addressed; this may also have limited space for increased widths in parts, this would impact all of the routes.

Another challenge impacting routes WC1 and WC2 is that Ashley Road is a long, straight road which has no footway and is known to experience high speeds by drivers. There is also limited space for a facility without acquiring land or going behind existing properties. WC3 and WC4 follow Marsh Lane instead of Ashley Road, this approach may be suitable due to low traffic flow, however this needs to be investigated further.

Potential Benefits

All of the routes scored the maximum of five on this criterion due to the total potential benefits from AMAT and tourism benefits equalling circa £48 million for routes WC1, WC2, WC3 and WC4, and circa £50 million for routes WC5 and WC6. A majority of these benefits were tourism related benefits given that these routes were anticipated to be primarily used for leisure/ tourism as opposed to commuter/ everyday use. The route will also provide a link to the proposed Tatton Services as well as Altrincham and potential future development, this will provide both potential tourism and utility benefits. Further work is required to better understand the benefits and benefit cost ratio (BCR) of the routes once there is a better understanding of the investment costs.

Costs for comparison

As route interventions and costs have not been developed at this stage, a 0-5 score was given for costs to compare the routes. Routes WC1, WC2, WC3 and WC4 scored higher on the costs for comparison. It was expected that routes WC1 and WC2 would have high costs associated with passing through the residential areas of Hale and Altrincham. Investment generally in this area is expected to be high due to the infrastructure required at Manchester Airport, through Birtles Farm, within Little Bollington and along Ashley Road (for routes WC1 and WC2).

Funding/Affordability

WC1, WC2, WC3 and WC4 scored lower for funding/ affordability as whilst they provide a connection between NCN routes, Manchester Airport and National Trust sites which could attract sources of funding, they provide limited connectivity into residential areas of Greater Manchester. WC5 and WC6 connect to Hale and Altrincham which would likely attract funding due to the increased use for everyday purposes, rather than primarily tourism/ leisure.

Acceptability

It is expected that all six routes would be acceptable due to their non-controversial nature (subject to landowner agreements). A leisure focused route may also be more acceptable for this trail which has resulted in other routes scoring higher than WC5 and WC6. In addition, WC1, WC3 and WC5 all score well as they utilise the walking and cycling tunnel under the airport which is an attraction and quality piece of existing infrastructure. WC6 scores lowest as it does not utilise the advocated airport tunnel and is less leisure focused.

Land

All the route options scored equally on this criterion. There are large sections of the western routes which are understood to be Tatton Group land, an organisation which is enthusiastic about the potential to have the GBT pass through its land, subject to further discussion and agreements. There are sections that do not follow existing footpaths that may be privately owned and there are multiple farms along the route such as Kell House Farm and Birtles Farm which require further investigation. Some sections of the routes utilise adopted highways such as Wood Lane, Small Lane, Station Road, and Smith Lane which are anticipated to be more straightforward. There may also be the need to change the status of some PRoW to include cyclists, for example past Birtles Farm and along the Bridgewater Canal the routes are currently footpaths which would need to be upgraded to bridleway or cycle track status or have permissive rights for cyclists and potentially equestrians agreed. Additional space could also be required in some areas where highway widths are narrow, for example along Ashley Road and residential roads through Hale and Altrincham.

Environmental Considerations

Routes WC1, WC2, WC3 and WC4 all scored marginally higher than WC5 and WC6 on this criterion. All of the routes pass through Dunham Massey which has ancient trees, and they run through areas of Flood Zone Risk 2 and 3 near the River Bollin and ancient and deciduous woodland around Manchester Airport which could be a challenge. However, WC5 and WC6 run through Dunham Forest Golf Course and Country Club which means the routes pass

through wood pasture and parkland, deciduous woodland, and ancient trees through this area. Further information is provided in Appendix D, and these environmental considerations would need to be considered further in future stages of work.

Existing facilities

Routes WC1, WC3 and WC5 scored higher than the other three routes on this criterion, this is because they utilise the walking and cycling tunnel under the Manchester Airport runway which provides an existing high quality facility. Conversely, routes WC2, WC4 and WC6 encounter the steep and boggy, lower quality facilities south of Manchester Airport which would require significant improvement. Some of the higher quality existing facilities along all the routes includes the wide bridge over the M56 (though note that existing parapets are low) and a separate facility from Mereside Farm to Millington Lane alongside the A556. A lot of this section is existing PRow and can mostly be utilised today, however significant upgrades to the quality of these facilities is needed for the trail to function as an attractive route that is family friendly, as well as changes to the legal status of the PRow, or the agreement of permissive access for equestrian and cyclist users.

Ability to have a phased delivery

It is important to consider whether the routes can have a phased delivery. WC1, WC2, WC3 and WC4 all scored lower than WC5 and WC6 This is because WC5 and WC6 can be split into four phases, whilst WC1, WC2, WC3 and WC4 can only be split into three phases.

Summary

As two routes scored highest (WC1 and WC3), both options should be taken forward at this stage. This western section could also be marketed as a standalone product if desired as it provides access from the Trans Pennine Trail through key areas to the airport which may be an attractive leisure route. And useful to provide an alternative to any NPR construction traffic / opportunities. There may also be a benefit to linking to the proposed Tatton Services.

6.4.3 Central

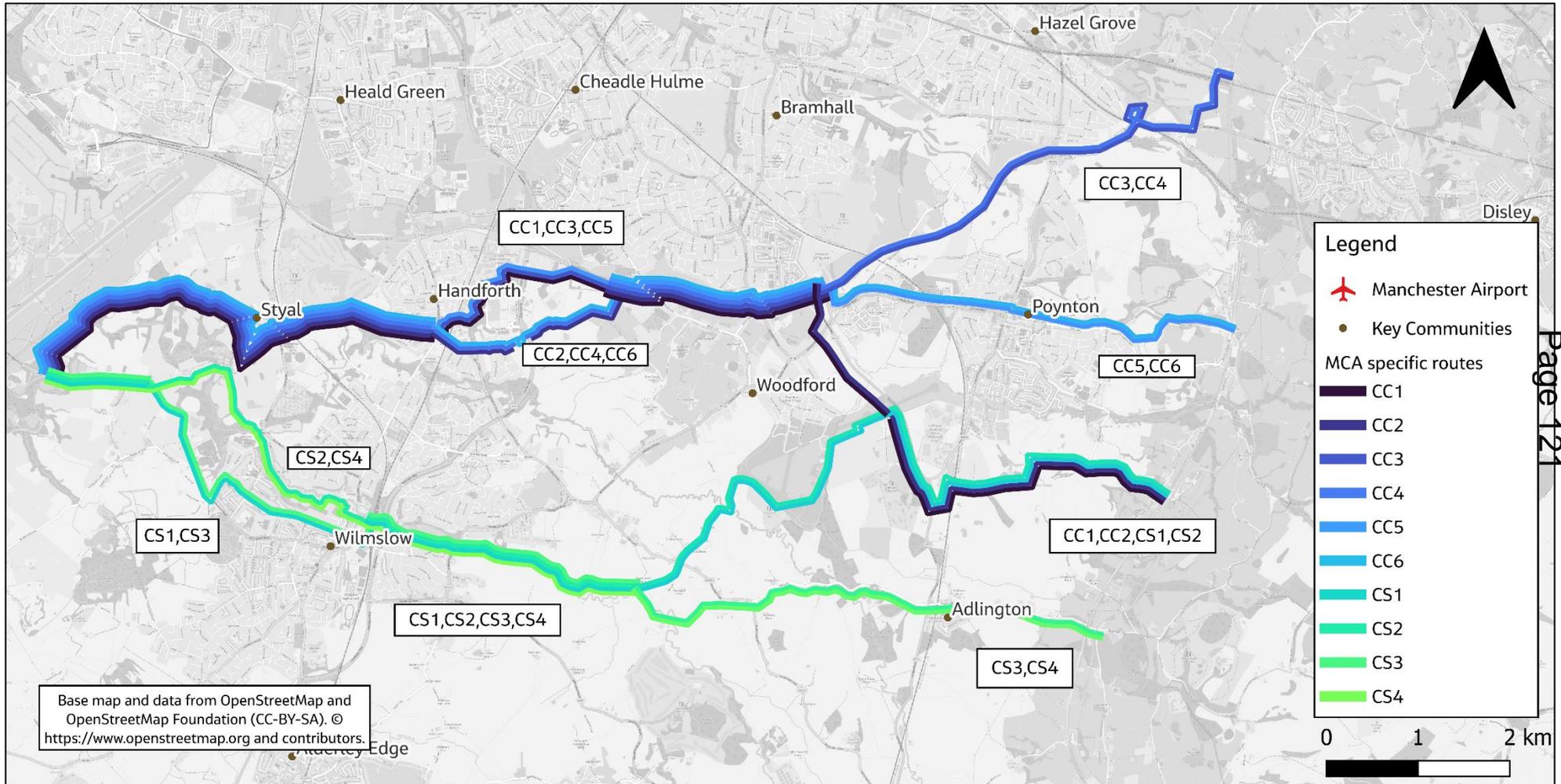


Figure 6-5: Central route sections

Table 6-4: Central route section descriptions

Route reference	Route description
CC1	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs east through Styal and past the National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill. The route connects to Handforth and the proposed Manchester Road Wilmslow scheme. The route then runs along the A555. The route follows the recently completed Roy Chadwick Way, before heading south to Adlington Business Park, then east to the Middlewood Way and National Cycle Network.
CC2	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs east through Styal and past the National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill. The route connects to Handforth, the proposed Manchester Road Wilmslow scheme and through the proposed Handforth Garden Village to the A555. The route follows the recently completed Roy Chadwick Way, before heading south to Adlington Business Park, then east to the Middlewood Way and National Cycle Network.
CC3	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs east through Styal and past the National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill. The route connects to Handforth and the proposed Manchester Road Wilmslow scheme. The route then runs along the A555 to Hazel Grove, the GM Ringway and the Middlewood Way.
CC4	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs east through Styal and past the National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill. The route connects to Handforth, the proposed Manchester Road Wilmslow scheme, and through the proposed Handforth Garden Village to the A555. The route continues along the A555 to Hazel Grove, the GM Ringway and the Middlewood Way.
CC5	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs east through Styal and past the National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill. The route connects to Handforth and the proposed Manchester Road Wilmslow scheme. The route then runs along the A555 connecting to Poynton before reaching the Middlewood Way and National Cycle Network.
CC6	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs east through Styal and past the National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill. The route connects to Handforth, the proposed Manchester Road Wilmslow scheme, and through the proposed Handforth Garden Village to the A555. The route continues along the A555 connecting to Poynton before reaching the Middlewood Way and National Cycle Network.
CS1	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route continues along the A538, past Waters, to Wilmslow. The route connects through the centre of Wilmslow, under the A34, then along the course of the River Bollin for a considerable distance. The route then continues further northeast through Woodford Garden Village and Adlington Business Park, then along the southern part of Roy Chadwick Way. The route continues along quiet routes before connecting to the Middlewood Way and National Cycle Network.

Route reference	Route description
CS2	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs towards Quarry Bank Mill and through the Carrs Park, before heading into Wilmslow connecting to the proposed Manchester Road, Wilmslow scheme. The route continues under the A34, then along the course of the River Bollin for a considerable distance. The route then continues further northeast through Woodford Garden Village and Adlington Business Park, then along the southern part of Roy Chadwick Way. The route continues along quiet routes before connecting to the Middlewood Way and National Cycle Network.
CS3	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route continues along the A538, past Waters, to Wilmslow. The route connects through the centre of Wilmslow, under the A34, then along the course of the River Bollin for a considerable distance. The route continues through Adlington before connecting to the Middlewood Way and the National Cycle Network.
CS4	This option begins south of the airport connecting to the Airport Orbital Cycleway and National Cycle Network at the A538. From here the route runs towards Quarry Bank Mill and through the Carrs Park, before heading into Wilmslow connecting to the proposed Manchester Road, Wilmslow scheme. The route continues under the A34, then along the course of the River Bollin for a considerable distance. The route connects through Adlington before connecting to the Middlewood Way and the National Cycle Network.

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

The results of the sift for the central section are shown in Table 6-5 and Table 6-6 and refer to routes shown in Figure 6-5. Results of CC are provided first, and then CS. As set out in Section 6.3, both the central (CC) and southern (CS) corridors were taken forward to this stage. The tables show that route sections CC4 and CS2 scored the highest, ranking first. CC1, CS3 and CS4 all ranked lowest. Below is an analysis of each route and how they scored within each criterion. Results for CC are provided first, and then CS.

Table 6-5: CC sift results

Ref	Deliverability									Outcome	
	Design challenges	Potential Benefits	Costs for comparison	Funding / Affordability	Acceptability	Land	Environmental considerations	Existing Facilities	Ability to have a phased delivery	Total Score	Rank
CC1	4	4	2	2	6	3	3	3	5	65	6
CC2	4	4	2	3	8	3	3	2	5	67	4
CC3	8	2	4	2	6	3	3	4	5	70	2
CC4	8	2	4	4	8	3	3	3	5	73	1
CC5	4	6	2	2	6	3	3	3	5	67	4
CC6	4	6	2	3	8	3	3	2	5	69	3

Design Challenges (CC)

CC3 and CC4 scored higher than the other routes for design challenges. CC3 and CC4 utilise more existing walking and cycling infrastructure, particularly along the A555, however there are challenges at the eastern extent from the A6 to the Middlewood Way to address. CC5 and CC6 that link through Poynton have challenges such as narrow roads, for example, on Chester Road near Poynton railway station, and also east of Poynton on Park Lane which is narrow, and Coppice Road which has no existing footway. Therefore, it could be difficult to find a design solution on these alignments. CC1, CC3 and CC5 pass through Handforth including its residential areas, which would need to include finding a solution to improve the existing route under the railway line. CC2, CC4 and CC6 would require working closely with developers in regard to Handforth Garden Village and delivery of this is likely to be dependent upon this development coming forward. Key challenges that all route options face include narrow roads with limited space for dedicated facilities in the Styal area such as Altrincham Road and Station Road. Whilst dedicated facilities are in place on the A555, these may not be attractive to a leisure market, which the GBT is aiming to target.

Potential Benefits (CC)

The scores varied for this criterion. CC5 and CC6 scored the highest due to the total potential benefits from the AMAT and tourism benefits equalling £18 million. CC1 and CC2 scored benefits of £16m, and CC3 and CC4 had the lowest estimated benefits at £12 million. A majority of these benefits were AMAT benefits rather than tourism related benefits given that for this alignment it is expected that a majority of the users from this route would be commuters/ everyday use, rather than tourism, resulting in lower benefits overall. In addition, for the tourism benefits within the western section to be realised there needs to be route connectivity through the central section to link to the Middlewood Way and Trans Pennine Trail. This is not to say that the routes would not be value for money; though further work is required to better understand the benefits and BCR of the routes once there is a better understanding of the investment costs.

Costs for comparison (CC)

As route interventions and costs have not been developed at this stage, a 0-5 score was given for costs to compare the routes. CC3 and CC4 scored highest as a significant amount of existing infrastructure would be utilised along the A555 so therefore these options would likely be lower cost than the alternatives. The other four routes scored lower as they would require investment through Poynton to link into the Middlewood Way (CC5 and CC6), and CC1 and CC2 would require investments on roads east of Roy Chadwick Way e.g. Street Lane. All other sections of the route from the airport to Handforth are likely to have similar investment costs.

Funding/Affordability (CC)

CC1, CC3 and CC5 scored lower for the funding/ affordability as whilst they provide a connection between NCN routes, Manchester Airport and a National Trust site (Quarry Bank Mill) which could attract sources of funding, they do not provide connectivity into Handforth Garden Village which is likely to unlock additional funding opportunities for options CC2, CC4 and CC6. CC4 scores highest as in addition to linking through Handforth Garden Village, the route utilises the pre-existing walking and cycling route along the A555 for a larger proportion of the route and would therefore be expected to cost less and therefore be more affordable. Overall however, these routes generally serve more of an everyday use/ commuter market than tourism and will therefore less likely to attract tourism related funding sources.

Acceptability (CC)

It is expected that all six routes would be widely acceptable due to their non-controversial nature (subject to landowner agreements). CC2, CC4 and CC6 all scored higher as the routes go through Handforth Garden Village and would utilise the proposed footpath/ cycleway through the development. As all route options follow the existing A555 route and CC1 and CC2 follow Roy Chadwick Way, this would be acceptable and sensible to use existing infrastructure. However, as these routes are parallel to busy roads, these may be less acceptable and attractive to a leisure/ tourism market. For all routes, work would be required with National Trust to progress proposals on their land at Quarry Bank Mill.

Land (CC)

All the route options scored equally on this criterion as there are sections across all routes that are anticipated to be owned by Manchester Airports Group or National Trust and therefore it is essential to continue to work with these landowners. Sections of the routes follow adopted highway which should be more straightforward, such as the A555, however work may be needed with neighbouring Local Authorities due to the route being on the Cheshire East/ Greater Manchester boundary. There may also be the need to change the status of some PRoWs to include cyclists and equestrians, and to obtain clarification on highway status, for example in relation to Sagars Lane between Clay Lane and Hampson Crescent. Close working is needed with the developer for Handforth Garden Village in regard to routes CC2, CC4 and CC6. The eastern extent of CC3 and CC4 are anticipated to include private land at their eastern extent close to the tie in to Middlewood Way.

Environmental Considerations (CC)

All the routes scored equally on this criterion. All the routes pass through Northern Wood which has ancient woodland, which could be challenging, and some lowland meadows, and all connect through areas of Flood Zone Risk 2 and 3 either on Hall Lane, Lower Meadow Road or the A523 and A555 and a traditional orchard at Oak Farm. Further information is provided in Appendix D, and these environmental considerations would need to be considered further in future stages of work.

Existing facilities (CC)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

Route CC3 scored highest on this criterion and CC2 scored lowest, this is because CC3 utilises the most existing facilities along the route and CC2 the least. Whilst all routes utilise the A555 existing facilities, CC3 follows the A555 for the greatest length. CC4 also follows the A555 for a large extent however links through the proposed Handforth Garden Village which has no facilities at present, and therefore scores slightly lower (this also applies for CC2 and CC6). CC2 scores lower as towards the eastern end of the route the route is on-road and lacks existing facilities for walking and cycling, this also applies for CC1, however both of these utilise the Roy Chadwick Way. There is also a lack of facilities for CC5 and CC6 through Poynton.

Ability to have a phased delivery (CC)

It is important to consider whether the routes can have a phased delivery. All of the routes scored highly for this criterion as they can all be easily delivered in multiple phases.

Table 6-6: CS sift results

Ref	Deliverability									Outcome	
	Design challenges	Potential Benefits	Costs for comparison	Funding / Affordability	Acceptability	Land	Environmental considerations	Existing Facilities	Ability to have a phased delivery	Total Score	Rank
CS1	4	8	1	3	8	3	3	2	3	72	2
CS2	4	8	0	3	10	3	3	3	3	74	1
CS3	2	10	2	2	4	3	3	1	2	66	3
CS4	2	10	1	2	4	3	3	2	2	66	3

Design Challenges (CS)

CS1 and CS2 scored higher than CS3 and CS4 for design challenges. CS3 and CS4 connect through Adlington which provides an additional design challenge as Wilmslow Road and Mill Lane have a national speed limit which will make it a challenge to find a suitable design solution. CS1 and CS2 utilise the recently completed Roy Chadwick Way which has a good quality facility for walkers and cyclists, despite being alongside a busy road. These two routes also connect through Woodford Garden Village which would require further investigation. A challenge across all routes is the need to improve the underpass at the A34 which needs widening and lighting. West of Wilmslow along the River Bollin needs significant investment to provide a high-quality facility however the natural landscape could provide an attraction to the area. Potential issues need to be considered such as erosion of the river bank. CS2 and CS4 connect through the Carrs Park to Quarry Bank Mill which is steep in parts and includes a bridge over the River Bollin which may need upgrading. The route between the A538 and Quarry Bank Mill is also anticipated to be challenging in parts due to stepped access and private properties which needs further investigation.

Potential Benefits (CS)

All routes scored high for this criterion. For routes CS1 and CS2, the potential benefits from the AMAT and tourism benefits equalled £36.5 million. For CS3 and CS4, the benefits are estimated at £46 million. A majority of these benefits were tourism related benefits given that these routes were anticipated to be primarily used for leisure/

tourism as opposed to commuter/ everyday use. Further work is required to better understand the benefits and BCR of the routes once there is a better understanding of the investment costs.

Costs for comparison (CS)

As route interventions and costs have not been developed at this stage, a 0-5 score was given for costs to compare the routes. Investment generally in this area is expected to be high due to the infrastructure required and challenges that need to be addressed as set out in design challenges. CS2 scored low due to the extremely high costs associated with the infrastructure required along the River Bollin, the Carrs Park, through Florence Farm and Lumb Farm and the connection into the Middlewood Way. CS3 scored relatively higher as this route only has costs associated with the infrastructure required along the River Bollin and through Adlington connecting into the Middlewood Way.

Funding/Affordability (CS)

Whilst the ability to attract funding is likely to be similar for an attractive flagship route along the River Bollin, CS1 and CS2 have scored higher due to their connectivity into Woodford Garden Village which may attract more funding streams.

Acceptability (CS)

CS1 and CS2 score highly for acceptability and is expected to be widely accepted by the public due to the non-controversial nature of the route. These options, particularly the sections along the River Bollin have the ability to become an attraction not only for local residents but regionally and potentially nationally too, in particular for CS2 which utilises the Carrs Park in Wilmslow as well. Many of the routes utilise the ProW network, and therefore there is a need to liaise with landowners for any improvements or change of status. CS3 and CS4 score lower due to these options routing along Wilmslow Road and Mill Lane at their eastern extents, which could be a challenge for acceptability without a high quality solution put forward, which could be challenging.

Land (CS)

All the route options scored equally on this criterion. It is likely that there would be the need to change the status of some ProW to include cyclists and equestrians along all options, in particular along the River Bollin. All route options would require a crossing of Wilmslow Park South Road which is private land. In addition, there are sections along all routes that are located on private land, for example the route from Hollies Farm to Newton Farm. The route adjacent to the River Bollin is likely to be privately owned in part, and the land at the A34/Bollin Valley Roundabout is privately owned. On CS2 and CS4, work would be required with the National Trust for routes within their ownership at Quarry Bank Mill.

Environmental Considerations (CS)

All the routes scored moderately on this criterion, as they all have minor impacts across multiple environmental considerations. For example, all the routes pass through Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 in significant sections along the River Bollin, Mill Lane and Quarry Bank Mill which would require careful consideration. There is deciduous woodland along the majority of the route and there is good quality grassland near Newton Hall Farm. Further information is provided in Appendix D, and these environmental considerations would need to be considered further in future stages of work.

Existing facilities (CS)

Route CS2 scored highest on this criterion. This is because CS2 utilises Quarry Bank Mill routes, the recently completed Roy Chadwick Way and the Carrs Park in Wilmslow which is a relatively high-quality bridleway owned by CEC and is part of the NCN. CS4 also utilises routes through Quarry Bank Mill and the Carrs Park, and CS2 also

utilises Roy Chadwick Way. CS1 and CS3 utilise the recently completed A538 Altrincham Road infrastructure, however this is not an attractive leisure route, but more suited for everyday purposes. Routes CS3 and CS4 have limited facilities at their eastern extent along Wilmslow Road and Mill Lane which are busy routes and a challenge for design as described previously. A large proportion of these routes are PRow, with significant upgrades to the quality of these facilities being needed for the trails to function as an attractive route that is family friendly.

Ability to have a phased delivery (CS)

It is important to consider whether the routes can have a phased delivery. Routes CS1 and CS2 scored moderately as these routes can be delivered in four phases and CS3 and CS4 scored slightly lower as these routes could be delivered in three phases.

Summary

Within the northern route of the central section, CC4 scores highest and therefore should be taken forward, largely due to the extent of existing facilities that could be utilised and therefore it would be expected to have a lower cost and lower levels of funding required. CC3, scoring the second highest should also be considered given that the Handforth Garden Village timescales may not align with this project which could hinder delivery of CC4. However, this alignment through the central section is more aligned to an everyday use market rather than a leisure market which could limit its attractiveness.

The southern route section CS2 scored the highest. This is likely to be a longer term solution that would be more suited for leisure use trips, providing a higher-quality solution, though would require significant infrastructure improvements. This option would have the ability to draw in regional and potentially national visitors to the local area, boosting the economy and elevating the active travel offer of Cheshire East. This would also be primarily traffic-free for walkers, wheelers, equestrians, runners and cyclists; promoting active travel and creating sustainable travel options which is accessible for all.

6.4.4 Eastern

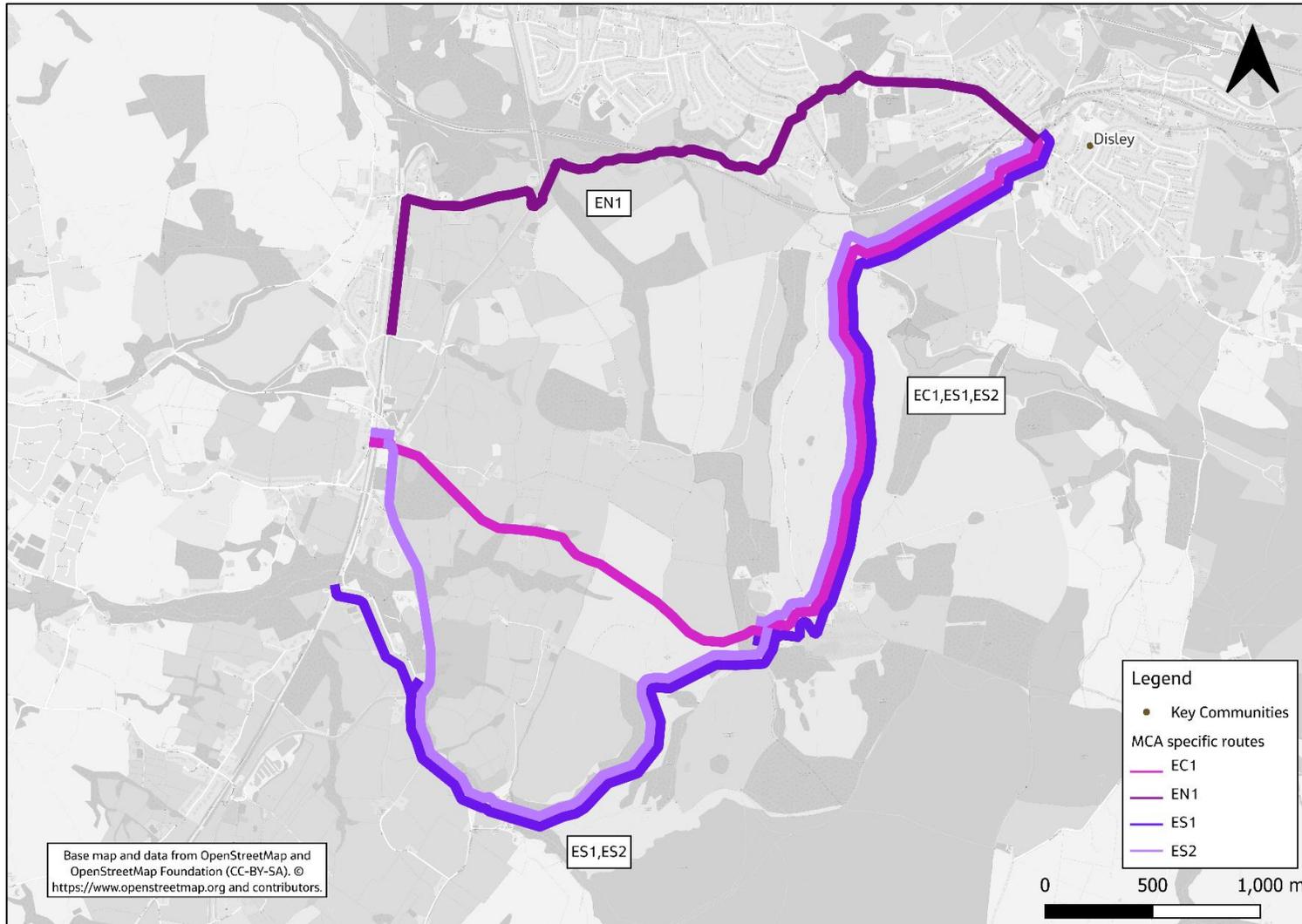


Figure 6-6: Eastern route sections

Table 6-7: Eastern route section descriptions

Route reference	Route description
EC1	This option begins on the Middlewood Way near Nelson’s Pit Visitor Centre, before heading east along PRow, through Lyme Park to Lyme Park car park, where the route connects to the Gritstone Trail, before heading north to connect into Disley.
EN1	This option begins on the Middlewood Way, connecting through High Lane, before continuing east into Disley.
ES1	This option begins on the Middlewood Way before heading southeast along quiet roads, through Lyme Park, past The Knot and Lyme Park car park, where the route connects to the Gritstone Trail. From here the route heads north to connect into Disley.
ES2	This option begins on the Middlewood Way near Nelson’s Pit Visitor Centre, before routing along the canal and quiet roads. The route then continues through Lyme Park and back up past The Knot and Lyme Park car park where the route connects to the Gritstone Trail. From here the route heads north to connect into Disley.

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

The results of the sift for the eastern section are shown in Table 6-8 below and refer to routes shown in Figure 6-6. The table shows that route section EC1 scored the highest, ranking first, and EN1 scored the lowest, ranking fourth. Below is an analysis of each route and how they scored within each criterion.

Table 6-8 Eastern sift results

Ref	Deliverability									Outcome	
	Design challenges	Potential Benefits	Costs for comparison	Funding / Affordability	Acceptability	Land	Environmental considerations	Existing Facilities	Ability to have a phased delivery	Route Section Total Score	Route Section Rank
EC1	6	6	4	2	8	1	3	3	1	65	1
EN1	4	2	4	1	8	2	3	3	1	59	4
ES1	6	6	2	2	8	1	2	3	1	62	2
ES2	4	6	2	2	8	1	2	2	2	60	3

Design Challenges

EC1 and ES1 scored higher than EN1 and ES2. EN1 faces challenges in relation to providing a high quality route over the canal and also the railway crossing south of High Lane. In addition, the route follows residential streets in High Lane and Disley which may be difficult to provide widths that meet LTN 01/20 guidance. All other routes utilise the access road to Lyme Park and Red Lane, which is a private road that could result in some challenge. Routes ES1 and ES2 utilise both quiet roads and an access point to Lyme Park further south, however the routes through Lyme Park need further investigation to what could be done to improve these to be aligned to LTN 01/20 standards. EC1 follows existing ProW, however surfacing would need upgrading. All options have challenging topography that would be difficult to overcome for family-friendly use.

Potential Benefits

The scores varied for this criterion. EC1, ES1 and ES2 all scored equally due to the total potential benefits from the AMAT and tourism benefits equalling £18 million. EN1 had benefits of £13m and therefore scored lower. A majority of these benefits were tourism related benefits given that these routes were anticipated to be primarily used for leisure/ tourism as opposed to commuter/ everyday use. This lower scoring is not to say that the routes would be

poor value for money; though further work is required to better understand the benefits and BCR of the routes once there is a better understanding of the investment costs.

Costs for comparison

As route interventions and costs have not been developed at this stage, a 0-5 score was given for costs to compare the routes. Routes EC1 and EN1 scored higher on the costs for comparison than ES1 and ES2. It was expected that routes ES1 and ES2 would have higher costs as a result of the infrastructure on Shrigley Road requiring improvements and potentially routes through this area of Lyme Park. EN1 would require investment to overcome the design challenges described above. EN1 would also need investment to improve surfacing and fund legal changes to the PRoW, subject to landowner agreement.

Funding/Affordability

These routes primarily cater for leisure/ tourism purposes and therefore would likely only attract leisure/ tourism related funding. Whilst it is expected that routes through Lyme Park are more likely to attract leisure funding, EN1 does not pass through Lyme Park and also would not be expected to cater for a significant number of everyday trips, therefore, is less likely to attract funding.

Acceptability

It is expected that all four routes would be widely accepted by the public due to the non-controversial nature of the routes and the routes already being provided along the Middlewood Way and through Lyme Park in particular for walking purposes. However, there is some concern relating to ES1, EC1 and ES2 which follow a private road (Red Lane) which could provide a challenge regarding securing cyclist and equestrian access. EC1 follows the PRoW which goes through Harestead Farm which is a working farm and therefore landowners would need to be on board with any proposed changes. For routes passing through Lyme Park, work would be required with the National Trust to progress proposals on their land.

Land

All the route options scored low on this criterion. As mentioned, all routes apart from EN1 utilise Red Lane which is a private road and has public footpath status (though securing cyclist and equestrian access would be challenging). In EC1, the land between the canal to Harestead Farm near Shrigley Road North is private land however is an existing PRoW. The land through Lyme Park is owned by National Trust and therefore partnership working would be required to enable improvements.

Environmental Considerations

Routes EC1 and EN1 scored marginally higher than ES1 and ES2 on this criterion. EC1 encounters ancient woodland at Elm Wood and Bens Wood and woodland pasture and parkland through Lyme Park, as well as ancient woodland at Coalpit Clough. EN1 encounters ancient woodland at Ryles and Middlecake Woods and a local nature reserve at Jackson's Brickworks. ES1 and ES2 encounter deciduous woodland north of Shrigley Road and west of Macclesfield Canal respectively and woodland pasture and parkland through Lyme Park, they also encounter a Flood Risk Zone around Shrigley Road/Mitchell Fold from the Macclesfield Canal. Further information is provided in Appendix D, and these environmental considerations would need to be considered further in future stages of work.

Existing facilities

Routes EC1, EN1, and ES1 scored marginally higher than ES2 for this criterion. This is because all the routes apart from EN1 utilise routes through Lyme Park and the PRoW on Red Lane. ES2 scored lower as it follows the narrow canal towpath. EC1 and ES1 utilise the wide smooth paved access road up until the cattle grid and farm track and

the private access road into Disley. EN1 utilises the Ladybrook Valley Interest Trail, Middlewood Way and the footpath along Jackson's Edge Road.

Ability to have a phased delivery

It is important to consider whether the routes can have a phased delivery. Routes EC1, EN1 and ES1 score low as these routes could be delivered in two phases only. ES2 scored slightly higher as it is expected that this route could be delivered in three phases.

Summary

Route EC1 scored the highest within the eastern section which connects from the Middlewood Way to Lyme Park and Disley. An improved leisure connection in this location could provide benefits. However, this eastern section of the GBT is less of a strategic route as it does not connect into the Trans Pennine Trail and also has topographical challenges, which damages the marketability of the route as a family-friendly scheme.

6.4.5 Preferred route

Following the MCAF sift set out in the above sub-sections, the preferred route is shown in Figure 6-7 below, followed by Figure 6-8 which shows some of the wider context and benefits that the route could unlock.

The preferred route will provide a connection from the Trans Pennine Trail close to Partington in the west to Little Bollington via the GM Ringway and the National Trust site Dunham Massey. After connecting over the M56 and going through Rostherne, the route connects to the Cheshire East operated site Tatton Park. Initial engagement with stakeholders has resulted in a spur towards the proposed Tatton Services and Altrincham also being included. From here, the trail connects further east to reach Manchester Airport. Here the preferred route splits into two options. The northern alignment which would be more deliverable in a shorter term due to more existing infrastructure provides access to Quarry Bank Mill, Handforth and potentially Handforth Garden Village before running along the A555 utilising existing infrastructure to reach the Middlewood Way and the NCN and could then link up to the Trans Pennine Trail via Stockport. The southern option in the central section provides access to the National Trust site Quarry Bank Mill, Wilmslow, Woodford Garden Village and Adlington Business Park before reaching the Middlewood Way and NCN to the Trans Pennine Trail via Stockport. From the Middlewood Way, there is the potential to link to Lyme Park before reaching Disley.

If the route was to be delivered in full it would provide an accessible multi-use trail attractive to both leisure and utility users. It would provide connectivity to key existing trails in the area and provide the ability to attract visitors locally, regionally, and nationally if connected to the Trans Pennine Trail.

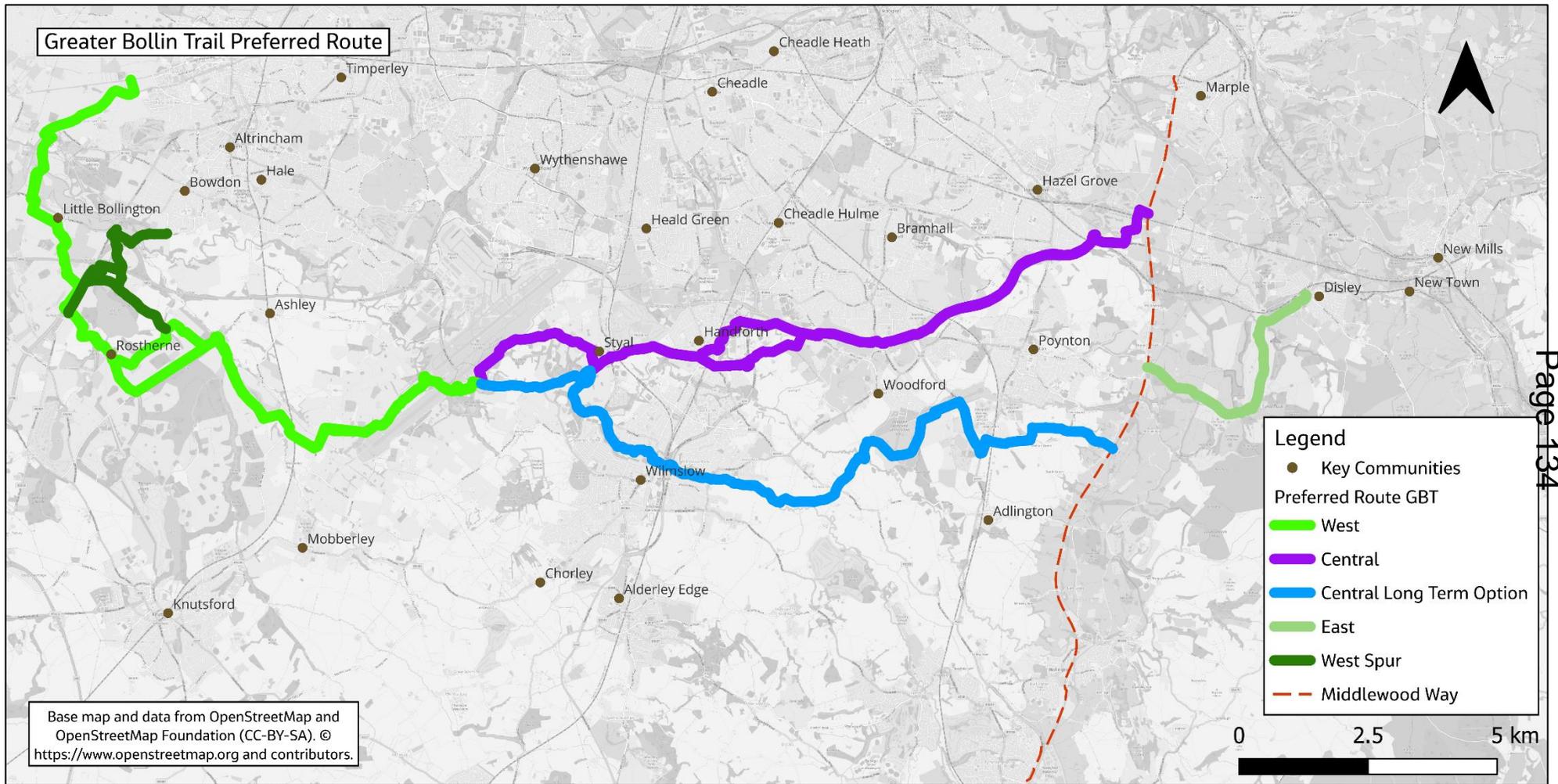


Figure 6-7: GBT preferred route

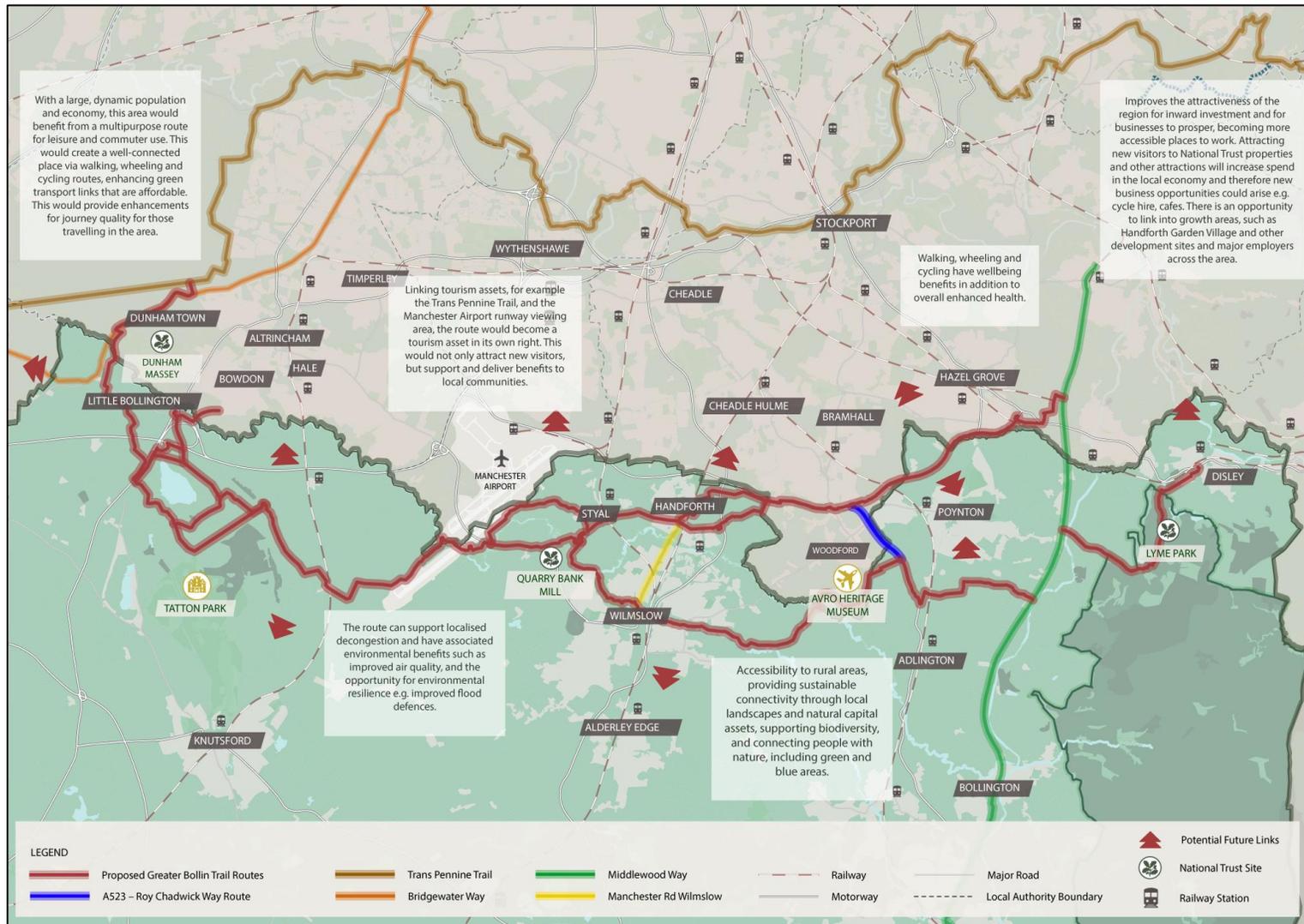


Figure 6-8 GBT preferred route

7. Phasing

Phasing of the preferred route identified in Section 6.4 has been undertaken to establish which elements could be delivered in the short-term, medium-long term and long-term. However regardless of the phasing, the vision for the project acts as an overarching support for the GBT, moving towards the project's aims in the meantime. Elements which have been taken into consideration to assist in determining the phases of the preferred route included:

- Whether the route section has existing infrastructure in place;
- Whether the existing infrastructure in place needs improving;
- Whether it is anticipated that significant land acquisition or access rights are required;
- Whether there are design challenges which will be difficult to overcome;
- Whether the origin and destination of each phase of the route sections is accessible via public transport;
- Whether key local communities will be accessible and could be connected with other settlements/ attractions/ green and blue infrastructure within the proposed phase, subsequently benefiting the community and positively impacting larger numbers of potential users;
- Whether the proposed phase could, at a future date, provide shorter sections/ loops of the route section; and
- Whether the proposed route can provide links to local communities/ attractions/ green and blue infrastructure on its own.

Table 7-1 provides an overview of the rationale and key risks/ challenges for delivery associated with each corridor.

In summary, the short-term phasing reflects the northern section option of the Central Corridor, utilising existing infrastructure and providing key links to leisure, tourism and employment opportunities. It should be noted that the option would either route via Handforth Dean or Handforth Garden Village (which would be subject to delivery as part of Handforth Garden Village if this option were chosen). An initial high-level assessment of the anticipated benefits of this short-term phase has been undertaken. This is estimated to be approximately £12.4 million, made up of £7.7 million of benefits from the AMAT⁷ and £4.7 million of tourism benefits. Further work is required to understand the cost of this investments and therefore the BCR of the route. Ahead of the medium and long-term phases being delivered, there may be an opportunity for shorter loops/ routes to be followed by users, through links to public transport nodes across the short-term route. This would enable a leisure offer in the short-term ahead of the full GBT being delivered and allow tourism related benefits to be unlocked in the short-term.

The medium-term phasing reflects the Western and Eastern Corridors, with the Western Corridor ideally being delivered before the main construction phase of NPR. This phasing would provide a comprehensive GBT, enabling connections to the Trans Pennine Trail at the concluding extents of the preferred route for onward travel. Further, this phase would provide key links to National Trust sites such as Dunham Massey and Tatton Park in the west, and Lyme Park in the east as well as a connection to Manchester Airport. As such, delivering this in the medium term

⁷ AMAT monetises benefits related to congestion, infrastructure maintenance, accidents, air quality, noise, greenhouse gases, reduced risk of premature death, absenteeism and journey ambience

would provide not only benefits to leisure users, but also utility trip options. Both corridors would be subject to funding and land/ access rights.

The long-term phasing would provide an alternative southern section to the Central Corridor that would be an attractive facility locally, regionally and nationally due to its alignment alongside the River Bollin. Though this phase would require significant new infrastructure and is comparatively long compared to other potential phases. As such, further investigations into necessary infrastructure would be required. Though, technical work and land access/ negotiations could be progressed during the short/medium-term to work towards the delivery of this corridor.

Table 7-1 Phasing rationale

Proposed phase and associated corridor	Rationale	Risks/challenges for delivery
<p>Short-term (Central Corridor, northern section)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Links areas of Handforth to Styal, Quarry Bank Mill and Manchester Airport and has the potential to link with Handforth Garden Village dependent on which route option is chosen providing a connection to leisure, tourism and employment opportunities. ▪ Public transport provision is provided within Handforth and Styal that the route could link to (Handforth railway station, Styal railway station and multiple bus stops). ▪ Utilises existing infrastructure on the A555. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One of the route options is subject to delivery as part of Handforth Garden Village. ▪ Access under the railway line from Lower Meadow Road, Handforth Dean, to Brooke Avenue, Handforth is required. ▪ Determination of highway status of Sagars Road is required. ▪ Limited to no footway along Altrincham Road which would require improving and the lack of a crossing point onto Station Road in Styal. Narrow footways along Station Road which may also be difficult to address. ▪ The possibility of lighting alongside Manchester Airport runway would need to be assessed and any lighting would need to be of a suitable type. ▪ Wellington Road is a private road that continues onto a footpath through Hazel Grove Golf Club which is likely private land and will require discussion for potential improvements and change of legal status/ access rights.
<p>Medium-term (Western Corridor)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anticipated to mainly benefit leisure users and provides a final link at the west of the GBT to the Trans Pennine Trail where users can continue into areas such as Warrington and Greater Manchester, and also links to the Bridgewater Way trail. However, there is the potential for this phase to serve utility trips between Knutsford, Altrincham, and Manchester Airport partly along the GBT. ▪ Comparatively long and fairly rural with limited public transport connections which may make it more difficult to secure funding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Topography near Manchester Airport and that the possibility of lighting alongside Manchester Airport runway would need to be assessed and any lighting would need to be of a suitable type. ▪ The possibility of lighting alongside Manchester Airport runway would need to be assessed and any lighting would need to be of a suitable type. ▪ Security risks of additional footfall near Manchester Airport would require agreement and consideration. ▪ Potential NPR development interface. ▪ Change of status of ProW/routing through farms likely to be required. ▪ Environmental considerations such as ancient woodland near Manchester Airport, as set out in Appendix D.

Proposed phase and associated corridor	Rationale	Risks/challenges for delivery
Medium-term (Eastern Corridor)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Anticipated to mainly benefit leisure users and provides a connection from the existing Middlewood Way trail through the National Trust site of Lyme Park and into the local community of Disley. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Subject to funding and land/ access rights. ▪ Steep topography and therefore design challenges would be difficult to overcome for family-friendly use, surfacing and lighting could be challenging. ▪ Upgrades to existing ProW though farmland and agricultural buildings will need to be explored, as well as upgrading the existing surfacing. ▪ Red Lane is a private road in parts, with the remainder adopted highway. It is also a footpath and a recent addition to ProW (footway) with residential dwellings with private rights of access.
Long-term (Central corridor, southern option)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provides an additional link between Styal and Manchester Airport. ▪ Progression of the route alongside the River Bollin which requires significant new infrastructure and is comparatively long compared to other potential phases. ▪ Would be an attractive facility locally, regionally and nationally. ▪ By delivering this final phase, this enables the full route benefits to be realised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Follows access to a private property/ recent housing development which would need exploring. ▪ Bridge over the River Bollin may pose a challenge for upgrading to suitable widths as well as potential erosion issues alongside the River Bollin, new infrastructure requirements and investigation into land ownership. ▪ Under the A34 underpass could require substantial infrastructure for widening and lighting. ▪ Linking with Woodford Garden Village. ▪ Improvements to Street Lane.

8. Potential Funding Sources

Key to delivery of the GBT will be securing external funds. CEC have an annual programme of transport infrastructure delivered through the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block and it is recommended a portion of this is used to conduct design work for the initial phases of the GBT to develop 'ready to go' schemes to seek external funding. Potential external funding sources are set out below.

Table 8-1: Funding sources

Funding Source	Description	Link	Opportunities
Handforth Garden Village (S106)	Approval has been granted to secure Section 106 contributions from the Handforth Garden Village developer towards local highways, education, and healthcare.	It could be possible for the central section of the route to link into the Handforth Garden Village to provide a connection for residents to employment and leisure opportunities and improve walking and cycling accessibility across the site.	By linking Handforth Garden Village into the route it may be possible to utilise some of the Section 106 funds to provide high quality infrastructure in the area that would benefit the GBT e.g. connection over the A34 at Handforth.
Local Transport Fund (LTF)	Cheshire East have been provisionally allocated £180m of funding for the LTF. The LTF funding priorities are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive better connectivity within towns, suburbs and cities • Drive better connectivity between towns and cities • Improve everyday local journeys for people 	This funding allowance is to be allocated for Cheshire East schemes in line with the funding priorities, therefore there is potential that this funding could be used to deliver parts of the GBT.	As the principles of the trail include every day and utility journeys, there is the opportunity for the LTF to be a source of funding. The route will look to drive connectivity between towns and improve everyday journeys.
National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF)⁸	The NLHF is the largest funder for the UK's heritage. Over the next decade the NLHF are strategising to take a longer-term view, investing in heritage for the future as well as for the present. They will invest in places to	The NLHF looks to provide funding to projects including helping to connect people to nature in their daily lives and areas that are connected to history and heritage. This could be applicable to sections of the proposed GBT.	As the trail will connect into historical and heritage sites and will provide access to nature, there could be potential to apply for this funding.

⁸ [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#)

Funding Source	Description	Link	Opportunities
	bring about benefits for people, places and the natural environment. The NLHF can provide funding for projects between £10,000 and £10 million.		
National Highways	The GBT will look to connect into the proposed Tatton Services which will be located off the M56 and will interact with National Highways infrastructure.		There is a need to work closely with National Highways to investigate options of how to take this section of the GBT forward.
Private Sector Investment	Along the route there are multiple private businesses that may benefit from both utility and leisure users of the GBT.		There may be an opportunity to discuss the benefits of the route to the private sector and leverage funding for the GBT.
UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)	The UKSPF is a central pillar of the UK government's Levelling Up agenda. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills. This project has been funded by UKSPF.	The UKSPF Cheshire East allocation is circa £12.4 million and must be spent by March 2025. CEC have developed an investment plan for the UKSPF allocation. Five priority local opportunities are identified within this including active travel, making more of natural assets and green spaces and boosting the visitor economy and cultural offer to drive town centre footfall.	The GBT will aim to increase footfall into town centres through the use of the trail, which will encourage active travel and make use of the natural assets and green spaces within Cheshire East. There may be potential for future stages of work to be funded by SPF.
Local Transport Plan (LTP)	CEC have an adopted LTP for the period of 2019-2024. The strategy considers all forms of transport over the plan period, providing a framework for how transport will support wider policies to improve the economy, protect the environment and make attractive places to live, work and play. Associated with the LTP, CEC have an annual programme of transport infrastructure delivered through the Local Transport Plan Integrated Transport Block.	There is potential for the LTP Integrated Transport Block funding to be utilised to conduct design work for the initial phases of the GBT to develop ready to go schemes to seek external funding.	There is an opportunity to use the LTP Integrated Transport Block funding to progress the GBT.

Funding Source	Description	Link	Opportunities
Northern Powerhouse Rail (NPR)	The potential NPR infrastructure could interface with the western corridor of the GBT.		There may be opportunities for funding related to NPR to contribute towards delivery of the western sections of the GBT as well as utilising any surplus land.
Land owners	Landowners receive grants to support project work, plant new woodland and build countryside cycle trails, create wildlife habitats, manage coastal landscapes and to protect historic sites across the UK. There are various land owners across the route.		For land owners who could benefit from the GBT or are supportive of the scheme, there may be options to investigate around dedicating land as permissive route as a benefit in kind. Further, the approach undertaken in Somerset ('The Strawberry Line') experimenting with permitted development rights and volunteers should be investigated further with land owners.
Sport England	Each year Sport England invest more than £250 million to help people play sport and take part in physical activity.	The GBT aims to provide an opportunity for people to be physically active and to connect communities.	The Sport England 'Small Grants Programme' helps to fund opportunities for communities to get more physically active. Further consideration should be given to this funding source.
Sustrans	Sustrans are investing funds in improving the quality of the NCN to achieve a higher standard of provision.	CEC have engaged with Sustrans on this piece of work to date and the route utilises the NCN.	Continue to engage with Sustrans to identify and progress improvements on the NCN across the GBT.
Future CEC Local Plan Opportunities	The Local Plan Strategy sets out strategic priorities for the development of the area, along with planning policies and proposals to make sure that new development addresses the economic, environmental and social needs of the area. The existing Local Plan was adopted in July 2017.	The GBT could be integrated into the next Local Plan as it could enhance walking and cycling connectivity to development sites.	There is potential for funding through the Local Infrastructure Plan associated with the next Local Plan.

9. Recommendations and next steps

This OAR has detailed the options assessment process for the proposed GBT. Work undertaken as reported in this document including route investigation and options development and assessment has determined a preferred route as shown in Figure 6-7 and Figure 6-8 in Section 6.4.5. Feedback from stakeholders and site visits have also informed the preferred route.

As set out in Section 7, the short-term phases would link the A555 existing infrastructure through Handforth and Styal to east of Manchester Airport, with a long-term ambition to deliver the entire GBT. The short-term phase is expected to deliver benefits in the region of £12.4 million. A crucial element of this is to address topography east of the Manchester Airport runway, which is a significant design challenge that needs to be overcome to provide accessibility around Manchester Airport. This would link into existing infrastructure within the Central Corridor and unlock access to future route sections within the Western Corridor. In order to achieve the entire GBT, the recommendations create a long-term investment programme that will need sustained investment to deliver the route and associated step change in levels of walking, wheeling and cycling.

Work as part of the MCAF has suggested that sections of the route would provide benefits, however further work is required to better understand the expense of the investment and understand the benefits in more detail to determine a BCR.

As such, key recommended next steps include:

- Securing of funding to further develop the scheme;
- Understanding any issues or constraints in further detail;
- Understanding the benefits and benefit cost ratio and wider business case;
- Developing plans for promotion and marketing of the scheme;
- Engaging local businesses to seek their investment to capitalise on opportunities and develop the wider offer for users;
- Developing scheme designs and progressing discussions on land access or acquisitions for the short-term phase and develop cost estimates;
- Preparing bids to other external funding opportunities as appropriate;
- Integrate the ambitions for the GBT and leisure routes for walking and cycling into policy documentation e.g. Local Transport Plan and Local Plan;
- Consideration of future long-term maintenance funding for the route;
- Continue to work alongside partners, including other Local Authorities, to deliver these ambitions and link into networks outside of Cheshire East; and
- Continue to work with and alongside stakeholders who will be important to the delivery of the scheme, including landowners. Discussions with landowners have not taken place across the entire route and these discussions will be key to firming up route options ahead of any delivery. The Steering Group will be a valuable mechanism for ensuring continued support and enabling delivery.

Appendix A. Policy Review

A.1 National Policy/Guidance

Department for Transport, Gear Change (2019)⁹

Gear Change is a policy document released in 2019 by the Department for Transport aimed at outlining the plans to make England 'a great walking and cycling nation'. It is split into four main themes of actions and includes the benefits and opportunities the proposals will create.

The document begins by describing the benefits associated with a 'step change' in cycling and walking, these include 'improving air quality, combatting climate change, improving health and wellbeing, addressing inequalities and tackling congestion on our roads', there are also health benefits from the physical activity and thus reduced NHS costs. This is followed by highlighting how there is an opportunity to embed the changes in travel behaviour since COVID-19 and the rise in popularity of cycling and walking which can change how people move around in towns and cities.

'A great walking and cycling nation' is defined by the following quote from the document: *"Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit. Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030."* If this outcome is to be achieved, it will create places that people want to live and work in, they will be better connected and more sustainable communities. It will also help to deliver clean growth which will support local businesses and ensure prosperity across the country and level up the nation.

The document outlines four main themes of actions that are required to reach its goal. These are listed below:

1. **Better streets for cycling and people** – streets will become safer to cycle and walk with separated pedestrian and cycle routes and direct and intuitive routes designed by cyclists.
2. **Putting cycling and walking at the heart of transport, place-making, and health policy** – appropriate infrastructure provisions will be made for cycling and walking with an increase in spending and budgets.
3. **Empowering and encouraging Local Authorities** – Local Authorities will receive increased funding; however, this will only be given to schemes that meet the standards set out in the LTN 01/20 (reviewed below). Funding applications will be examined by a soon to be established commissioning body called Active Travel England (now established) who will enforce standards and improve the performance of active travel schemes. Local authorities will also gain new powers to enforce against moving traffic offences previously only done by the police.
4. **We will enable people to cycle and protect them when they cycle** – every adult or child who wants cycle safety training will be able to access it, and proposals are in place for cycling to be prescribed as an intervention for poor health. A nationally established e-bike support programme is proposed, and legal changes will be made to protect vulnerable road users.

According to the document if these themes of actions are implemented, then the country can become a great walking and cycling nation which will help to address the issues around climate change, air quality, health and wellbeing, inequalities and congestion.

⁹ Department for Transport (2019) *Gear Change* [Online] Available from: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f1f59458fa8f53d39c0def9/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

This policy is relevant to the GBT as this would create a safe, attractive and well-connected route for walking and cycling. The proposed route could be used by people to exercise and improve their health as well as support local businesses along the route as a result of increased footfall.

Department for Transport, Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 01/20) (2020)¹⁰

The Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 01/20) policy document provides guidance and good practice for the design of cycle infrastructure, in support of the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy. The document begins by outlining how key cycling is to the future of the transport system and that to facilitate this the quality of cycle infrastructure must improve to encourage people to use it. The standards set out in this document aim to help cycling become a form of mass transit in many more places and for it to be seen as a means of everyday transport. All schemes must be built consistent with the guidance and if they are not or if the scheme takes too long to be built then requests can be made for funding to be returned.

The document identified that inclusivity is key as people of all ages must be considered. It is also important to view cycling as a form of leisure and tourism as well as transport. The document notes that the benefits of cycling can extend further than just physical and mental health improvements. The document also highlights the opportunity for modal shift: reducing the number of people doing short journeys in the car and taking advantage of the high numbers of school children who live nearby to secondary schools. This is highlighted in Figure 9-1.

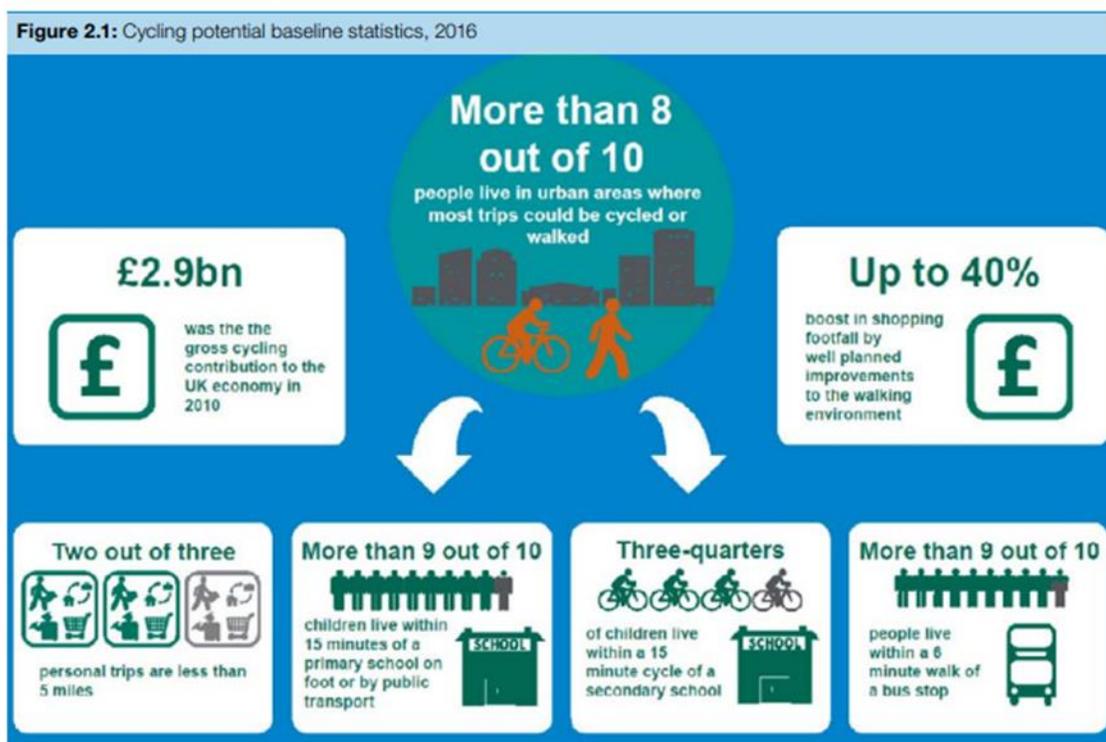


Figure 9-1: Cycling potential baseline statistics

¹⁰ Department for Transport (2020) *Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 01/20) 2020* [Online] Available from: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ffa1f96d3bf7f65d9e35825/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-1-20.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

Five core design principles for cycle infrastructure have been set out to ensure cycling is accessible for all. These are listed and shown in the Figure 9-2 below.

- **Coherent** – must be simple to navigate;
- **Direct** – at least as direct – and preferably more direct – than those available for private motor vehicles;
- **Safe** – infrastructure should be and is perceived to be safe;
- **Comfortable** – good quality, well-maintained smooth surfaces with an adequate width for the volume of users and there must be minimal stopping and starting, avoiding steep gradients; and
- **Attractive** – should be places that people want to spend time using.

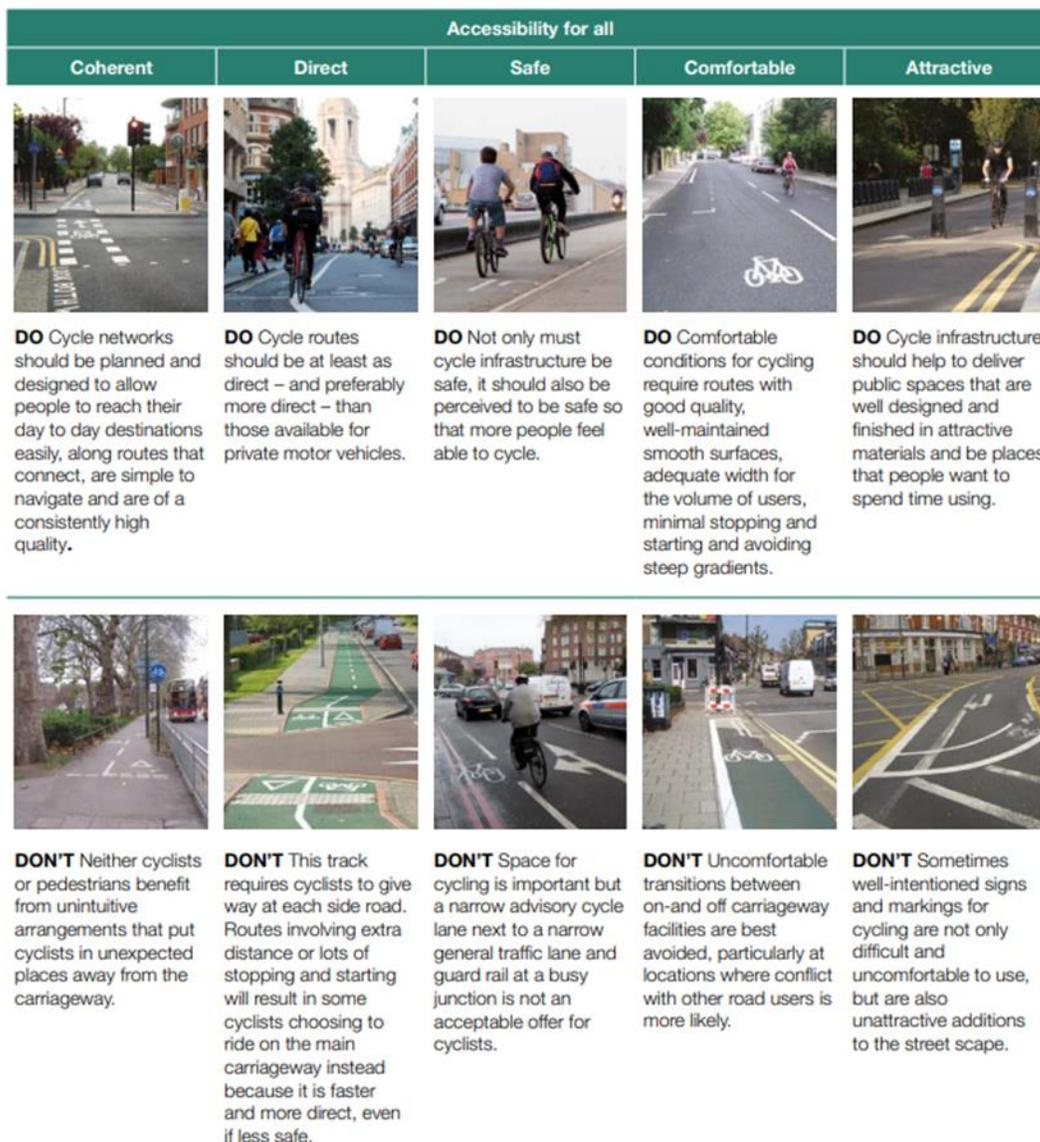


Figure 9-2: Core principles for design

These are followed by 22 summary principles which form an integral part of the guidance.

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

The document highlights the need for cycling to be accessible all, referencing The Equality Act 2010 which "*places a duty on public sector authorities to comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty in carrying out their functions*". Plans for cycling should provide a network on and/ or off the carriageway, which is suitable for all abilities, the aim is to create a densely spaced network with between 250m and 1km between routes. These routes will fulfil various functions which together will create an integrated network.

- Primary routes – between major trip generators;
- Secondary routes – connections into local centres;
- Local access to streets and attractors; and
- Long distance and leisure routes.

Motor traffic free routes away from the highway can be important links for everyday trips, they are attractive as they avoid motor traffic. However, they need to be designed and maintained to a high quality, particularly in terms of surfacing, accessibility, and lighting. Additional maintenance also needs to be done to keep them clear of seasonal challenges such as leaf debris, snow, and ice as well as other hazards that aren't cleared by cars. These routes can be mixed use; however, it is preferable to provide separation between pedestrians and cyclists. Some of the key considerations for traffic free routes are:

- Suitable width and surfaces.
- Integration with the wider network – clear signing and properly constructed links.
- Good level of social safety.
- Sealed surfaces and good lighting for year-round utility cycling – loose gravel surfaces can be difficult or inaccessible for people in wheelchairs and some types of adapted cycles.
- Provide separate routes for walking and cycling where budget and space allows.
- Comfortable and coherent transitions between on and off carriageway routes.
- Cycle parking.
- Public cycle hire schemes.
- Clear signing with information about distances, destinations and directions – a consistent approach to design and branding will assist with this.

This policy is relevant to the GBT as the route aims to comply with LTN 01/20 guidance where possible. The guidance on off-carriageway routes is particularly relevant and will guide how the scheme is designed. The five core design principles and 22 summary principles will also be considered

The British Horse Society, Advice on surface for Horses (July 2021)¹¹

Natural low growth vegetation and beaten earth with some stone embedded into the surface is the ideal multi-use surface for equestrian use. Drainage is also very important the soil must drain well. To make it a good surface for equestrian use, it is important to understand horses, their physiology and the effect horses may have on a surface when choosing a surface for multi-use routes. Different surfaces cause different risks for horses the greatest risks include slippery tarmac or other sealed surfaces, and the ideal surface is well drained, non-slip resilient surfacing. The highest preference is given to short, firm, well-drained turf and the least preferable is formally constructed paths with firm, non-slip surfaces.

The route will be a multi-use scheme that could include equestrian use; therefore, this policy document is relevant to the GBT.

The Combined Environmental Land Management Offer¹² (January 2024)

The Combined Environmental Land Management Offer will contribute to the outcomes set out in the Environmental Improvement Plan released in January 2024 by the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). The range of actions within the plan will be more attractive to farmers and land managers and will help to achieve objectives such as 65% to 80% of landowners and farmers adopting nature friendly farming on at least 10% to 15% of their land by 2030. The plan will also contribute to DEFRA's environmental outcomes on habitat restoration and creation, water quality and water demand, net zero, and farming in protected landscapes.

This scheme is relevant as Section 22b of the plan provides an action to "*provide and maintain new permissive bridleways or cycle paths*". The scheme considers improvements to existing PRow as part of the route which is in line with this action.

A.2 Regional Policy**Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership, Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission (2022)¹³**

The Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission was set up by the Subregional Leaders' Board in November 2020. Their aim is to build on previous progress to help Cheshire and Warrington realise its ambition of becoming '*the most sustainable and inclusive subregion in the UK*'. This has led to a final report called '*Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Cheshire and Warrington*'¹⁴ being released which includes ambitious recommendations to reach this target. Some of these recommendations include:

¹¹ The British Horse Society (July 2021) *Advice on Surfaces for horses* [Online] Available from: <https://www.bhs.org.uk/media/mr2b1udi/surfaces-0721.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

¹² Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2024) *The combined environmental land management offer* [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/agricultural-transition-plan-2021-to-2024/technical-annex-the-combined-environmental-land-management-offer> (Accessed: April 2024)

¹³ Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (2022) *Promoting a just transition to a green, fair and growing economy* [Online] Available from: <https://cheshireandwarrington.com/what-we-do/sustainability-inclusion/sustainable-and-inclusive-growth-commission/> (Accessed: December 2023)

¹⁴ Cheshire and Warrington Sustainable and Inclusive Growth Commission (2022) *Towards a Sustainable and Inclusive Cheshire and Warrington* [Online] Available from: https://cheshireandwarrington.com/media/kpqb5ni5/lep220718-p1_a4d_01r.pdf (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

- A fair employment charter for Cheshire and Warrington;
- The decarbonisation of dairy;
- The full decarbonisation of all transport by 2035;
- Building the UK's First Net Zero industrial cluster around the area's large hydrogen and net zero projects;
- Public investment to address disadvantage and target opportunities;
- Improve active travel and public transport;
- Provide new infrastructure/ support for electric cars and zero-emission vehicles to make them cost effective and accessible;
- Work with businesses, public sector and agriculture to speed up the transition to a circular economy;
- Retrofitting insulation and clean energy to housing, particularly for social housing and disadvantaged households;
- Access to digital for all; and
- Making current land use net zero.

This policy is relevant as the recommendations published by the commission touch on improving active travel and targeting opportunities with public investment, both of which the GBT will aim to do.

Cheshire and Warrington LEP, Transport Strategy (2021)¹⁵

The Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) Transport Strategy is part of the sub region's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) which covers the period up to 2040. The SEP identifies the need for growth, transport and connectivity as being central to Cheshire and Warrington's aspirations and for supporting economic development. The strategy highlights how effective transport networks will be crucial in continuing the success of the sub region's attractiveness as a place to live and do business. Whilst the sub region is well connected transport wise, improving connectivity, to unlock strategic and wider development sites for housing and employment and relieving congested areas, is a central theme of the SEP. The strategy highlights ten key challenges for the transport network which are listed below:

1. Accommodating development growth;
2. Congestion on strategic routes;
3. Sub regional movement;
4. Cross boundary movement;

¹⁵ Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (2021) *Strategic Economic Plan Draft Transport Strategy* [Online] Available from: https://www.warrington.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2019-10/appendix_11_-_cheshire_and_warrington_transport_strategy.pdf (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

5. Rural connectivity;
6. Dominance of car for mode share;
7. Low bus use;
8. Modernising local rail services;
9. Increasing levels of cycling and walking; and
10. Digital connectivity.

This policy is relevant as the GBT would improve the attractiveness of the region and help with rural connectivity and movement across the region and boundaries. The scheme also aims to increase the levels of cycling and walking in the region all of which are objectives within the policy.

Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership, Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040 (2021)¹⁶

This strategy, led by Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) and Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership (GMLEP), focuses on the long term challenges that Greater Manchester faces to strategise the best way forward to meet the Greater Manchester Strategy vision “to make Greater Manchester one of the best places in the world to grow up, get on and grow old” and help create a successful resilient city region. 2040 has been selected as a target year as devolution has allowed for strategy to be bolder and viewed more long term. The strategy highlights how transport is crucial to these plans and evidence based, long term vision has been used to come up with a ‘right-mix’ of transport modes for the network. This ‘right-mix’ includes 50% of journeys being made by sustainable transport and no net increase in motor vehicle journeys by 2040.

Priorities for the strategy include fast east-west connections, Greater Manchester becoming a modern pedestrian and cycle friendly city region which includes the Bee Network and town centre regeneration through new sustainable transport connections and bus networks improvements. Every five years a transport delivery plan will be released describing the progress that has been made in delivering the strategy.

This policy is relevant to the scheme as some of the GBT is proposed to be within Greater Manchester boundaries. It also sets out how Greater Manchester will become pedestrian and cycle friendly - two modes of transport which the GBT is aiming to improve access to.

Manchester Airports Group, Sustainable Development Plan (2016)¹⁷

The Manchester Airports Group (MAG) Sustainable Development Plan 2016 “sets out the strategic context for the long term development of Manchester Airport”. It identifies the growth opportunities the airport has as well as the

¹⁶ Transport for Greater Manchester, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Greater Manchester Local Enterprise Partnership (2021) *Greater Manchester Transport Strategy 2040* [Online] Available from: https://assets.ctfassets.net/nv7y93idf4jq/01xbKQONW0ZYLzYvcj1z7c/4b6804acd572f00d8d728194ef62bb89/Greater_Manchester_Transport_Strategy_2040_final.pdf (Accessed December 2023)

¹⁷ Manchester Airports Group (2016) *Sustainable Development Plan 2016* [Online] Available from: https://assets.live.dxp.magnfrastructure.com/f/73114/x/51cd0d6f10/man_sdp_summary-masterplan_online-2016_v2-lr-29716.pdf (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

challenges it faces. This involves responsibly managing the environment and the impacts the airport has on communities nearby. The Plan also details MAG's Transformation Programme. This is its investment to create a world class airport with high quality facilities and services. The plan also has a list of objectives it hopes to meet. These are:

- Explain the long-term opportunities for the growth and development of Manchester Airport and its contribution to the northern economy;
- Set out our vision for the development of the airport site;
- Provide the framework for capitalising on the benefits of the airport's development and for managing and minimising local disturbance and environmental impact;
- Explain our plans to enable a constructive dialogue with our customers, neighbours and business partners;
- Inform the plans and strategies of others across the north west region and beyond; and
- Provide evidence to help Government understand the implications of making best use of Manchester's capacity.

This policy is relevant as the GBT could be located near to Manchester Airport; therefore, it may impact upon the communities that are mentioned within the policy.

TfGM, Bee Network (2023)¹⁸

The Bee Network aims to make it easier to get around Greater Manchester by bus, tram, train, walking, wheeling or cycling. Greater Manchester buses are being franchised so that they will be controlled under the Bee Network framework which TfGM hope will improve the service and increase patronage. On 24th September 2023 the first bus services in Bolton and Wigan and parts of Bury, Salford and Manchester were brought under control. By 5th January 2025, every Greater Manchester bus service will be part of the Bee Network. The Bee Network will become a 'one-stop-shop for all local journeys' as trains, trams, buses and bikes will become integrated into one network and ticket. This they hope will make public transport and active travel more accessible, cheaper, simpler, more reliable and more sustainable.

The Bee Network is relevant to the scheme as the network is trying to improve cycling, wheeling and walking links in Greater Manchester. The GBT also intends to achieve this and with parts of the route proposed to be located close to or within Greater Manchester, this could connect into the wider Bee Network.

Warrington Council, Warrington Local Plan 2021/22 – 2038/39 (2023)¹⁹

The Warrington Local Plan was adopted on the 4th December 2023. It provides a statutory planning framework for the entire borough between 2021/22 and 2038/39. Within the plan is a vision, range of objectives and an overall strategy for development. Part of this is transport safeguarding. A scheme that may be relevant to the GBT is the

¹⁸ Transport for Greater Manchester (2023) *Say yellow to the Bee Network* [Online] Available from: https://tfgm.com/the-bee-network?utm_source=Web&utm_medium=MPU&utm_campaign=Bee+Network+&utm_id=Bee+Network (Accessed December 2023)

¹⁹ Warrington Council (2023) *Warrington Local Plan 2021/22 – 2038/39 Adopted December 2023* [Online] Available from: <https://www.warrington.gov.uk/LocalPlan> (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

Warrington East Multi-modal corridor. This will connect Birchwood to Central Warrington via Birchwood way. This will help support future highways and public transport improvements.

Additionally, there are multiple main development areas that may be relevant to the GBT. These are listed and described below.

- **South East Warrington Urban Extension** – runs north of the M56 and east of the A49, the extension will provide a minimum of 4,200 homes and also includes local centres and open spaces.
- **Thelwell Heys residential development** – greenbelt land east of Grappenhall and south of Thelwell will be allocated for a minimum of 300 new homes.
- **Culcheth residential development** – land to the east of Culcheth allocated to provide a minimum of 200 new homes. This development will provide ease of access to existing local services and facilities in Culcheth as well as employment opportunities at Taylor Business Park and Birchwood.
- **Hollins Green residential development** – land southwest of Hollins Green will be allocated for residential development to provide 90 new homes and ease of access to local facilities and services and employment opportunities at Birchwood.
- **Lymm residential developments**
 - **Pool Lane/ Warrington Road** – land to the west of Lymm will be allocated for a minimum of 170 new homes which will provide ease of access to local facilities and services and employment opportunities in Warrington Town Centre.
 - **Rushgreen Road** – land east of Lymm will be allocated for a residential led mixed use development providing a minimum of 136 new homes and a new health facility.

This policy is relevant to the scheme as the proposed route could help to improve transport links towards Warrington.

A.3 Local policy

CEC, Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030 (2017)²⁰

Adopted in July 2017, the CEC Local Plan is the most important tool the Council has for shaping development in Cheshire East. It is an overall vision for shaping strategy for development for the period until 2030. With this plan they hope to develop Cheshire East to maintain its reputation as the best place to live in the North West. The plan's functions include setting planning policy, allocating sites for development and providing guidance on making decisions on planning applications. The plan also addresses *"issues such as the amount and locations of new housing and employment development, discussed the provision of new infrastructure, ensures that there is protection and improvement of important open areas, as well as the improvements required for town centres and community facilities"*.

This policy is relevant to the GBT as a majority of the route will be in Cheshire East. The policy also helps to make decisions on planning applications and addresses protecting and improving important open areas. As a result, the GBT will need to be guided by this plan.

CEC, Local Transport Plan 2019-2024 (2019)²¹

Adopted in October 2019, the Local Transport Plan (LTP) considers all forms of transport for the five-year period between 2019-2024. It provides a framework for how *"transport will support wider policies to improve Cheshire East's economy, protect its environment and make attractive places to live, work and play"*. It also outlines how transport will support the long-term goals of Cheshire East. As part of the LTP, the Council is taking a range of actions. To complement these, Local Transport Development Plans (LTDPs) have been developed by the Council. These LTDPs set out a range of potential schemes to improve the transport network to support towns and surrounding areas. They identify ways to deliver the aspiration of coordinated and integrated transport networks within the borough, covering all forms of transport, including walking, cycling, buses, rail and road traffic.

The current LTP was prepared pre-Covid and prior to many recent changes in transport policy including, but not limited to: Gear Change (2020), The Transport Decarbonisation Plan (2021), Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy (2022) and Bus Back Better (2021). Numerous non-transport policies have also come forward which impact transport including the Levelling Up White Paper (2022) and Clear Air Strategy (2019) for example. The decision to stop HS2 from Birmingham to Manchester will also further impact the borough, particularly Crewe as there is potential for alternative schemes to be introduced in lieu of HS2. CEC is now well placed to undertake a significant update of the LTP to maintain a document that is robust and relevant to both national, regional and local priorities.

This policy is relevant to the scheme as the route will be located predominantly in Cheshire East, the route is also part of the transport network which will cover walking and cycling as potentially equestrian, and therefore the GBT will need to be developed in line with the LTP. The scheme will also hopefully increase the attractiveness of Cheshire East which links to the aims of the LTP.

²⁰ Cheshire East Council (2017) *Local Plan Strategy 2010-2030* [Online] Available from: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/planning/local-plan/local-plan-strategy-web-version-1.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

²¹ Cheshire East Council (2019) *Local Transport Plan 2019-2024* [Online] Available from: <https://modern.gov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s72327/Local%20Transport%20Plan%20-%20app%201.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

CEC, Cheshire East Council Environment Strategy 2020-2024 (2020)²²

The policy details how Cheshire East are committed to reducing emissions and becoming carbon neutral by 2025. Since this pledge, the target year has been revised and reset for 2027, however the Council still aim for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2045. Cheshire East set out a number of goals which they hope to achieve between the period 2020-2024, these are listed below:

- Cheshire East will be a Carbon Neutral Council by 2025 (now updated to 2027)²³;
- Waste and pollution will be reduced;
- Air quality will improve;
- The availability and use of sustainable transport and active travel will increase;
- New development will be sensitive and sustainable; and
- CEC will manage the environment to restore nature, conserve heritage and enhance the beauty of our landscapes.

The strategy summarises the key strategies and action plans to deliver these goals will be through their "service delivery, regulatory activity, projects, and partnerships". A policy framework is also provided for the Council to evaluate all emerging strategies, policies, action plans and projects on how they impact on the environment and climate change. The framework will help the council understand how they can contribute positively to the above goals so they can provide strong leadership and stewardship.

This policy is relevant to the GBT as the proposed scheme is looking to increase active travel numbers along the route which is largely located in Cheshire East. This will directly contribute to one of the goals within the Environment Strategy to improve the availability and use of sustainable transport and increase active travel use. Increased active travel use will also in turn help to reduce emissions and create an improved environment.

CEC, The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the population of Cheshire East 2023 – 2028 (2023)²⁴

The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy has three main roles. It is a recommitment to the priorities of the previous strategy which in some cases have been exacerbated by the pandemic. It has a new commitment to address challenges that have emerged since the pandemic and finally it is a pledge to different, more effective and sustainable ways of working in Cheshire East for the long-term. The strategy also sets out high level visions and aspirations for Cheshire East, these are listed below:

- "Reduce inequalities, narrowing the gap between those who are enjoying good health and wellbeing and those who are not;

²² Cheshire East Council (2020) *Cheshire East Council Environment Strategy 2020-2024* [Online] Available from: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/environment/environment-strategy-2020-24-final.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

²³ Cheshire East Council (2019) Carbon Neutral Council [Online] Available from: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/environment/carbon-neutral-council/carbon-neutral-council.aspx> (Accessed December 2023)

²⁴ Cheshire East Council (2023) *The Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy for the population of Cheshire East 2023-2028* [Online] Available from: <https://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s102075/The%20Joint%20Local%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Strategy%20Cheshire%20East%202023.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

- *Improve the physical and mental health and wellbeing of all of our residents; and*
- *Help people to have a good quality of life, to be healthy and happy".*

This strategy is relevant to the GBT as aims to meet the visions and aspirations of the strategy. Particularly, improving physical and mental health and helping people to have a good quality of life, to be healthy and happy.

CEC, Cheshire East UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Overview (2022)²⁵

The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a "central pillar" of the governments Levelling Up agenda. It aims to "advance pride in place and increase life chances across the UK" by investing in communities and place, supporting local businesses as well as people and skills. The UKSPF allocation for Cheshire East is ~£12.4 million with a further ~£1.5 million for Adult Numeracy programme (Multiply). This funding must be spent by March 2025. There have been some projects put in place already, for example Lyceum Square in Crewe has been upgraded to provide a new community and cultural event space. Cycle ways have also been funded in Crewe and Macclesfield and grants for cost-of-living impact reduction. This Feasibility Study has been funded through the UKSPF.

This policy is relevant to the GBT as this initial stage of work has been funded by the SPF and further work could be done to explore any future funding rounds. Investing in community and place and will support local businesses along the route. It may also help to improve the pride in place of the area.

CEC, Cheshire East Visitor Economy Strategy 2023 – 2028 (2023)²⁶

The strategy details the ambitions for Cheshire East's Visitor economy to grow to over £1 billion, with CEC playing an important role to meet this ambition. CEC must provide "strong leadership and providing the catalyst for growth; creating the conditions to thrive, setting the planning context, investing in infrastructure, improving skills and incentivising inward investment". CEC will need to ensure there is a rich cultural offer in Cheshire East to attract visitors. This is supported by Marketing Cheshire who are as the local Destination Marketing Organisation (DMO) and are a part of the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP). They act as a link between local businesses and Visit England, the national tourist board. The DMO provides a Destination Management Plan which is supported by this strategy document. Cheshire East can find opportunities for growth in developing the place image and supporting brands to strengthen the pull of the area and access to suitable transport will improve the conditions for the visitor economy to grow.

This strategy is relevant as the GBT could be viewed as a visitor attraction and developing an improved sense of place and can be viewed as strengthening the pull of the area. Along the route there are also various opportunities for businesses to thrive and incentives for investment.

CEC, Cheshire East Green Space Strategy Update 2020 (2020)²⁷

²⁵ Cheshire East Council (2022) *Cheshire East UK Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan Overview* [Online] Available from: <https://preview-cheshireeast.cloud.contentis.com/pdf/business/business-and-growth/summary-of-ce-investment-plan.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

²⁶ Cheshire East Council (2023) *Cheshire East Visitor Economy Strategy 2023-2028* [Online] Available from: <https://modern.gov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/documents/s100440/CE%20Visitor%20Economy%20Strategy%202023%202028.pdf> / <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/business/cheshire-east-visitor-economy-strategy-2023-2028.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

²⁷ Cheshire East Council (2020) *Cheshire East Green Space Strategy Update 2020* [Online] Available from: https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/spatial-planning/research_and_evidence/green_space_strategy.aspx (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

The Cheshire East Green Space Strategy Update takes the aspirations set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan and seeks to make them a reality. The strategy focuses on the provision of good quality green space and proactive management of existing green space to leave an important legacy for Cheshire East's communities. The strategy aims to deliver green space so that all local and visitor communities have the opportunity to access green space for health and wellbeing. It takes all the green space elements of CEC (Open Space, The Countryside Service, PRow, Landscape and Biodiversity) and feeds them into an evidence base for the strategy. The strategy is a tool to:

- *"Promote green space in the creation of sustainable communities;*
- *Co-ordinate the various partners to make sure that resources are effectively used, and benefits are maximised; and*
- *To make an effective case for investment".*

This strategy is relevant as the GBT is intended to enable people to access the green spaces within Cheshire East. The route will also be a good space for people to improve their health and wellbeing through active travel, and within green spaces which has further benefits.

CEC, Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2026 (2011)²⁸

The Cheshire East Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) strategy builds on the work of the previous ROWIP in partnership with many stakeholders both internal and external to CEC. Externally these include landowners, parish councils, community groups and the Cheshire Local Access Forum. The ROWIP is closely integrated to the LTP and aims to:

- Assess the extent to which local PRow and other countryside access resources meet the present and likely future needs of the public;
- Assess opportunities for exercise and other forms of open air recreation and enjoyment of the authority's area; and
- Assess the accessibility of local PRow and other routes to blind or partially sighted people and others with mobility problems.

The ROWIP begins by outlining an assessment of the PRow network and wider countryside access in Cheshire East, followed by an assessment of the level of demand for the network now and in the future. These assessments then lead to the policy and strategy which will help to bridge the gap between demand and the existing network.

The policy is relevant as PRows are integral to encouraging people to walk, cycle and horse ride. The GBT will consider utilising and improving the PRow network.

CEC, Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (Wilmslow) (2021)²⁹

²⁸ Cheshire East Council (2011) *Cheshire East Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2011-2026* [Online] Available from: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/public-rights-of-way/rowip%20final%20accessible%20for%20web.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

²⁹ Cheshire East Council (2021) *Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan: Congleton, Macclesfield and Wilmslow* [Online] Available from: <https://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s83625/Local%20Cycling%20and%20Walking%20Infrastructure%20Plans%20-%20app%202%20NE.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) provide a strategic approach to identify walking and cycling improvements at a local level, Cheshire East Council are utilising them to achieve a “step change” in the levels of walking and cycling across Cheshire East. The Council have committed to delivering a local action plan to tackle the climate emergency and have stated walking and cycling will play a large part in this. The plan sets out ambitious plans for a high-quality walking and cycling network in Wilmslow, it sets the standards for how walking and cycling should be planned and delivered in Cheshire East in line with LTN 01/20.

This policy is relevant to the GBT as the route could provide access to Wilmslow and will contribute to the high-quality cycling and walking infrastructure of the area. The scheme aims to be designed to the standard of LTN 01/20 in parts, which is a requirement of any infrastructure relevant to the LCWIP.

CEC, Cycling Strategy 2017-2027 (2017)³⁰

The cycling strategy sets out an ambitious vision for “a network of high quality strategic cycle routes which connect local communities and key growth areas”, leisure opportunities and the natural environment will also be better connected. These strategic cycle routes will enable more people to cycle safely for everyday and leisure journeys. The strategy will shape the Council's policy and inform the planning and design of streets, communities and green spaces in Cheshire East.

The strategy outlines six main objectives for the strategy:

- 1) *“Create and maintain safe, attractive, cohesive, direct and adaptable networks and infrastructure;*
- 2) *Ensure cycling is integrated with other transport modes, transport networks, the public realm and new developments;*
- 3) *Ensure high quality facilities are in place to support people who cycle and to attract people to live and work in the area;*
- 4) *Use targeted cycle promotion, education and training;*
- 5) *Integrate and align policies, procedures and practices to encourage cycling; and*
- 6) *Deliver cycle-friendly infrastructure in partnership with the community, officers and organisations of Cheshire East.”*

The strategy hopes that these objectives can help CEC achieve its targets of doubling the number of people cycling once per week for any purpose (against a 2014 baseline) by 2027, and improving the public perception cycling within the borough, ensuring satisfaction is improving on an upward trend.

This policy is relevant to the GBT as the trail will aim to encourage cycling in Cheshire East by providing a safe and high-quality cycle route which can better connect communities and key growth areas. The route can be used to attract more people to cycle and with a high quality design can improve the public perception of cycling.

³⁰ Cheshire East Council (2017) *Cycling Strategy 2017-2027* [Online] Available at: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/highways/cycling/cheshire-east-council-cycling-strategy-march-2017.pdf> (Accessed: December 2023).

CEC, Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2020-2025 (2020)³¹

In May 2019, CEC committed to becoming carbon neutral as a council by 2025, with a further pledge made in January 2022 to make Cheshire East a carbon neutral borough by 2045. Since this pledge, the target year has been revised and reset for 2027, however the Council still aim for the borough to be carbon neutral by 2045. Following the Notice of Motion relating to Climate Change which was agreed by Elected Members of CEC in May 2019, the CEC Carbon Neutrality Plan was commissioned and released in response. The Carbon Neutrality Action Plan was approved in May 2020 which sets out the actions that should be considered in order to support the Council's carbon neutrality target.

This policy is relevant as reducing the number of car journeys and increasing the number of journeys by foot and cycle can help reduce Cheshire East's emissions. The scheme can provide a route with which cycling and walking are made easier and a more attractive option, which may increase the number of people using these modes.

CEC, Local Transport Development Plans - Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow (2022)³²

Following adoption of the Cheshire East Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) in October 2019, work began on developing 11 Local Transport Development Plans (LTDPs) across the borough. This included Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton and Wilmslow which the proposed GBT could link to. To develop the LTDPs a two-stage approach was taken. The first stage was to develop a 'Transport Issues and Options report' for each area. This report developed a set of provisional local transport objectives and a 'long list' of schemes for each area. Following public consultation, the second stage of the LTDP is presented in the documents. The LTDP for each area sets out the local transport objectives. For all four areas, the respective LTDP identifies transport challenges and opportunities, provides a package of transport schemes to be developed and gives a framework for the council to seek funding for the packages of schemes that have been detailed.

The Local Transport Objectives for each area are shown in the table below:

Table 9-1: Local Transport Objectives

Area	Objectives
Handforth	<p>Objective 1: Strengthening the transport network to accommodate the Handforth Garden Village and other development sites included within the Local Plan</p> <p>Objective 2: Improve transport connections along key corridors to and from Wilmslow, Macclesfield and wider Cheshire East and Greater Manchester, including access to key services such as hospitals</p> <p>Objective 3: Improving access to Handforth to protect and enhance the village centre</p>

³¹ Cheshire East Council (2020) *Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2020-2025* [Online] Available at: <https://moderngov.cheshireeast.gov.uk/ecminutes/documents/s76206/Carbon%20Neutral%20Action%20Plan%20-%20appendix.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

³² Cheshire East Council (2022) *Handforth, Knutsford, Poynton, Wilmslow Transport Development Plan* [Online] Available at: Handforth: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/public-transport/local-transport-plan/brj10654-handforth-ltdp-may-2022-rev4.pdf> Knutsford: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/public-transport/local-transport-plan/brj10654-knutsford-ltdp-july-2022-rev5.pdf> Poynton: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/public-transport/local-transport-plan/brj10654-poynton-ltdp-may-2022-rev2.pdf> Wilmslow: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/public-transport/local-transport-plan/brj10654-wilmslow-ltdp-may-2022-rev2.pdf> (All accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

Area	Objectives
	<p>Objective 4: Supporting access to education and employment sites including Wilmslow High School, Manchester Airport, Stanley Green Business Park, and Handforth Dean</p> <p>Objective 5: Supporting access from Styal and other rural communities to key services and employment</p>
Knutsford	<p>Objective 1: Improving access to the town centre and the train station to support a thriving town centre</p> <p>Objective 2: Supporting access to education and employment sites such as Booths Park, Radbroke Park, Alderley Park, Manchester Airport and Jodrell Bank</p> <p>Objective 3: Supporting access from Mobberley and rural communities around Knutsford to key services and employment centres</p> <p>Objective 4: Improving access on key travel corridors such as the A50</p> <p>Objective 5: Improving connectivity to leisure and tourism locations such as Tatton Park and Jodrell Bank</p> <p>Objective 6: Strengthening the transport network to accommodate development sites within the Local Plan such as Northwest Knutsford, Parkgate Extension and Land South of Longridge</p>
Poynton	<p>Objective 1: Improve transport connections along key corridors to and from Poynton and Disley to Macclesfield, Wilmslow, Handforth, the Peak District and wider Cheshire East and Greater Manchester</p> <p>Objective 2: Strengthening the transport network to accommodate development sites such as the Adlington Business Park extension and potential developments in Greater Manchester</p> <p>Objective 3: Complementing Poynton Relief Road with measures around the town centre to further improve the environment for residents and visitors</p> <p>Objective 4: Reducing the impact of the A6 on Disley</p> <p>Objective 5: Improving leisure routes and access from rural communities around Poynton and Disley to key services and employment</p> <p>Objective 6: Supporting access to education and employment including both Poynton and Adlington Industrial Estates</p>
Wilmslow	<p>Objective 1: Improving access to Wilmslow and Alderley Edge centres to support a thriving economy</p> <p>Objective 2: Supporting access from Alderley Edge and rural communities to key services and employment</p> <p>Objective 3: Improve transport connections along key corridors to and from Handforth, Manchester Airport, Macclesfield, Knutsford, and Greater Manchester, including access to key services such as Macclesfield District Hospital</p> <p>Objective 4: Supporting access to education and employment sites including Alderley Park, Waters, the Royal London Campus, and Manchester Airport</p> <p>Objective 5: Strengthening the transport network to accommodate development sites such as the Royal London Campus in the Local Plan</p>

This policy is relevant to the GBT as it will look to address some of the objectives within each area, for example it will look to improve transport corridors for walking and cycling and support access to certain areas. It would also improve leisure routes and access routes for rural communities.

CEC, Wilmslow Town Centre Vitality Plan (2023)³³

CEC is committed to supporting the vitality and viability of all towns in the borough, if the opportunity for funding arises CEC already have proposals agreed within their Town Centre Vitality Plans (TCVPs). Wilmslow is one of the towns with a TCVP, the plan '*provides a clear sense of direction for supporting town centre vitality and viability*'. The vision for Wilmslow is to "*sustain and enhance a dynamic community within Wilmslow which protects its special built and natural character, and which promotes a user friendly and green environment with an increasingly attractive and thriving Town Core*".

This policy is relevant to the scheme as the GBT would run through Wilmslow which could attract people to the town, sustaining and enhancing a dynamic community within the area.

CEC, Knutsford Town Centre Vitality Plan (2023)³⁴

CEC is committed to supporting the vitality and viability of all towns in the borough, if the opportunity for funding arises CEC already have proposals agreed within their TCVPs. Knutsford is one of the towns with a TCVP, the plan '*provides a clear sense of direction for supporting town centre vitality and viability*'. The vision for Knutsford is that the plan should:

- *"Ensure that the Town thrives economically and socially as a historic market town*
- *Protect and enhance the Town's character, variety of buildings and natural environment*
- *Support the delivery of the facilities and infrastructure the Town needs*
- *Maintain Knutsford's strong sense of community as it grows allowing it to remain an attractive, healthy and safe place to live, work and visit"*.

This policy is relevant to the scheme as the GBT could run through Knutsford which can attract people to the town ensuring it thrives economically and socially, whilst maintaining the strong sense of community.

CEC, Handforth Town Centre Vitality Plan (2023)³⁵

CEC is committed to supporting the vitality and viability of all towns in the borough, if the opportunity for funding arises CEC already have proposals agreed within their TCVPs. Handforth is one of the towns with a plan, the plan '*provides a clear sense of direction for supporting town centre vitality and viability*'. The vision for Handforth is:

"In 2030 Handforth will be a vibrant village. It will have extended its current strong community spirit and civic pride to new housing developments both within the Garden Village at Handforth and within the parish of Styal. It will provide for the needs of the whole community and will capitalise on its many advantages, including its location next

³³ Cheshire East Council (2023) *Wilmslow Town Centre Vitality Plan* [Online] Available at: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/business/major-regeneration-projects/town-centre-vitality-plans/m00244-wilmslow-r06-reduced.pdf> (Accessed: December 2023)

³⁴ Cheshire East Council (2023) *Knutsford Town Centre Vitality Plan* [Online] Available at: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/business/major-regeneration-projects/town-centre-vitality-plans/m00244-knutsford-r03-reduced.pdf> (Accessed: December 2023)

³⁵ Cheshire East Council (2023) *Handforth Town Centre Vitality Plan* [Online] Available at: <https://www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/pdf/business/major-regeneration-projects/town-centre-vitality-plans/m00244-handforth-r03-reduced-v1.pdf> (Accessed December 2023)

Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report

to Greater Manchester and the Cheshire countryside. Handforth will have an improved district centre with attractive public spaces, a vibrant and varied shopping experience, a successful independent sector and a wide range of services.

Handforth will offer an excellent quality of life for its residents. The provision of new affordable housing will reduce the degree of deprivation currently found in some areas of Handforth. There will be high levels of employment and increased average incomes. There will be good access to education and important services. Handforth will have better access to sustainable transport.

Handforth will have high quality open spaces and improved access to the surrounding countryside. It will be a progressive village with its own identity, reinforced by the retention of the greenbelt areas separating Handforth from Wilmslow to the south and Heald Green to the north”.

This policy is relevant to the scheme as the GBT could run through Handforth which can attract people to the area, this will help ensure a wide range of services and attractive public spaces are maintained. Also, Handforth will be better accessed by sustainable transport in terms of walking and cycling with improved access to the surrounding countryside.

CEC, Poynton Town Centre Vitality Plan (2023)

CEC is committed to supporting the vitality and viability of all towns in the borough, if the opportunity for funding arises CEC already have proposals agreed within their TCVPs. Poynton is one of the towns with a plan. The vision for Poynton is:

“Over the next 15 to 20 years development in Poynton will be of a high quality, sustainable and matched by the provision of infrastructure and services. This development will enable Poynton to retain its character and heritage as ‘a small town with a village feel’, bounded by Green Belt.

Community activities and the current mix of businesses will expand and prosper within attractive surroundings. Poynton will maintain a strong and inclusive sense of community, good access to neighbouring towns and villages and a positive sense of wellbeing making Poynton a healthy, happy and fulfilling place to live.”

This policy is relevant to the scheme as the GBT could run through Poynton which would attract people to the area, this will help ensure a wide range of services and attractive public spaces and character are maintained.

Appendix B. Evidence Base

B.1 Introduction and Data Sources

To progress the GBT OAR, a review of baseline data across Cheshire East and surrounding Local Authorities including Manchester, Trafford, Salford, High Peak, Warrington, and Stockport has been gathered and analysed. This analysis of data provides a useful baseline to understand the area surrounding the GBT.

A majority of the data used in the evidence base is taken from the 2021 Census, which is the latest data available, noting its limitations due to this taking place during COVID-19.

B.2 Trails

Throughout the different Local Authorities within the area, there are many different existing trails. Figure 9-3 below shows the different trails within the area. Background information on the trails and their usage is detailed below the figure.

Proposed

Manchester Road, Wilmslow

CEC has been developing a highly detailed and quality active travel, walking, and cycling route along Manchester Road between the areas of Wilmslow town centre and Handforth. The main funding for the project is by Active Travel England who have awarded £1.3 million for the Council to deliver the Northern section. The middle section of the route has also been funded by a £673,000 grant; however, the southern section is still awaiting funding.

Wilmslow Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP)

An LCWIP for the town of Wilmslow has been proposed and approved on the basis of future development for the area and the planning and sustainable transport within Cheshire East. This LCWIP will play an important part in Cheshire East's Local Transport Plan and their Cycling Strategy.

Existing

Gritstone Trail

The Gritstone Trail is located on the edge of the Peak District and starts at Disley railway station and links all the way to Kidsgrove railway station near Stoke-on-Trent. The trail has been extended so that it is more accessible by public transport meaning it is easier for people to access the trail. Along the trail there are amenities such as pubs, cafes and shops.

Airport Orbital Cycleway

The Airport Orbital Cycleway is an eight-mile cycle route that provides an off-road cycle route along Runger Lane to Wilmslow Road, around Manchester Airport. This trail is also part of the NCN Route 85. It also provides a way to get to the popular Runway Visitor Park south of the airport. This is where you can watch arrivals and departures from Manchester Airport, providing a unique cycleway. The cycleway also forms part of the core commuting access points for the airport.

Middlewood Way

Middlewood Way provides a ten-mile trail for walking, cycling and horse riding. In 1985, Middlewood Way was constructed utilising an unused railway line. This trail is part of the NCN Route 55, providing good links to surrounding areas. Horse riders can use the trail on a seven-mile route from Adlington Road to Rose Hill in Marple.

Trans Pennine Trail

The Trans Pennine Trail provides a rail for walking cycling and horse riders and allows essential links to the north, and through historic towns and cities in the north of England. This route is so popular due to the signs throughout the trails, traffic free routes, easy gradients and surfaced paths. This makes the trail suitable for wheelchairs and pushchairs, meaning there are no barriers stopping people from using the trail.

GM Ringway

The GM Ringway is Greater Manchester's walking trail, it covers all ten boroughs of the city region. It is a 300km trail split into 20 stages that can be easily accessed by public transport. It visits some of the region's most iconic landscapes and provides visitors the opportunity to explore Greater Manchester's rich cultural heritage.

Bridgewater Way

The Bridgewater Way will create a 39-mile leisure route for walking and cycling along the Bridgewater Canal. Thus, will include improving the canal towpath to make it a safer and more appealing route for all. Some sections of the route have been completed, however the section associated with the GBT has not yet been completed.

The National Cycle Network (NCN)

The NCN is a UK-wide network of signed paths and routes for walking, wheeling, cycling. In Cheshire East, there are two sections of the NCN connecting through the area, one to the west of Handforth and Route 55, along Middlewood Way.

Creating the GBT will ensure Cheshire East is well connected to the rest of the NCN routes and ensure active travel accessibility throughout the local area.

It would be beneficial for the GBT to link into the existing trails and proposed schemes and potentially provide an alternative link through Cheshire and South Manchester from the Trans Pennine Trail and also link into the Middlewood Way. These links across the area would create a network of routes for walking, wheeling and cycling across the area.

B.3 Travel to Work

Figure 9-4 below shows the percentage of employed people within Cheshire East and surrounding Local Authority areas that cycle to work. This data is taken from the 2011 Census, this is due to the 2021 Census being carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic, therefore data may be skewed and not reliable as many people had to work from home. Therefore, the 2011 provides a more accurate representation on the percentage of the employed population that cycle to work.

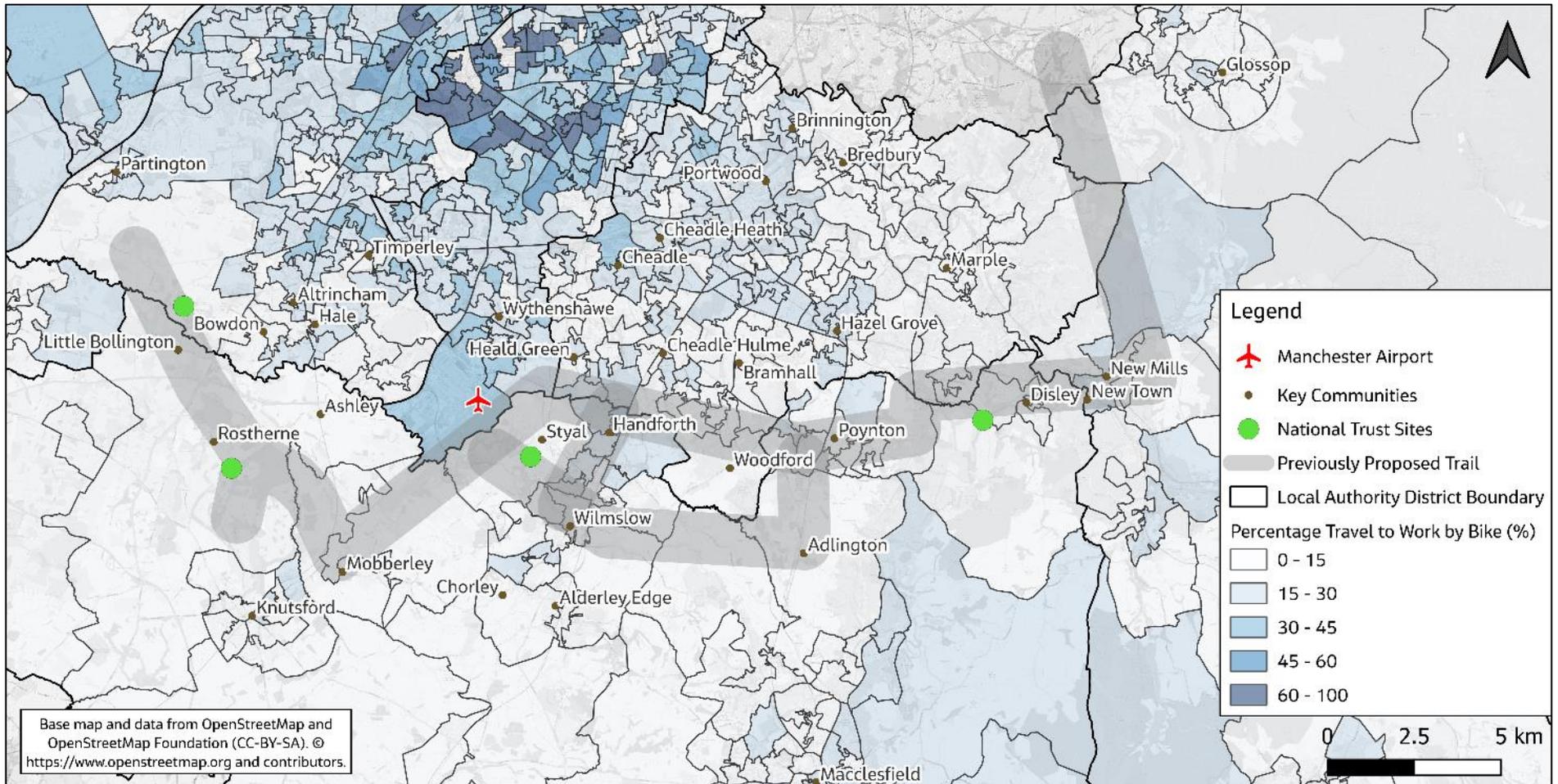


Figure 9-4: Travel to work by bike (%)

As shown, the area with the highest employed population cycling to work is in and around Manchester city centre, having over 60% of the employed population cycling in some areas. Travel to work by bike may be higher in these areas due to urban areas having higher densities of workplaces, therefore individuals have shorter distances to travel to work, therefore cycling is a viable and sometimes quicker option.

Within the vicinity of the GBT corridor, many of the areas have between 0-15% of their employed population cycling to work. This may be due to these areas being located further away from employment opportunities and too far of a distance to cycle, therefore individuals often choose to use their personal vehicles to travel to work.

The low rate of percentage of employed population cycling to work could be a result of a lack of a high quality network connecting people with where they want to go throughout the areas of Cheshire East and surrounding Local Authority districts. By creating the GBT, walking and cycling can be used for leisure but also would provide the opportunity for residents to cycle to work via a high quality route.

B.4 Indices of Multiple Deprivation

Figure 9-5 below illustrates the 2019 Indices of Multiple Deprivation for Cheshire East and surrounding Local Authority districts including, Manchester, Trafford, Salford, High Peak, Warrington and Stockport. The Index of Multiple Deprivation measures relative levels of deprivation by Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) boundaries. The Index of Multiple Deprivation tool measures many different factors, such as, income, health, crime, living environment and barriers to house and services. As shown in Figure 9-5, the IMD decile score has been mapped, where the score of 1, represents the most deprived LSOAs and a score of 10 represents the least deprived LSOAs.

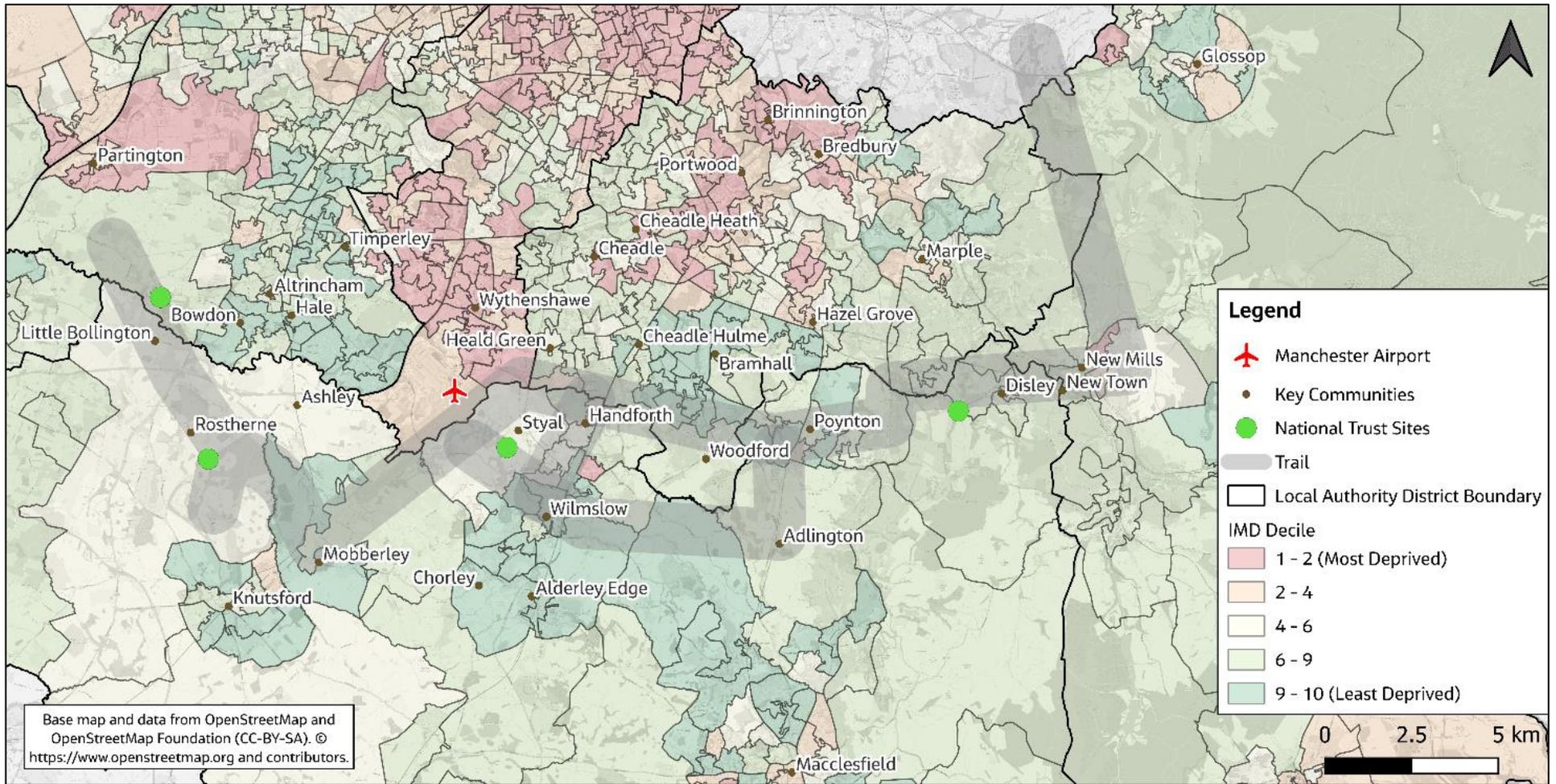


Figure 9-5: Index of multiple deprivation - decile score

As shown in the map, there is a high concentration of LSOAs in the Decile score of 1-2 most deprived around areas such as Stockport city centre, Partington, South Manchester and north of Macclesfield. Within these areas in particular, it is important to improve connectivity to employment opportunities, healthcare and education to reduce these inequalities and ensure these towns and areas with higher deprivation levels do not become isolated.

The areas with the lowest levels of deprivation in the category of 9-10 can be seen in Wilmslow, Altrincham, Alderley Edge and east of Stockport in areas such as Marple Bridge.

Similarly to the overall IMD Decile Score, the Health, Deprivation and Disability Score measures the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical and mental health. Figure 9-6 visualises this score across the study area.

Figure 9-6 shows the majority of areas around Cheshire East, High Peak, south of Stockport and south of Trafford all can be seen to have low deprivation scores for health deprivation and disability. This may be as a result of these areas having the healthcare facilities needed as well as being situated in less congested, rural areas, therefore air quality issues are not as prevalent in these areas compared to more urban areas surrounding them.

The figure shows the most deprived in terms of health deprivation and disability are many LSOAs in Manchester, especially south Manchester, areas around Stockport city centre, areas around Salford and east of Macclesfield. It is important that these areas are provided with the provision of walking and cycling routes, so individuals can be encouraged to travel via active travel instead of using private vehicles, in turn addressing air quality issues and therefore improving the health deprivation and disability score of these areas. Furthermore, with the provision of walking and cycling routes, individuals will be able to exercise by means of active travel, hence improving mental and physical health and wellbeing.

B.5 Propensity to Cycle Tool

The PCT is a web-based mapping tool that was designed to help prioritise investments and interventions to promote cycling. Cycling potential is calculated using a function based on trip distance (people are likely to cycle a shorter trip compared to a longer trip) and the hilliness (people are more likely to cycle on flatter routes and be discouraged by trips involving slopes).

The PCT tool has been used for the scenario of Government Target (Near Market). This scenario models a doubling of cycling nationally, corresponding to the proposed target in the DfT's Cycling Delivery Plan, to double cycling in England between 2013 and 2025. The Government Target (Near Market) models the increase as occurring as a function of trip distance and hilliness, plus sociodemographic and geographical characteristics. This includes age, ethnicity, income deprivation and more. Figure 9-7 visualises the PCT for the area surrounding the GBT.

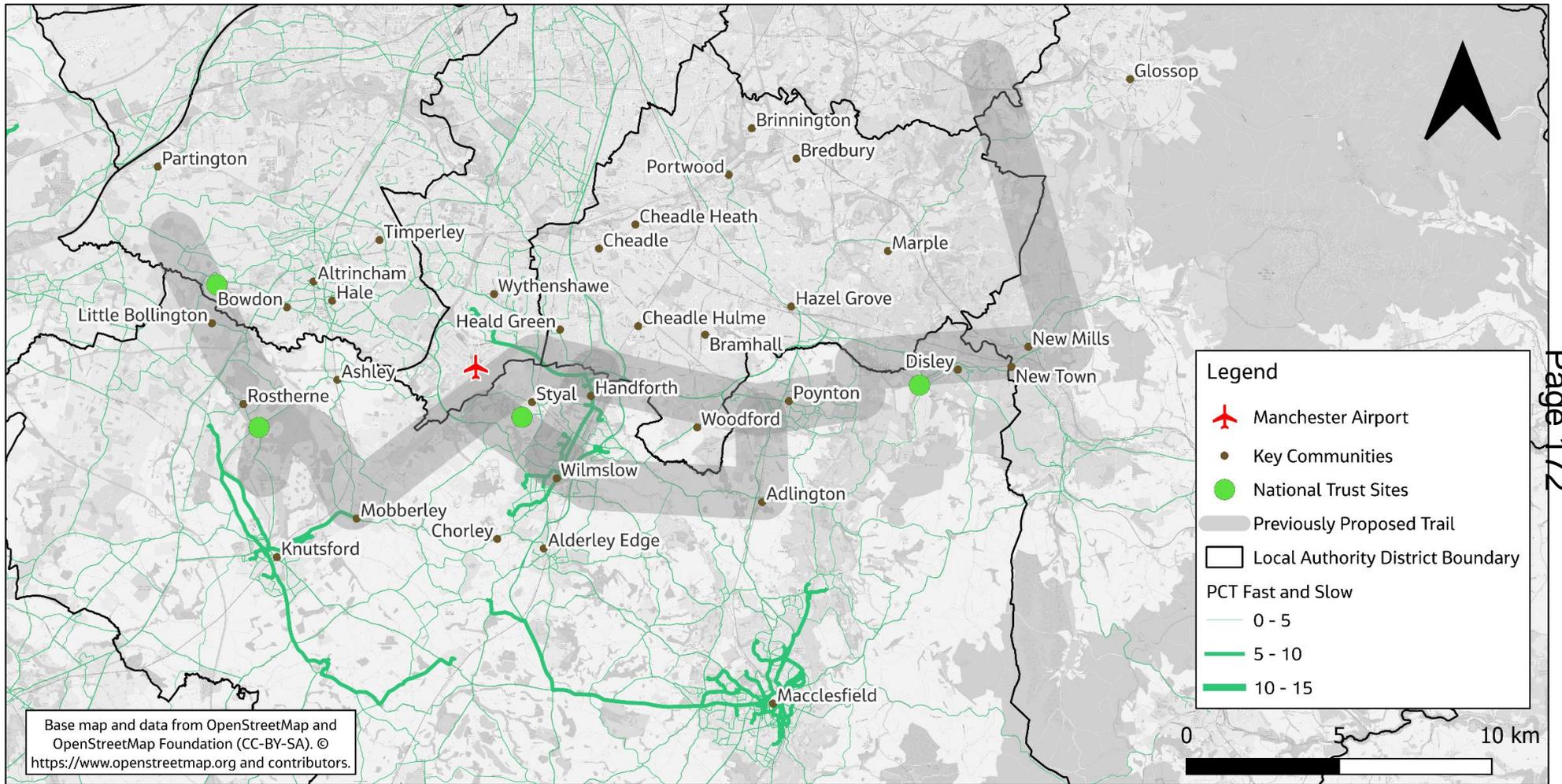


Figure 9-7: PCT - Government near market fast and slow routes

Figure 9-7 shows the areas with the highest propensity to cycle, these can be found within some of the key towns in Cheshire East that are closer to the GBT. In Macclesfield there are between 15 to 23 cyclist flows throughout the town, showing that many people may cycle in and around the town to get to work or for leisure purposes. In Wilmslow, there are around 5-10 cyclist flows going from Wilmslow town centre, north through Handforth and into Manchester. This shows that linking into these towns are potentially the best places to focus investment in, as they are likely to experience the greatest uptake in cycling and therefore unlock the most benefits.

B.6 Strava Metro

Strava Metro is an online tool which analyses data taken from Strava users who track their rides, walks and runs with Global Positioning Systems (GPS) on their phones to evaluate and improve bicycle infrastructure. Due to Strava Metro relying on individuals to track their activities on the app, it does not cover the entire population and is typically more associated with leisure activities due to individuals using the app to track their runs, walks or cycle trips. Despite this being 'opt-in' data, some independent academic studies have analysed this relationship, and it has been found to be representative of the overall population. Figure 9-8 shows the number of leisure walking trips taken across Cheshire between 2019 and 2023.

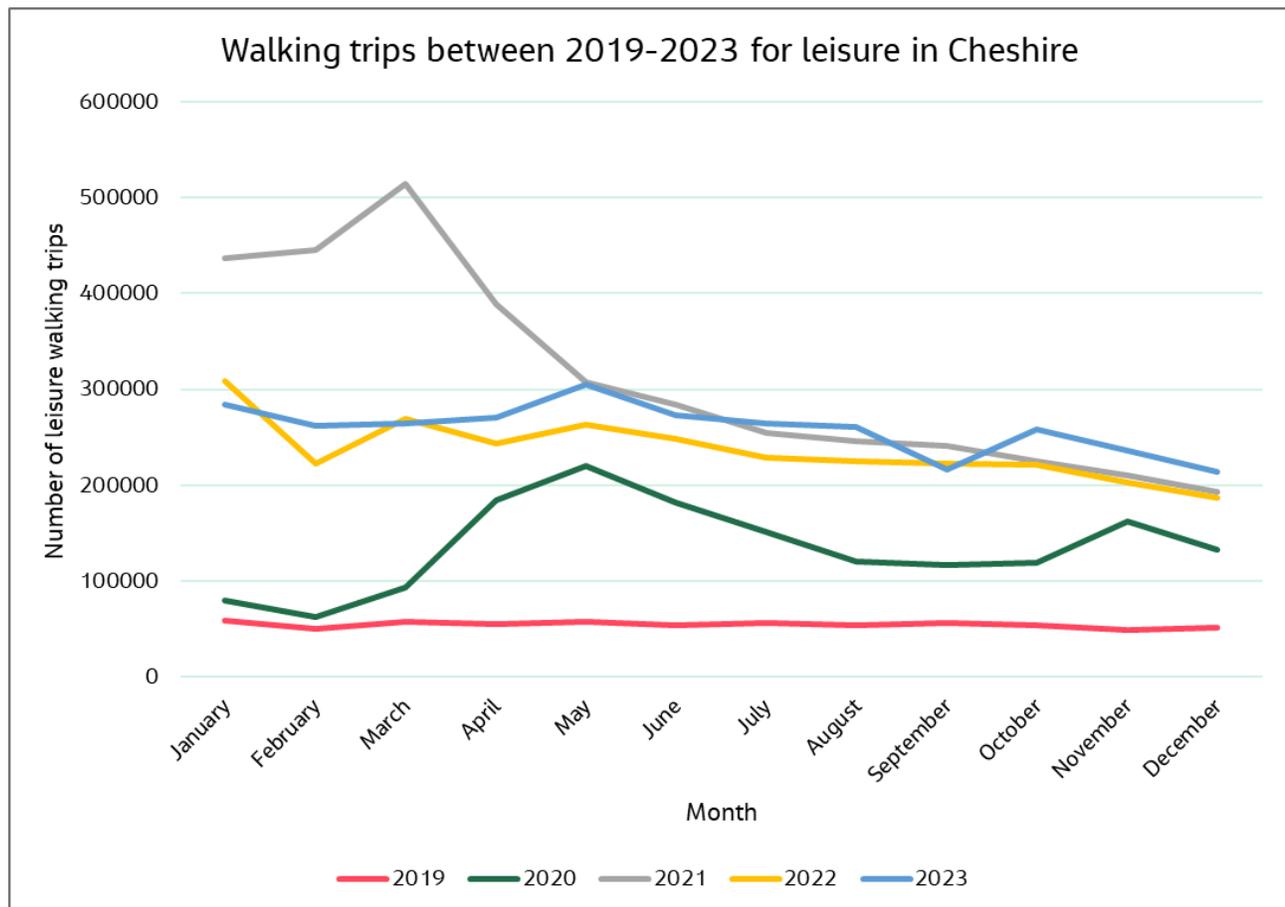


Figure 9-8: Number of leisure walking trips for Cheshire between 2019-2023 - Strava Metro

As shown in Figure 9-8, pre COVID-19 Pandemic walking levels for leisure in 2019 were low at below 60,000 trips. However, when the COVID-19 Pandemic occurred and the whole of the UK was placed in a lockdown in March 2020, walking trips rose at a significant rate from 92,828 in March 2020 to 184,505 in April 2020. The number of

trips per month stayed at a high rate until May 2020 where levels started to drop off but walking levels still remained high, above 115,000 trips in a month. Therefore, was a much higher number of trips between the months of January to March of 2021 compared with 2020, this may be a result of better weather, encouraging more individuals to get out and walk. However, it can be seen from the graph that walking trips for leisure have not increased at a significant rate, therefore more needs to be done regarding the accessibility of the walking network within Cheshire East to encourage the population to walk more and walk instead of using their private vehicle.

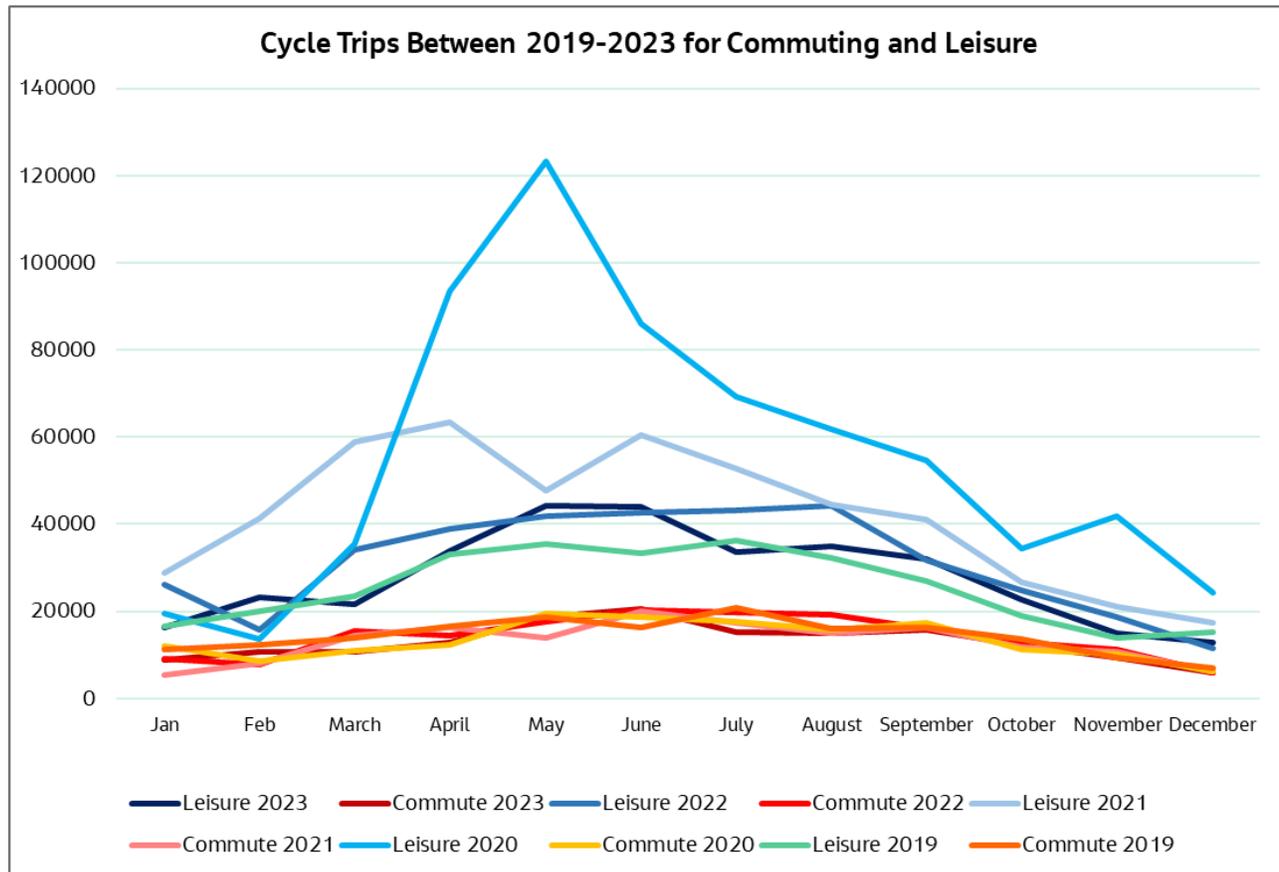


Figure 9-9: Strava Metro data for cycle trips for commuting and leisure in Cheshire, 2019-2023

Figure 9-9 shows the number of cycle trips taken across Cheshire between the years 2019 and 2023 for leisure and commuting purposes. The data is not broken down to a Cheshire East level. The graph shows a significant peak in leisure trips in Cheshire in May 2020. This coincides with the COVID-19 Pandemic, when there was better weather, and more individuals were leaving their homes and exercising. This peak in the summer months, shows a relationship between cycling and the time of year. Leisure cycling levels recorded significantly decreased between September 2020 and May 2021 over winter. Commuting levels recorded in Strava have stayed very similar over the past four years with there being a slight increase during the summer months which is likely a result of the better weather encouraging more to cycle.

B.7 Amenities

The proposed trail passes through many key areas and provides a link into development sites and amenities such as National Trust sites, Adlington Business Park and Manchester Airport. Figure outlines which key areas, infrastructure, development sites and amenities the proposed trail could connect into.

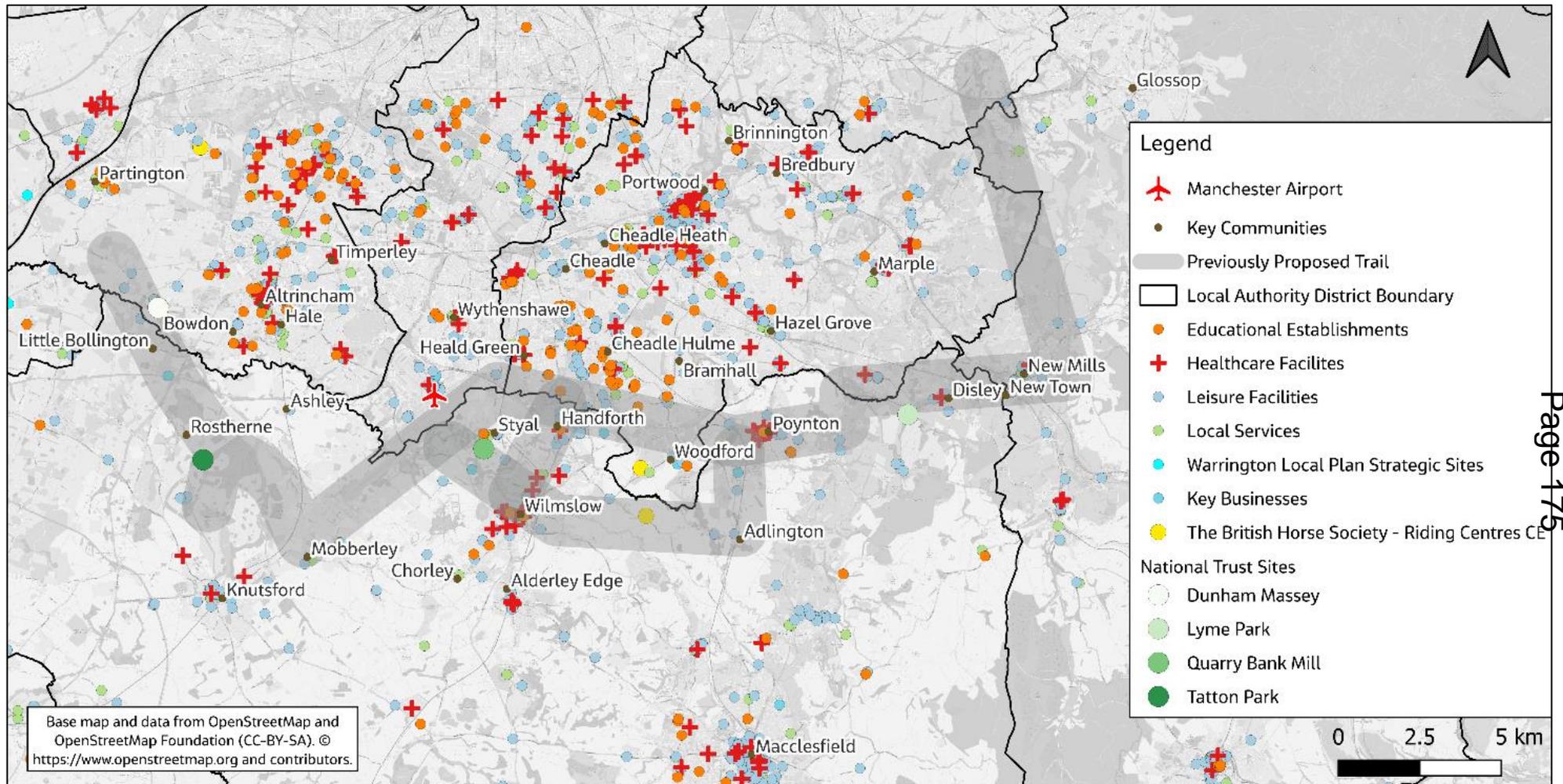


Figure 9-10: Amenities, key businesses and National Trust sites

As shown in Figure 9-10, there are numerous key areas, and a high concentration of development sites and amenities along the route which are labelled. These include:

- Educational establishments;
- Healthcare facilities;
- Leisure facilities;
- Local Services;
- Key businesses – such as AstraZeneca, Manchester Airport, Waters, as well as many located at Adlington Business Park;
- Development sites – such as Tatton Services, Handforth Garden Village, Timperley Wedge and Woodford Garden Village; and
- Tourist attractions such as National Trust sites (Quarry Bank Mill, Tatton Park, Lyme Park, Dunham Massey), The Carrs Park, Avro Heritage Gardens, and Adlington Hall and Gardens.

The number and variety of amenities would benefit the trail as it could improve connectivity across Cheshire East both for utility and leisure users. These links across the area would create a network of routes for walking, wheeling, and cycling.

B.8 Identification of Desire Lines

Following identifying the key amenities and businesses within Cheshire East and the surrounding Local Authorities, desire lines have been identified to show the most popular trips within the area. Amenities such as leisure facilities, educational establishments and healthcare facilities were mapped and then amenities near each other were grouped together to provide destination 'clustering'. This gives an indication of where people may be ending their journey, due to the amenities within the area and provides an insight into the most popular destinations throughout the area.

Once destination clustering has been identified, desire lines were created to reflect the most popular origin and destination trips throughout the area, these are shown in Figure 9-11. The PCT was used in conjunction to identify the routes with higher cycling levels. This gives an indication of where more people are cycling to and from and therefore indicates where there is higher demand for amenities. It is essential that these areas are well connected via active travel routes due to them being of high travel demand.

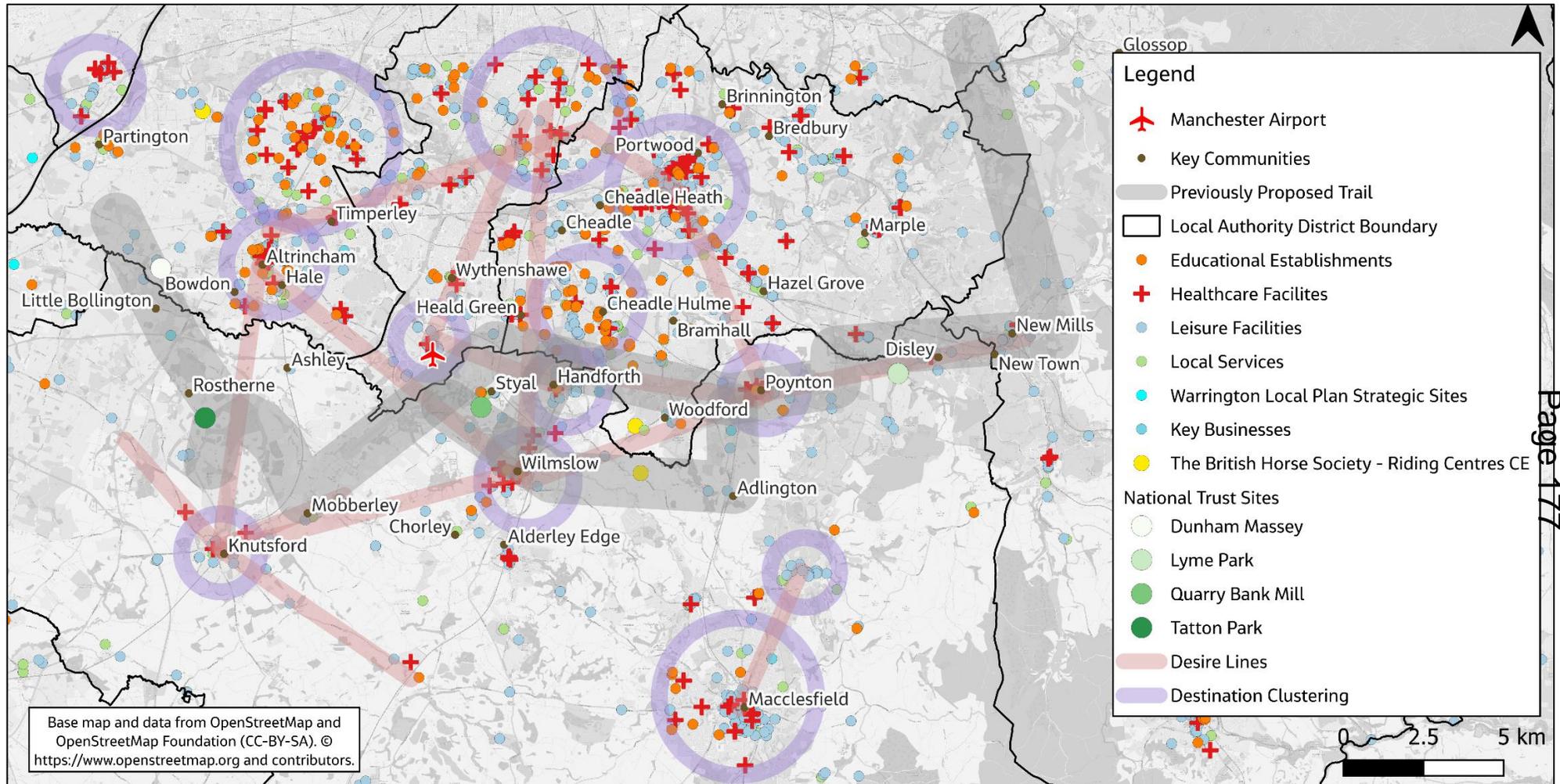


Figure 9-11: Cycling desire lines

B.9 Public Transport

Figure 9-12 below visualises the public transport network across the area. For public transport, this includes the Cheshire East bus stops and railway stations and TfGM Metro Rail Stops. Cheshire East has a public transport network that serves the area through bus and rail services. The Cheshire East bus network connects all neighbouring towns to each other including, Macclesfield, Knutsford, Wilmslow, Poynton and Disley. Although these towns all have rail stations, none of them link east to west. The GBT could support east to west connectivity in the borough.

TfGM have the Metrolink Network that connects areas across Greater Manchester. As shown, there are various metro stops in the vicinity of the GBT. If progressed, it would be beneficial for the GBT to connect into public transport nodes such as Metrolink stops as this would provide greater access for those wanting to access the trail for leisure trips or as part of a commute to work.

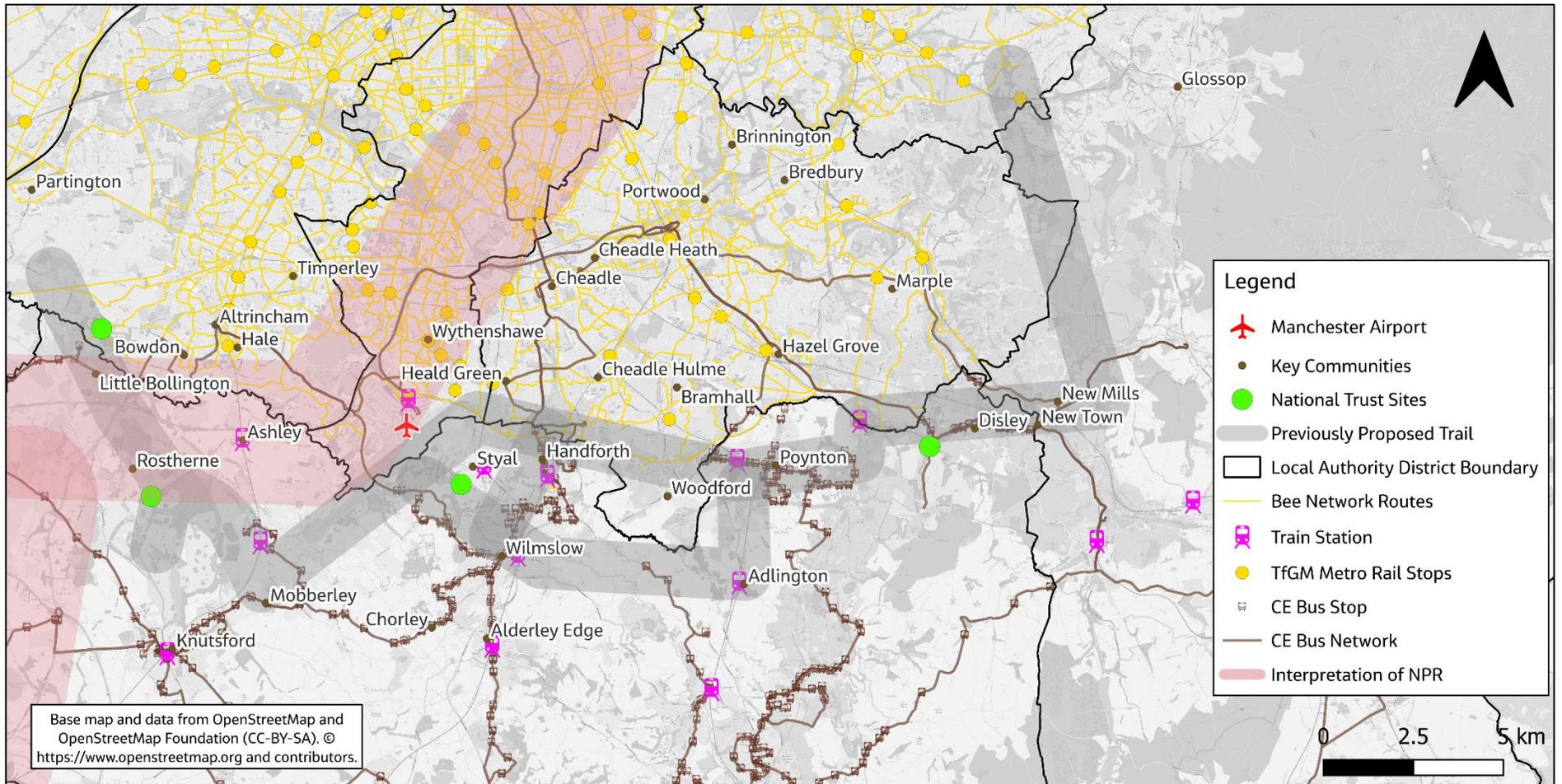


Figure 9-12: Public transport network

B.10 Road Network

Figure 9-13 overleaf shows the existing road network in and around Cheshire East which include:

- Motorways - M56, M60 and M6 – provides important strategic connectivity with the GBT area and connections to the rest of the UK;
- A Roads - major roads intended to provide large scale transport links;
- B Roads - roads intended to connect different areas and to feed traffic between A Roads and smaller roads on the network;
- Classified Unnumbered - smaller roads intended to connect unclassified roads with A and B Roads; and
- Not Classified/ Unclassified – local roads intended for local traffic – most roads in the UK fall into this category.

The majority of the road network in Cheshire East and surrounding Local Authority areas consists of B Roads and Unclassified roads. This can benefit the GBT as it could take advantage of suitable quiet routes within the area to provide cycle facilities. The GBT could also benefit from utilising any existing cycle infrastructure such as the cycle route along the A555.

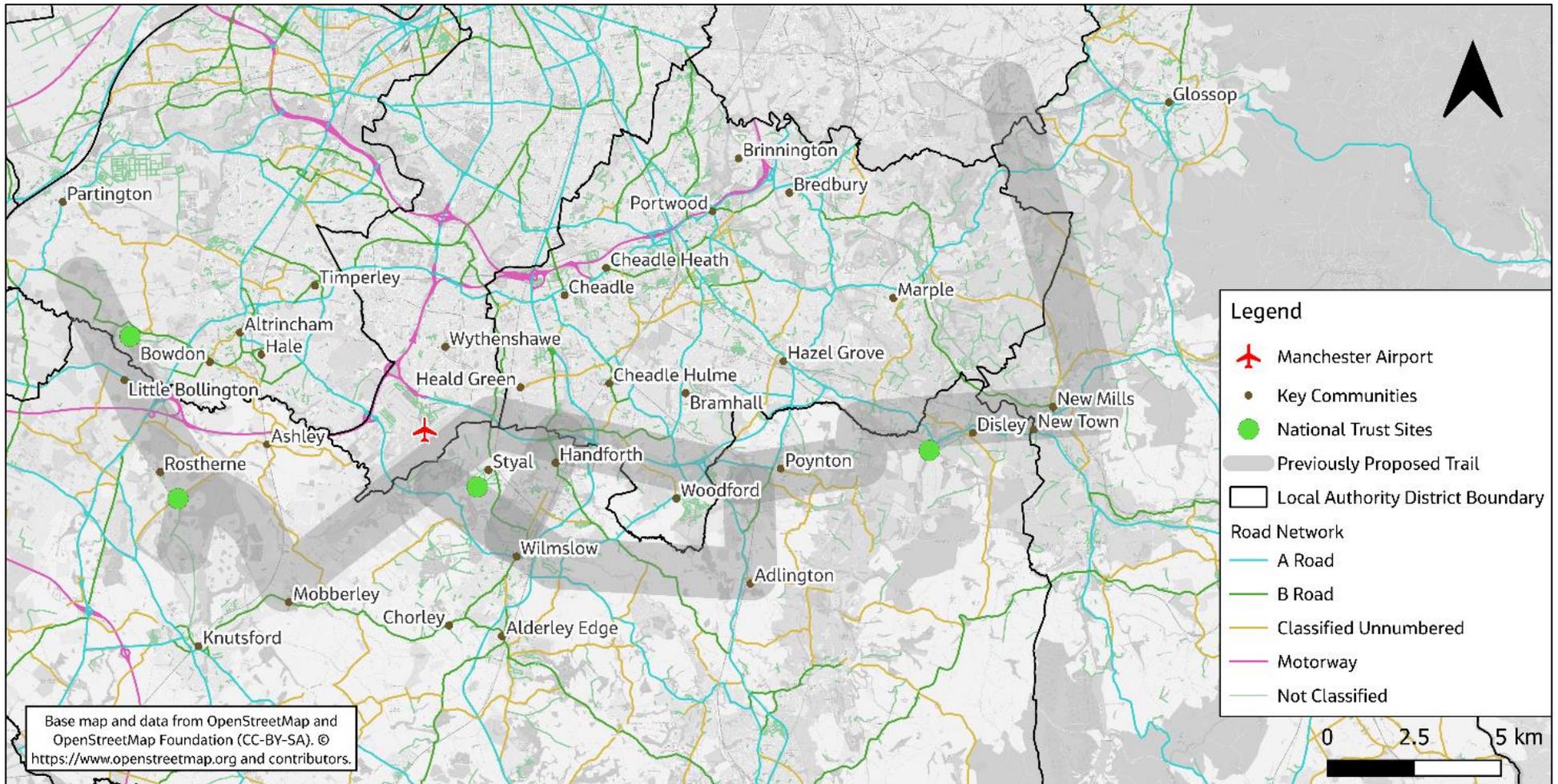


Figure 9-13: Road network

B.11 Public Rights of Way (PRoW)

PRoW are routes that allow the public to walk, wheel, cycle and horse ride along. As shown in Figure , there is a vast network of PRoW within the area. This presents the opportunity for the GBT to link into this network and potentially upgrade the PRoW network or change the status of the type of PRoW that currently exists.

PRoW are split into four different categories;

1. Footpaths – for walking, running, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs.
2. Bridleways – for walking, horse riding, bicycles, mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs.
3. Restricted byways – for any transport without a motor and mobility scooters or powered wheelchairs.
4. Byways Open to All Traffic (BOAT) – for any kind of transport, including cars.

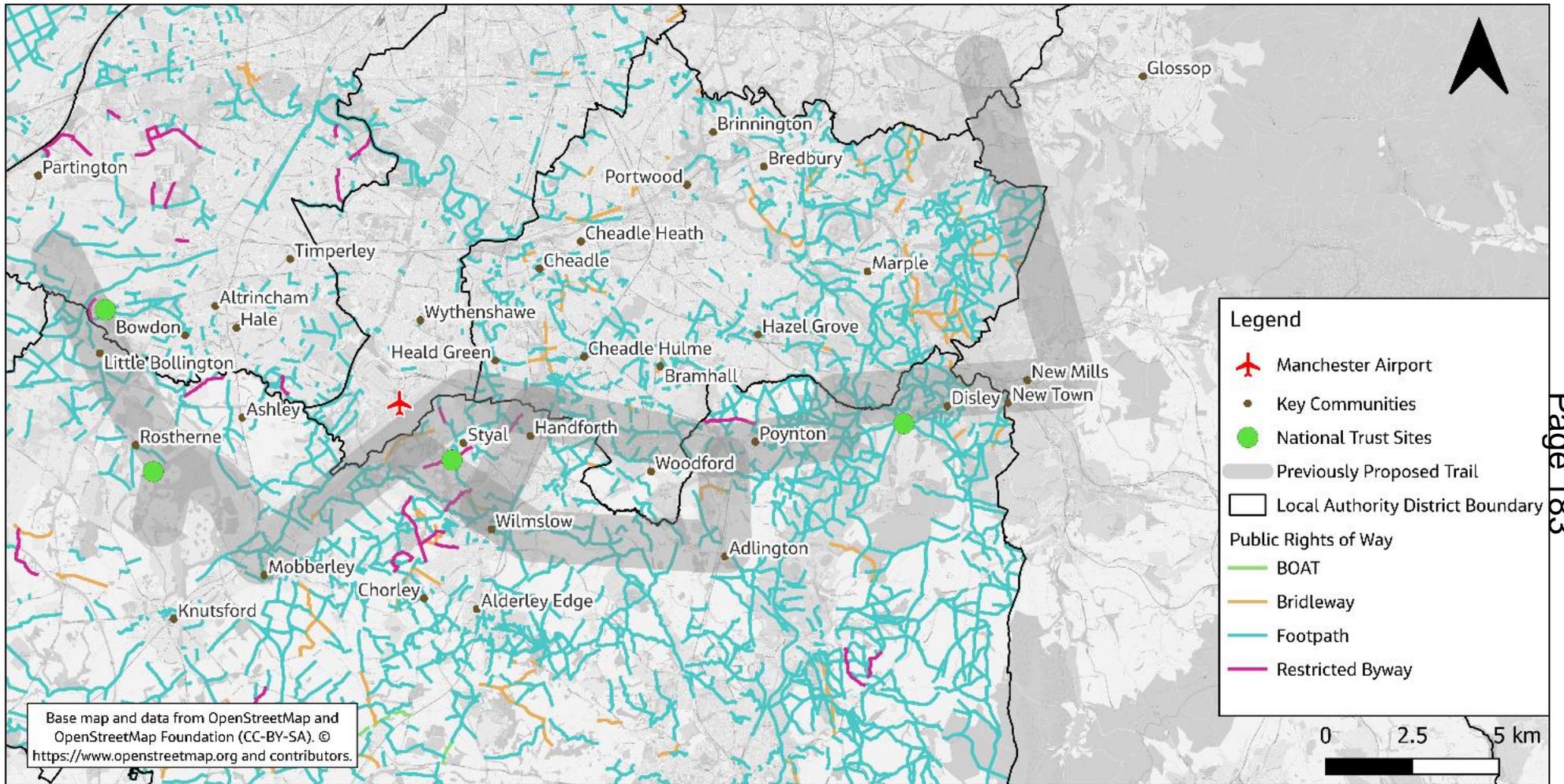


Figure 9-14: Public rights of way

Appendix C. MCAF Scoring Matrix

CATEGORY	CRITERIA	0	1	2	3	4	5
Strategic fit	Objective 1 <i>Ability to meet objective</i>	Does not meet objective	Marginally meets objectives	Moderately meets objective	Majorly meets objective	Significantly meets objective	Fully meets objective
	Objective 2 <i>Ability to meet objective</i>	Does not meet objective	Marginally meets objectives	Moderately meets objective	Majorly meets objective	Significantly meets objective	Fully meets objective
	Objective 3 <i>Ability to meet objective</i>	Does not meet objective	Marginally meets objectives	Moderately meets objective	Majorly meets objective	Significantly meets objective	Fully meets objective
	Objective 4 <i>Ability to meet objective</i>	Does not meet objective	Marginally meets objectives	Moderately meets objective	Majorly meets objective	Significantly meets objective	Fully meets objective
	Objective 5 <i>Ability to meet objective</i>	Does not meet objective	Marginally meets objectives	Moderately meets objective	Majorly meets objective	Significantly meets objective	Fully meets objective
	Local Policy alignment <i>Contribution towards CEC's Local Policy ambitions</i>	Does not contribute towards CEC's Local Policy ambitions	Marginally contributes towards CEC's Local Policy ambitions	Moderately contributes towards CEC's Local Policy ambitions	Majorly contributes towards CEC's Local Policy ambitions	Significantly contributes towards CEC's Local Policy ambitions	Fully contributes towards CEC's Local Policy ambitions
Effectiveness	Number of residents expected to benefit from the intervention <i>Analysis based on nearby populations expected to benefit from the investment</i>	No residents will benefit	A low number of residents will benefit	A moderate number of residents will benefit (scoring of either 2 or 3 dependent on potential number of residents positively impacted)		A majority of residents will benefit	All residents will benefit
	Number of employment areas expected to benefit from the intervention <i>Analysis based on nearby employment areas expected to benefit from the investment</i>	No employment areas will benefit	A low number of employment areas will benefit	A moderate number of employment areas will benefit (scoring of either 2 or 3 dependent on potential number of employment areas positively impacted)		A majority of employment areas will benefit	All employment areas will benefit
	Number of visitors/ leisure users expected to benefit from the intervention <i>Analysis based on nearby green spaces (such as National Trust parks) expected to benefit from the investment</i>	No visitors/ leisure users will benefit	A low number of visitors/ leisure users will benefit	A moderate number of visitors/ leisure users will benefit from the route (scoring of either 2 or 3 dependent on potential number of visitor/ leisure users positively impacted)		A majority of visitors/ leisure users will benefit	All visitors/ leisure users will benefit
	Number of existing trails the intervention links with <i>Analysis based on the number of existing trails the proposed route could 'link' into</i>	Does not link with existing trails	Links with one other existing trail	Links with two other existing trails	Links with three other existing trails	Links with four other existing trails	Links with more than four other existing trails
Deliverability	Costs for comparison <i>Analysis based on professional judgement regarding the likely infrastructure required to provide the route</i>	EEEE	EEEE	EEE	EE	E	No required costs
	Funding / affordability <i>Analysis based on the likelihood for match funding to be available or attracting funding from other funding sources</i>	No match funding or other funding sources available	Match funding or other sources of funding anticipated to be available in the future for application	Match funding or other sources of funding could be applied for	Match funding and other sources of funding likely	Match funding and other sources of funding highly likely	Match funding and other sources of funding guaranteed
	Land <i>Analysis of whether land is required or is within LHA boundary</i>	Land required which cannot be purchased	Land required which will likely have a high cost and will require support from the land owner (60-100% of route requires land)	Land required which will likely have a moderate cost and will require support from the land owner (40-59% of route requires land)	Land required but can be purchased at a moderate or low cost and will require support from the land owner (20-39% of route requires land)	Land required but can be purchased at a moderate or low cost and obtains required support from the land owner (1-19% of route requires land)	Land required is within LHA boundary
	Environmental considerations <i>Analysis of whether the proposed route impacts the environment such as protected species, habitats, woodland, water</i>	Detrimental impacts across multiple environmental considerations	Significant impacts across multiple environmental considerations	Moderate impacts across multiple environmental considerations	Minor impacts across multiple environmental considerations	Minor impacts across few environmental considerations	No impact across any environmental considerations
	Existing Facilities <i>Extent to which existing infrastructure is in place that can be utilised</i>	No existing facilities	0-20% of the route has existing facilities	21-40% of the route has existing facilities	41-60% of the route has existing facilities	61-80% of the route has existing facilities	81% + of the route has existing facilities
	Ability to have a phased delivery <i>Analysis of whether the proposed route can be delivered in phases</i>	Route could not be phased	Route could be delivered in two phases	Route could be delivered in three phases	Route could be delivered in four phases	Route could be delivered in five phases	Route could easily be delivered in multiple phases
		0	2	4	6	8	10
	Design challenges <i>Analysis based on whether the proposed scheme is feasible through a design solution</i>	Design challenges cannot be resolved	Design challenges can be resolved with significant interventions	Design challenges can be resolved with moderate interventions	Design challenges can be resolved with minor interventions	Design challenges can be resolved	No design challenges
	Potential benefits <i>Expected benefits of the route (utilising AMAT)</i>	Benefits between £0mill and £10mill	Benefits between £10.01mill and £14mill	Benefits between £14.01mill and £18mill	Benefits between £18.01mill and £22mill	Benefits between £22.01mill and £40mill	Benefits greater than £40.01mill
	Acceptability <i>Professional judgement of whether the proposed route will be accepted by the public and/or politically</i>	Will not be accepted by the public or politically	Significant unlikelihood to be accepted by the public or politically	Anticipated public or political opposition and criticism of the intervention	No anticipated public and political opposition to intervention, some public buy-in from advocacy groups, support from at least one councillor	Some public and political buy-in, active support from advocacy groups, stakeholders and a number of councillors/local government	Large public and political buy-in, active support for project

Appendix D. Environment Technical Note

D.1 Introduction

Jacobs UK Ltd. was commissioned by Cheshire East Council in January 2024 to prepare a high-level desk-based ecological constraints assessment for a new multi-use cycleway, the Bollin Valley Way (hereafter referred to as the 'Proposed Scheme'). Situated in Cheshire, the Proposed Scheme broadly between the outskirts of Altrincham and Disley. The route is divided and identified by western, central, and eastern sections. Of note, is the western route that directly impacts Rostherne Mere (Ramsar site, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and National Nature Reserve (NNR)), located at (OS) Grid Reference: SJ 74388 84311.

The Proposed Scheme is predominantly surrounded by agricultural fields with some residential properties in the villages and towns of Altrincham, Dunham Town, Ashley, Wilmslow, Handforth, Poynton and Disley. It is understood that much of the route will utilise existing tracks, pathways, and Public Rights of Way (PRoW).

The study objective is to undertake a high-level, desk-based, rapid ecological constraints assessment to inform an optioneering process in respect to the most appropriate route. A detailed desk study has not been undertaken at this stage and no fieldwork was undertaken as part of this study.

Please note that this report has been prepared to inform the optioneering process only and is not considered sufficient to support a planning application.

D.2 Methodology

D.2.1 Desk Study

This ecological constraints assessment was undertaken in consideration of good practice guidance detailed in the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management's (CIEEM) current guidelines on Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (CIEEM, 2017).³⁶

This desk-study involved a review of four datasets that were identified as representing features of the highest ecological value such as designated sites, Habitats of Principal Importance (HoPI, NERC 2006) or 'irreplaceable habitats' under the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2023)³⁷ as follows:

- Statutory designated sites of nature conservation interest for an area extending to 1km from the Proposed Scheme, obtained from MAGIC38 [accessed March 2024]. The sites included within this desk-study are defined in Table 9-2.

Table 9-2: Statutory Designated Site Definitions

Ramsar sites	Ramsar sites are wetlands of international importance designated by Ramsar Convention. Sites proposed for selection are advised by the relevant statutory nature conservation body within the UK.
---------------------	---

³⁶ CIEEM (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, 2nd edition. Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management. Winchester.

³⁷ National Planning Policy Framework - 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

³⁸ Version MAGIC v3. available online: https://magic.defra.gov.uk/Metadata_for_magic/SSSI%20IRZ%20User%20Guidance%20MAGIC.pdf [Accessed March 2024]

Special Protection Areas (SPA)	SPA are sites designated under the European Union's Birds Directive (2009/147/EC). The aim of SPAs is to safeguard the European bird species considered to be of particular importance and therefore listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, as well as regularly occurring migratory bird species which are not necessarily listed in Annex I. The Birds Directive also applies to birds' eggs, nests and habitats.
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	SACs are protected areas in the UK designated under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Under these Regulations, sites must make significant contribution to conserving the habitats and species identified in Annexes I and II. The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds).
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	The statutory nature conservation agencies have a duty under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, to notify any area of land which in their opinion is 'of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, or geological or physiographical features'. Such areas are known as SSSIs.
National Nature Reserves (NNR)	NNRs in England are designated by Natural England as key places for wildlife and natural features in England. They were established to protect the most significant areas of habitat and of geological formations.
Local Nature Reserves (LNR)	LNRs are a statutory designation made under Section 21 of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 by principal Local Authorities. LNRs are for people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally.

- Habitats of Principal Importance (HoPI) as listed on Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC), within 50m of the Proposed Scheme, obtained from the MAGIC³ [accessed March 2024].
- Ancient Woodland within 50m of the Proposed Scheme, obtained from MAGIC³ [accessed January 2024].
- Records of ancient and veteran trees within 50m of the Proposed Scheme were obtained from the Woodland Trust³⁹ [accessed March 2024].

D.2.2 Limitations

It should be noted that this exercise is intended to provide a high-level ecological constraints assessment only. A desk-based study for statutory designated sites/notable habitats can only highlight the potential presence of priority habitats that may be present in the study area. As such, further ecological study will be necessary to verify the presence/absence of priority habitats and species and their locations.

This assessment has been informed by desk study results. In the absence of the additional desk study data outlined above, and field surveys to inform habitat and species data, this study can only offer a preliminary assessment at this stage. This document is not considered sufficient to support a planning application.

³⁹ Woodland Trust <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/> [Accessed March 2024]

D.3 Results

A summary of the relevant ecological features identified within the study area are provided below. More detailed results and descriptions are shown in Table 9-3. Accompanying figures illustrating the Proposed Scheme and ecological features can be found in Section D.5.

D.3.1 Statutory Designated Sites for Nature Conservation

Nine statutory designated sites for nature conservation were recorded within 1km of the Proposed Scheme, these are listed below in terms of their biological importance, starting with the most valuable:

- Rostherne Mere Ramsar Site, SSSI and NNR;
- Dunham Park SSSI;
- Cotteril Clough SSSI;
- Lindow Common SSSI;
- Poynton Coppice LNR;
- Lindow Common LNR; and,
- Jackson's Brickworks LNR.

In addition, SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) for Rostherne Mere (IRZ) and Tatton Mere (IRZ) and Matley Moor Meadows (IRZ) were located within 1km.

D.3.2 Ancient Woodland

Ancient Woodland is considered an irreplaceable habitat under the NPPF. The desk study records identified 11 parcels of ancient woodland:

- Harpers Bank Wood
- Bank Wood
- Oversley Farm Wood
- Carr Wood
- Elm Wood
- Bens Wood
- Ryles and Middlecale Woods, and
- Four unnamed ancient woodlands.

D.3.3 Veteran Trees

Four veteran trees were identified from within 50m of the proposed route. Veteran trees are considered an irreplaceable habitat under the NPPF (2021; NPPF).⁴⁰

D.3.4 Habitats of Principal Importance

Habitats of Principal Importance within the study area included lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wood-pasture and parkland, lowland fens, lowland meadows and traditional orchards. Good quality semi-improved grassland was also identified, and this habitat may also qualify as a HoPI.

⁴⁰ National Planning Policy Framework - 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Table 9-3: Ecological Features recorded within the study area of the Proposed Scheme

Name and	Distance from Proposed Scheme (at the closest point)	Description
Ramsar, SSSI and NNR Sites within 1km		
Rostherne Mere Ramsar, SSSI, NNR	Located underneath the Proposed Scheme	<p>Designated as a Ramsar site for Criterion 1; Rostherne Mere is one of the deepest and largest meres of the Shropshire-Cheshire plain. Its shoreline is fringed with common reed (<i>Phragmites australis</i>). The following overwintering bird species occur at levels of national importance; great cormorant (<i>Phalacrocorax carbo carbo</i>), bittern (<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>), and water rail (<i>Rallus aquaticus</i>).</p> <p>Designated as a SSSI primarily as forming part of a nationally important series of open water and peatland sites.</p> <p>The NNR features of interest cite that it is primarily important for wintering wildfowl, particularly pochard (<i>Aythya ferina</i>), other species include mallard (<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>), teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>), pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>), shoveler (<i>Spatula clypeata</i>), gadwall (<i>Mareca strepera</i>) and goosander (<i>Mergus merganser</i>). The surrounding reed beds support a large breeding population of reed warblers (<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>), and bittern is a visitor during the winter. The surrounding woodland and scrub also support a good assemblage of breeding birds. Mammals include otter (SPI) and a population of harvest mouse (<i>Micromys minutus</i>, SPI) which are uncommon in Cheshire. The reserve supports several butterfly species, most notably white-letter hairstreak (SPI).</p>
Dunham Park SSSI	23m south from the Proposed Scheme	<p>The majority of Dunham Park is pasture-woodland or park-woodland and has been managed as such since mediaeval times. The main tree species are pedunculate oak (<i>Quercus robur</i>) and beech (<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>). A large number of the oak and beech trees are ancient, with some dating back to the 17th Century.</p>
Cotteril Clough SSSI	173m west from the Proposed Scheme	<p>The majority of the site is woodland with associated stream habitat and is the most diverse clough woodland on base rich soils in Greater Manchester. This grades into ash-wych elm woodland with sycamore (<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>) and pedunculate oak also commonly found. Cotteril Clough also has an interesting bird fauna.</p>

Name and	Distance from Proposed Scheme (at the closest point)	Description
Lindow Common SSSI	490m south from the Proposed Scheme	Lindow Common has been selected to represent one of the few remaining areas of lowland heath in Cheshire. The site consists of a mixture of wet and dry heath, bog, open water and scattered scrub and woodland.
Local Nature Reserves within 1km		
Poynton Coppice	2m north of the Proposed Scheme	Main habitats include running water, broadleaved woodland and meadow.
Lindow Common	190m south of the Proposed Scheme	The importance of Lindow's heathland is such that it has been designated a SSSI and an LNR. As well as areas of heather, other habitats, which add to the Common's richness – a fringe of woodland, wet mires and Black Lake.
Jackson's Brickworks	Adjacent to the Proposed Scheme	Mosaic of grassland, woodland, scrub and ponds on former brickworks site.
Irreplaceable Habitats within 50m		
Ancient Woodland	The closest site is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	Eleven parcels identified. Ancient Woodland is considered an irreplaceable habitat under the NPPF.
Ancient / veteran trees	The closest veteran tree is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	Four veteran trees were identified from within 50m of the proposed route.
Habitats of Principal Importance within 50m		

Name and	Distance from Proposed Scheme (at the closest point)	Description
Deciduous Woodland	The closest is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	Extensive deciduous woodland HPI cover within 50m, returning over 227 records.
Woodpasture and Parkland	The closest is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	Five areas of wood-pasture and parkland.
Lowland Meadows	The closest is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	One area identified.
Traditional Orchard	The closest is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	Nine traditional orchards within 50m.
Lowland Fens	The closest is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	Two parcels one adjacent to the eastern section of the Proposed Scheme.
Semi improved grassland	The closest is located under the footprint of the Proposed Scheme	Three parcels adjacent to the western section of the Proposed Scheme.

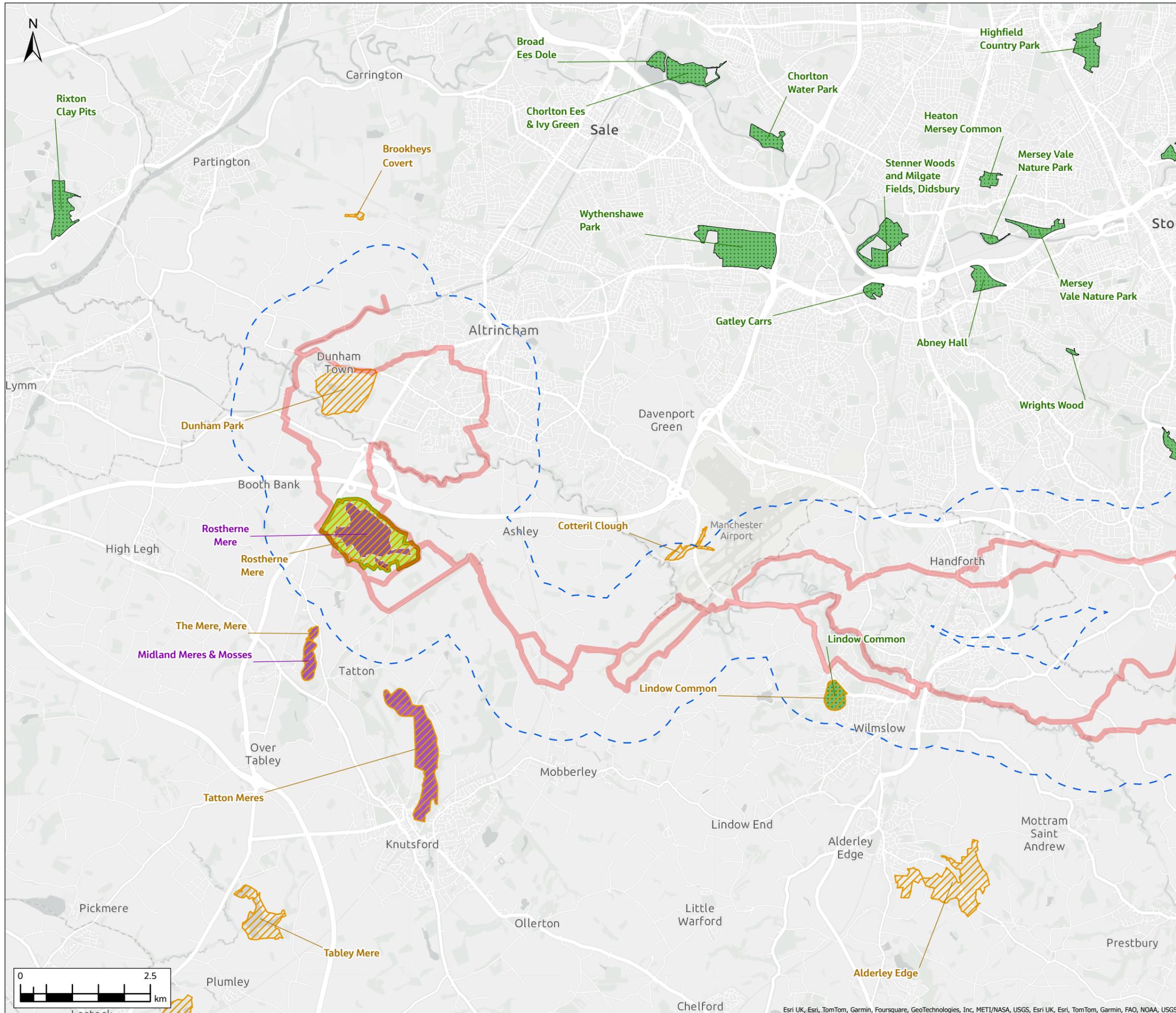
D.4 Recommendations

The information contained within this report in respect to 'high value' ecological features should be used to inform the location and design of the Proposed Scheme i.e., use of the mitigation hierarchy to 'avoid' impacts on these features in the first instance.

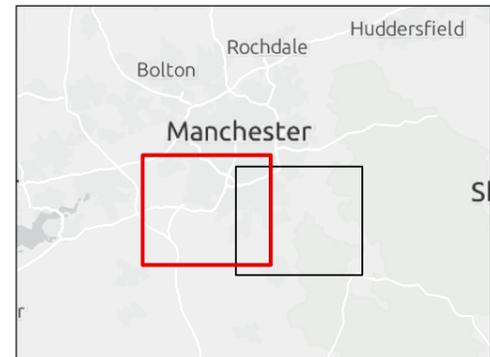
The next stages of the optioneering process should incorporate the review of more detailed ecological information to ensure further avoidance of ecological features. This should include:

- Detailed desk study;
- Field surveys i.e. ground-based verification of Habitats of Principal Importance, ancient woodland and veteran trees, UK Habitat Classification surveys and protected species surveys;
- Identification of Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated for bats (as a qualifying interest feature) within 30km from the Proposed Scheme;
- Identification of all SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) in which the Proposed Scheme is located.
- Consultation with the stakeholders;
- A request of non-statutory sites data, comprising Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), held by the Local Biological Records Centre for the Cheshire Region within the Zone of Influence of the Proposed Scheme;
- Where relevant, obtain licences for European Protected Species (EPS) extending within the Zone of Influence of the Proposed Scheme;
- Identification of waterbodies within 250m of the Proposed Scheme;
- A request of records for protected or notable species (including NERC Act, 2006, Section 41 SPI) held by the Local Biological Records Centre for the Cheshire Region within the Zone of Influence of the Proposed Scheme, and
- Identification of Biodiversity Net Gain requirements for the Proposed Scheme.

D.5 Figure A.1 Statutory Sites within 1km of the Proposed Scheme



- Legend**
- Initial Bollin Valley Way/Greater Bollin Trail routes
 - - - 1km Buffer
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest
 - South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation
 - Local Nature Reserves
 - Ramsar
 - Rostherne Mere National Nature Reserve
 - Peak District Moors Special Protection Area



Source:
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 10018341
 Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

0	3/13/2024	Initial Issue	KM	SK	ZC	LP
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Check'd	Rev'd	Appr'd
Scale @ A3		Scale: 1:71,000	DO NOT SCALE			
Jacobs No. BRJ10676						

Jacobs

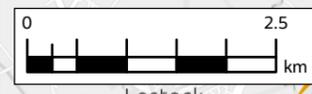


Client
 Project
 BRJ10676 Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail

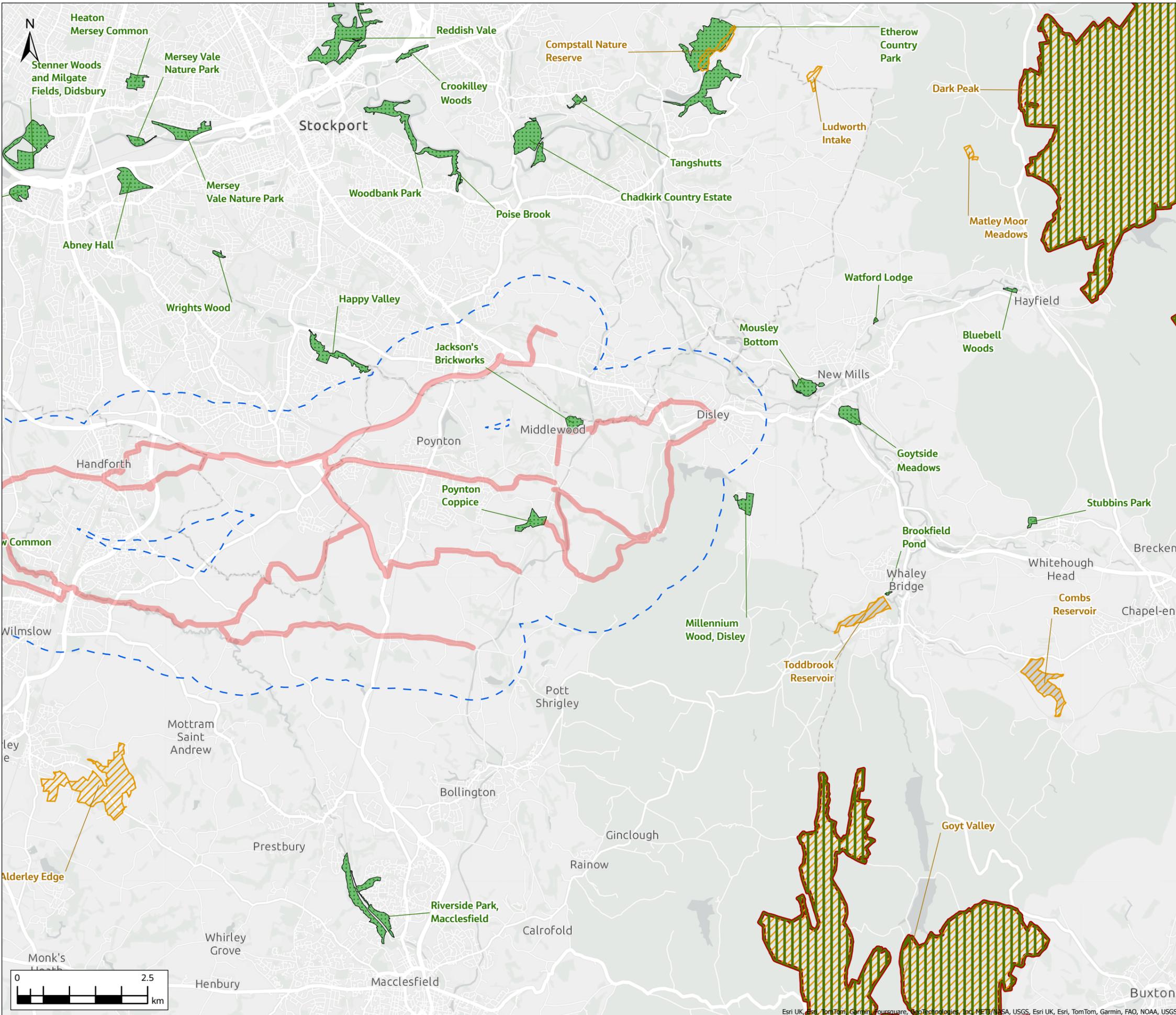
Drawing Title
 Statutory Sites within 1km of the corridors
 Sheet 1 of 2

Drawing No. N/A	Drawing Status FINAL
--------------------	-------------------------

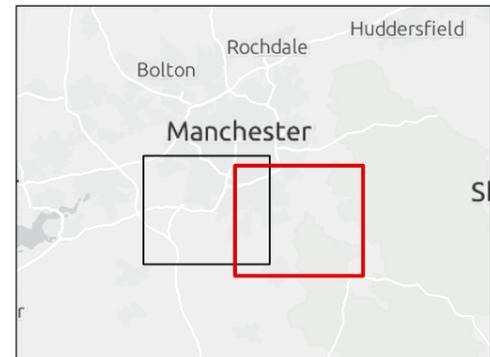
FIGURE 1



© Copyright 2024 Jacobs U.K. Limited. The concepts and information contained in this document are the property of Jacobs. Use or copying of this document in whole or in part without the written permission of Jacobs constitutes an infringement of copyright. Limitation: This drawing has been prepared on behalf of, and for the exclusive use of Jacobs' Client, and is subject to, and issued in accordance with, the provisions of the contract between Jacobs and the Client. Jacobs accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for, or in respect of, any use of, or reliance upon, this drawing by any third party.



- Legend**
- Initial Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail routes
 - - - 1km Buffer
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest
 - South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation
 - Local Nature Reserves
 - Ramsar
 - Rostherne Mere National Nature Reserve
 - Peak District Moors Special Protection Area



Source:
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 10018341
 Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

0	3/13/2024	Initial Issue	KM	SK	ZC	LP
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Check'd	Rev'd	Appr'd
Scale @ A3		Scale: 1:71,000	DO NOT SCALE			
Jacobs No. BRJ10676						

Jacobs



Client: Cheshire East Council

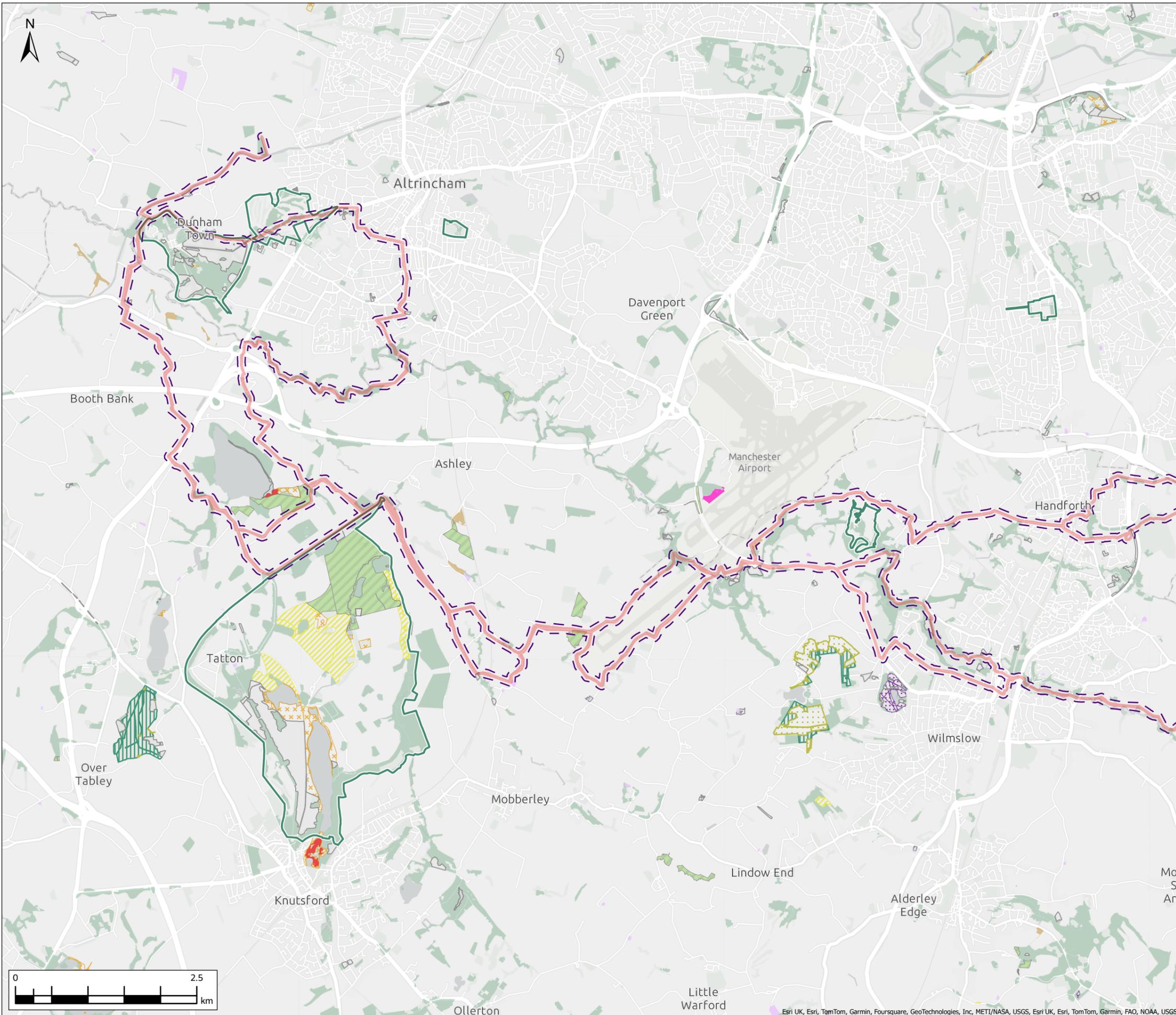
Project: BRJ10676 Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail

Drawing Title: Statutory Sites within 1km of the corridors
 Sheet 2 of 2

Drawing No. N/A
 Drawing Status: FINAL

FIGURE 1

D.6 Figure A.2 Habitats of Principal Importance within 50m of the Proposed Scheme



- Legend**
- Initial Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail routes
 - 50m Buffer
 - Wood Pasture and Parkland Habitat
 - Habitats that may qualify as Habitats of Principal Importance
 - Habitats of Principal Importance
 - Lowland fens
 - Lowland raised bog
 - Lowland heathland
 - Lowland meadows
 - Lowland calcareous grassland
 - No main habitat but additional habitats present
 - Purple moor grass and rush pastures
 - Reedbeds
 - Traditional orchard
 - Fragmented heath
 - Blanket bog
 - Upland flushes fens and swamps
 - Upland heathland
 - Good quality semi-improved grassland
 - Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
 - Deciduous woodland
 - Deciduous woodland, Lowland raised bog
 - Good quality semi-improved grassland
 - Grass moorland
 - Lowland dry acid grassland



Source:
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 10018341
 Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

0	3/13/2024	Initial Issue	KM	SK	ZC	LP
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Check'd	Rev'd	Appr'd

Scale @ A3: Scale: 1:51,000 DO NOT SCALE

Jacobs No. BRJ10676

Client

Project

BRJ10676 Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail

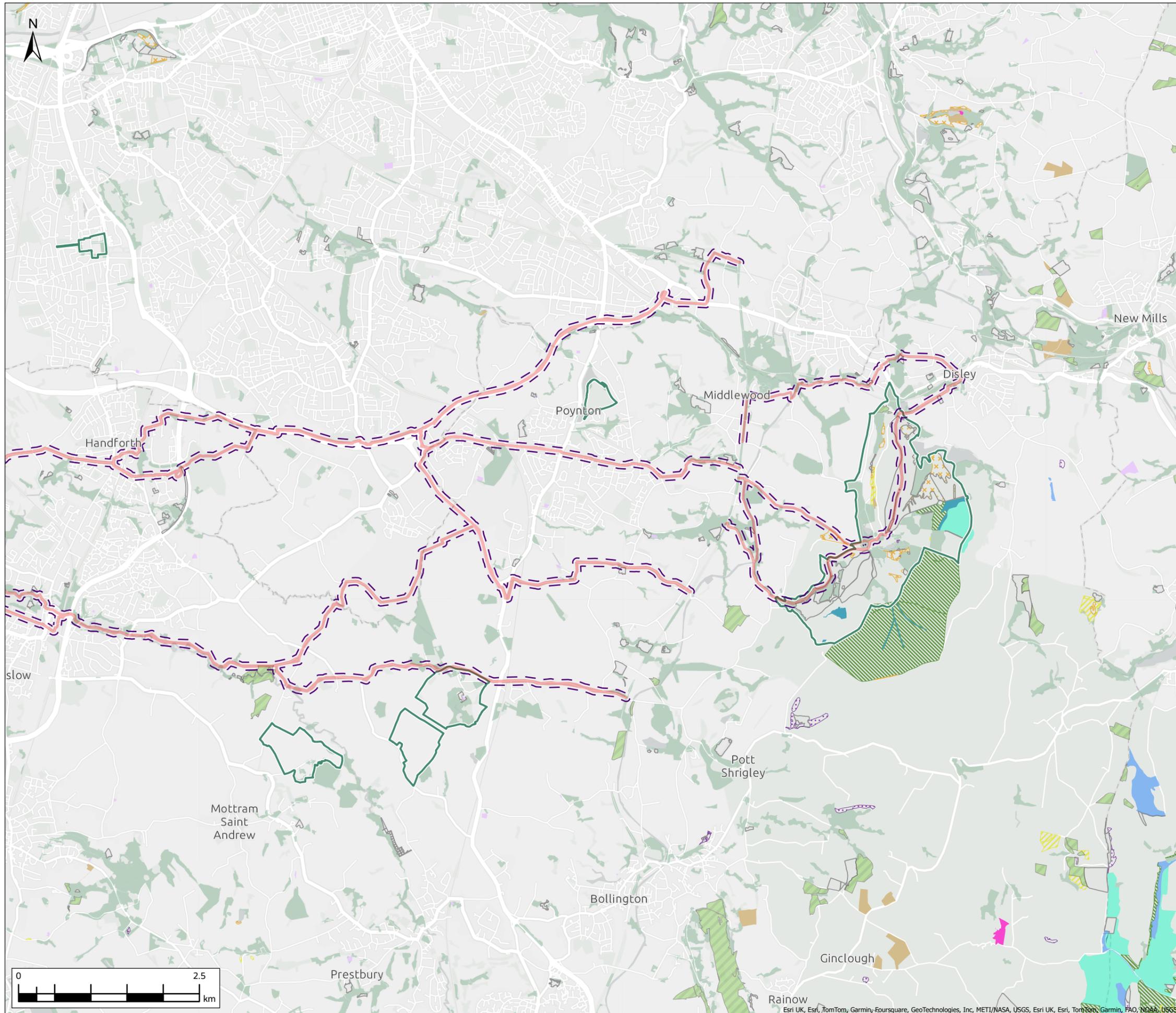
Drawing Title

Priority habitats within 50m of the corridors
 Sheet 1 of 2

Drawing No. N/A

Drawing Status FINAL

FIGURE 2



- Legend**
- Initial Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail routes
 - 50m Buffer
 - Wood Pasture and Parkland Habitat
 - Habitats that may qualify as Habitats of Principal Importance
 - Good quality semi-improved grassland
 - Habitats of Principal Importance
 - Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
 - Deciduous woodland
 - Deciduous woodland, Lowland raised bog
 - Good quality semi improved grassland
 - Grass moorland
 - Lowland dry acid grassland
 - Lowland fens
 - Lowland raised bog
 - Lowland heathland
 - Lowland meadows
 - Lowland calcareous grassland
 - No main habitat but additional habitats present
 - Purple moor grass and rush pastures
 - Reedbeds
 - Traditional orchard
 - Fragmented heath
 - Blanket bog
 - Upland flushes fens and swamps
 - Upland heathland



Source:
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 10018341
 Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

0	3/13/2024	Initial Issue	KM	SK	ZC	LP
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Check'd	Rev'd	Appr'd
Scale @ A3		Scale: 1:51,000	DO NOT SCALE			
Jacobs No. BRJ10676						

Jacobs

Client

Project
 BRJ10676 Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail

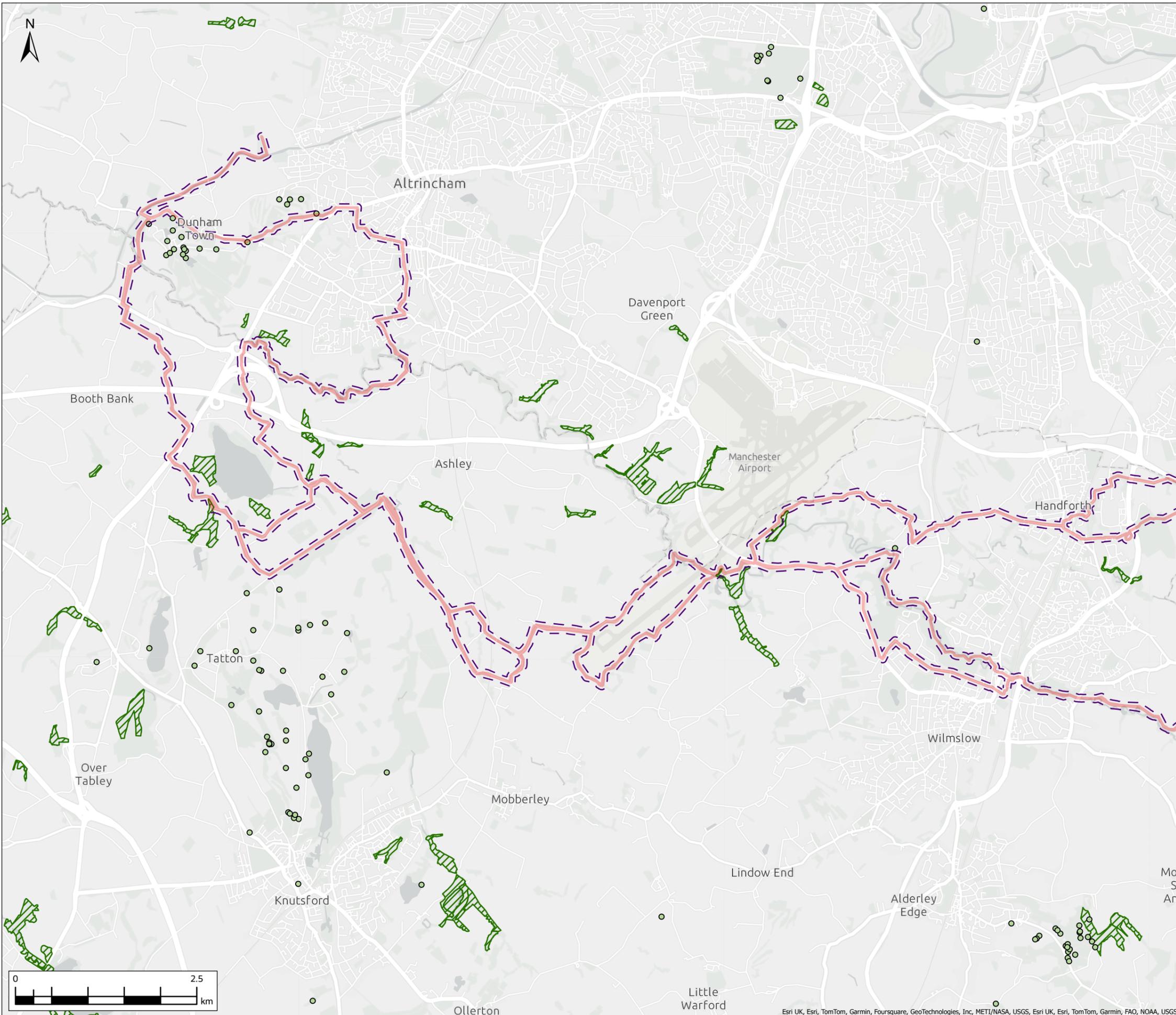
Drawing Title
 Priority habitats within 50m of the corridors
 Sheet 2 of 2

Drawing No.
 N/A

Drawing Status
 FINAL

FIGURE 2

D.7 Figure A.3 Ancient woodland and ancient veteran trees within 50m of the Proposed Scheme



- Legend**
- Initial Bollin Valley Way/Greater Bollin Trail routes
 - - - 50m Buffer
 - Ancient and Veteran Tree Inventory
 - ▨ Ancient Woodland, including Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland and Ancient Replanted Woodland



Source:
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 10018341
 Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

0	3/13/2024	Initial Issue	KM	SK	ZC	LP
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Check'd	Rev'd	Appr'd
Scale @ A3		Scale: 1:51,000	DO NOT SCALE			
Jacobs No. BRJ10676						



Client

Project
 BRJ10676 Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail

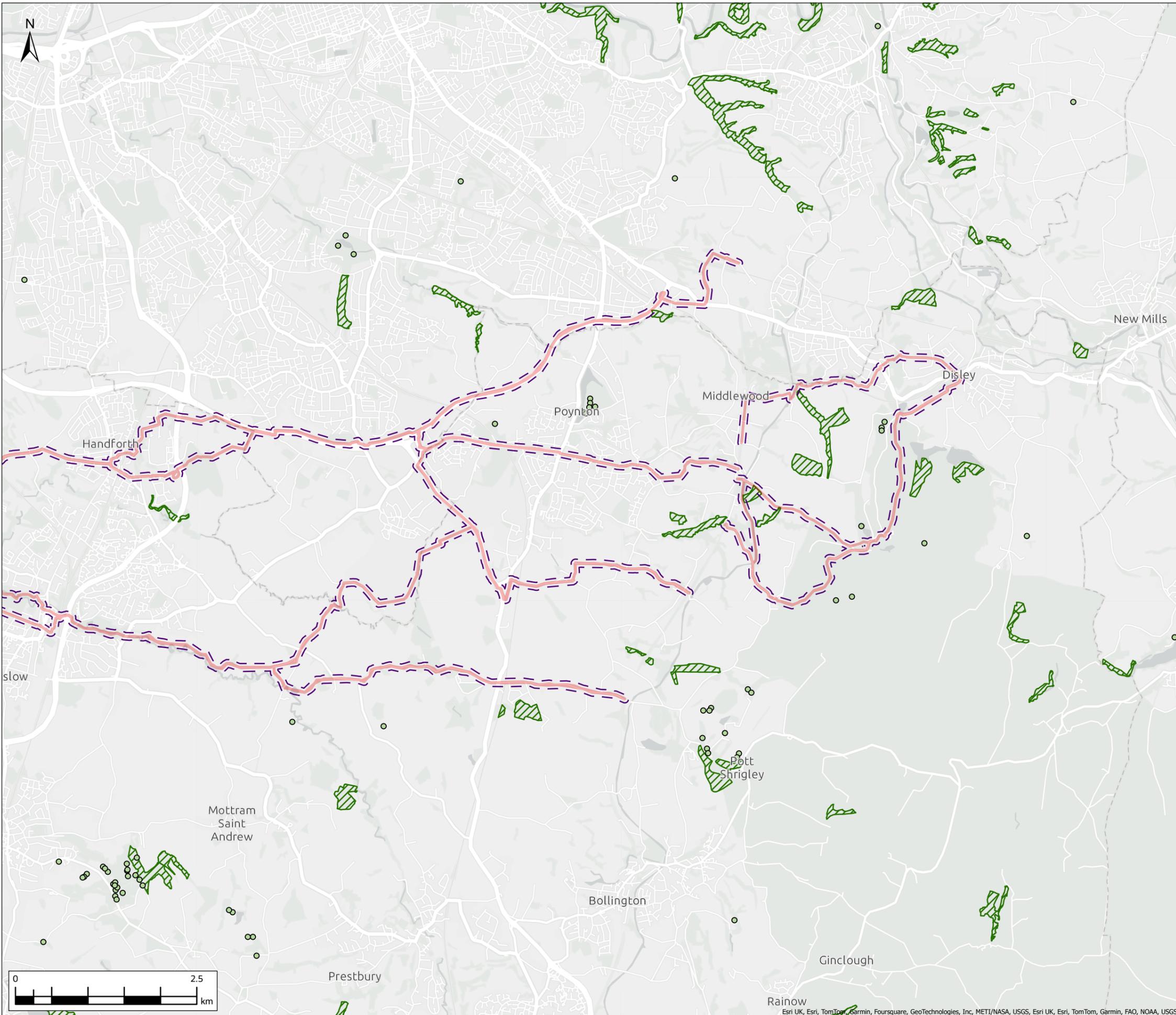
Drawing Title
 Ancient Woodland and Ancient trees within 50m of the corridors
 Sheet 1 of 2

Drawing No. N/A
 Drawing Status FINAL



FIGURE 3

\\gblon0vs01\GISProj\BRJ10676_BollinValleyWay\ArcGIS\002_EnvironmentalData\002_EnvironemntalData.aprx



- Legend**
- Initial Bollin Valley Way/Greater Bollin Trail routes
 - - - 50m Buffer
 - Ancient and Veteran Tree Inventory
 - ▨ Ancient Woodland, including Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland and Ancient Replanted Woodland



Source:
 © Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 10018341
 Contains public sector information licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0

0	3/13/2024	Initial Issue	KM	SK	ZC	LP
Rev.	Date	Purpose of revision	Drawn	Check'd	Rev'd	Appr'd
Scale @ A3		Scale: 1:51,000	DO NOT SCALE			
Jacobs No. BRJ10676						

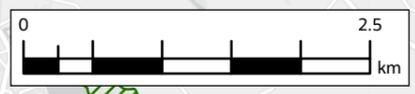
Jacobs



Client
 Project
 BRJ10676 Bollin Valley Way/ Greater Bollin Trail

Drawing Title
 Ancient Woodland and Ancient trees within 50m of the corridors
 Sheet 2 of 2

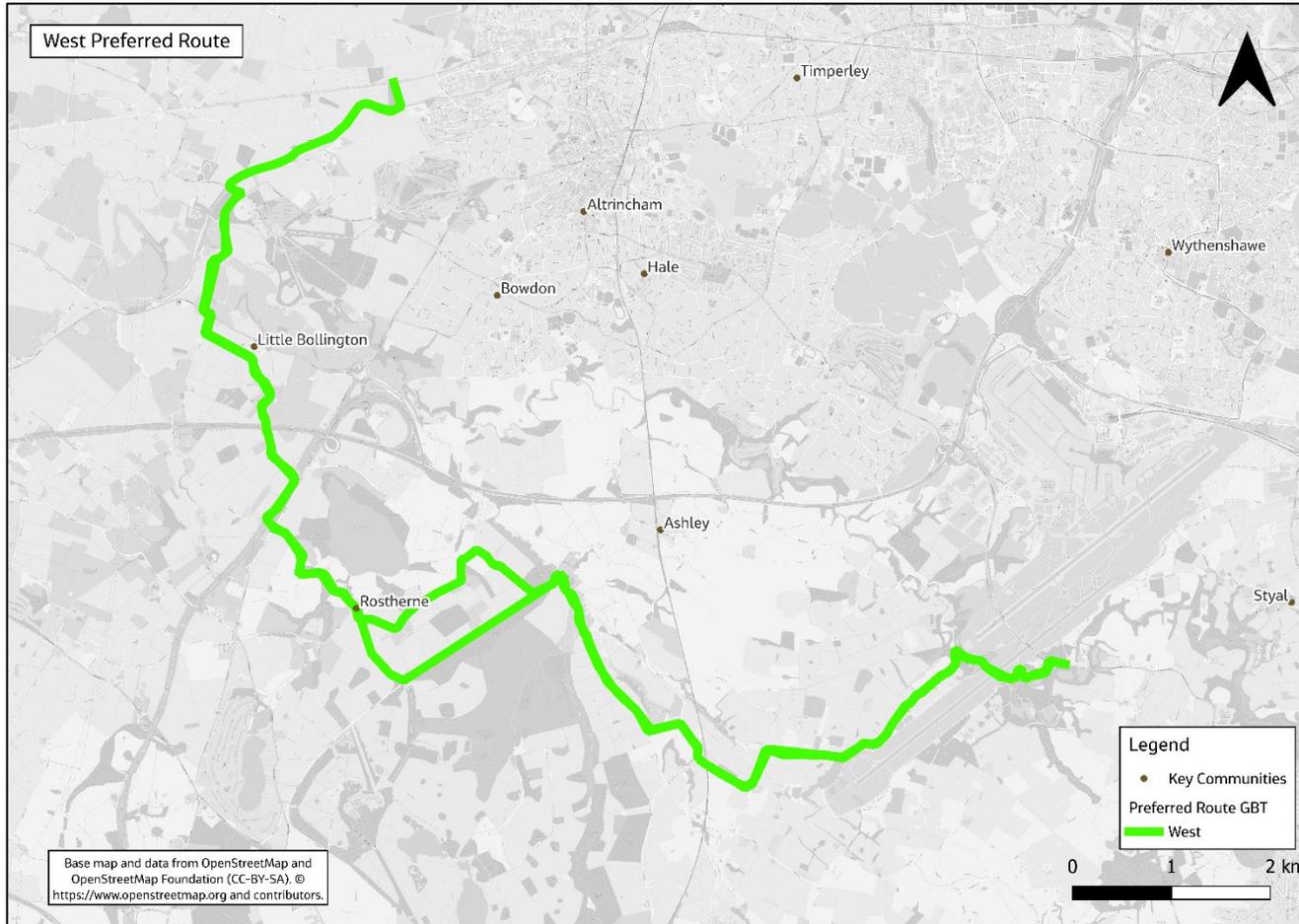
Drawing No. N/A
 Drawing Status FINAL

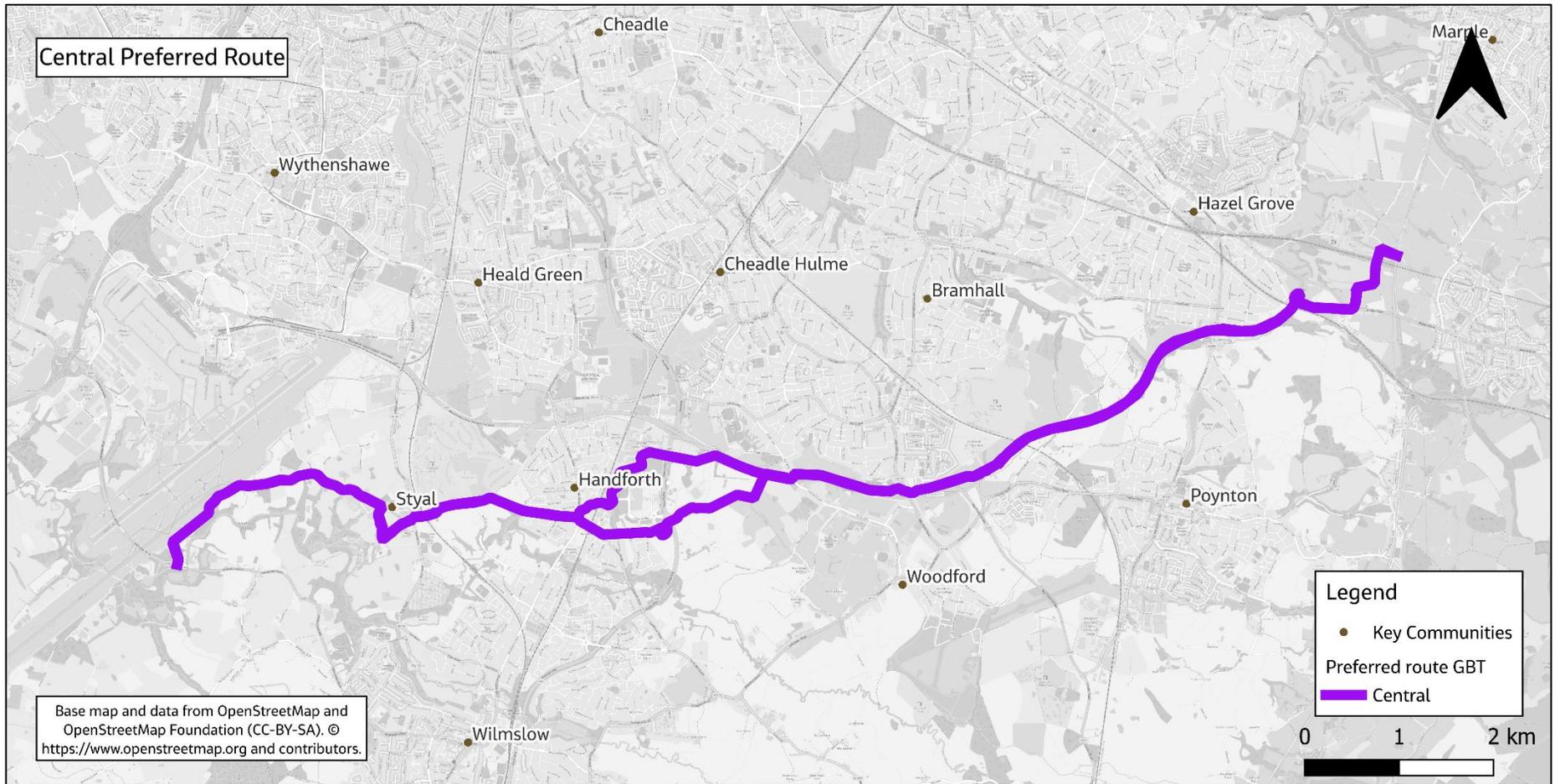


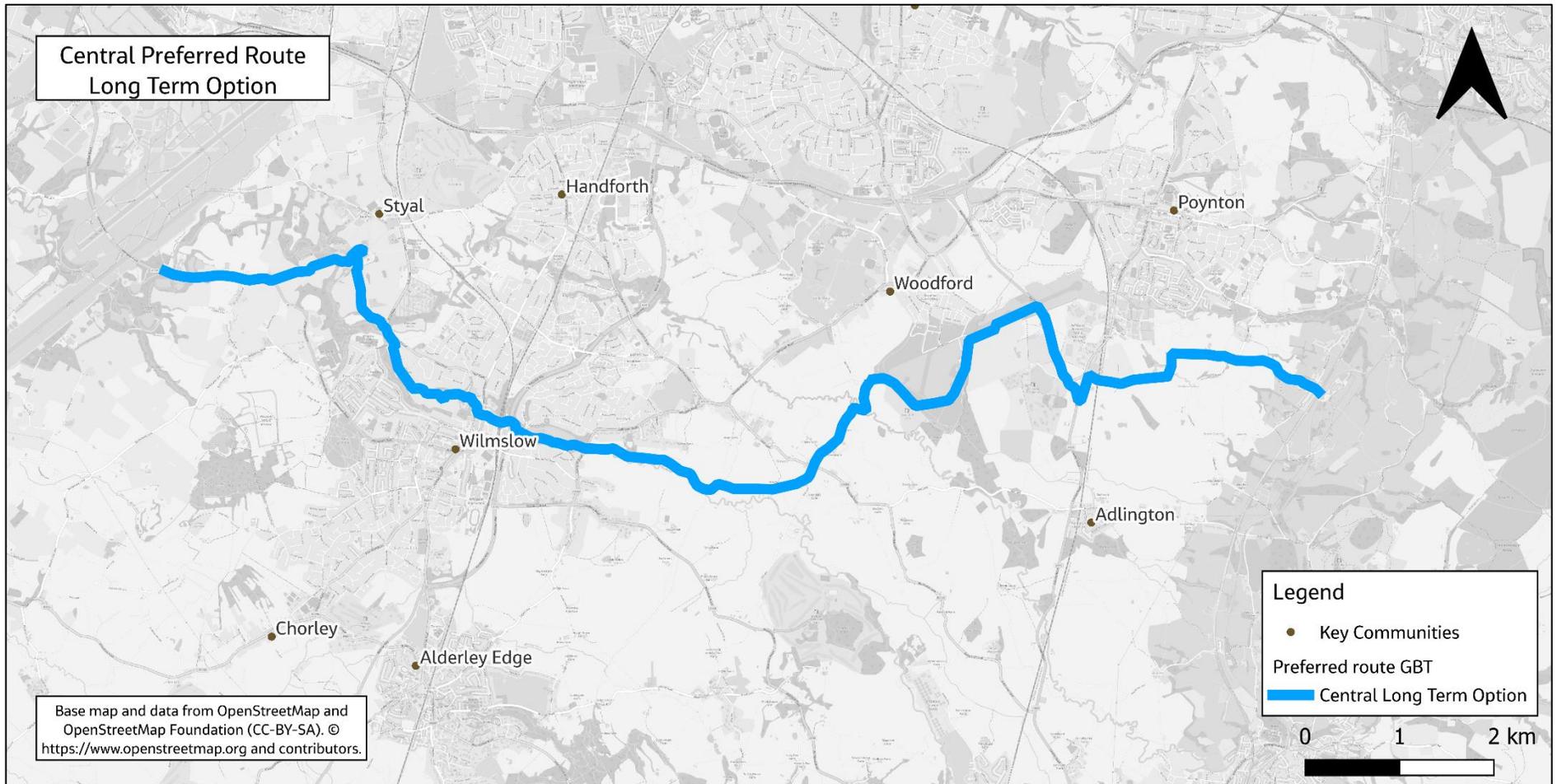
© Copyright 2024 Jacobs U.K. Limited. The concepts and information contained in this document are the property of Jacobs. Use or copying of this document in whole or in part without the written permission of Jacobs constitutes an infringement of copyright. Limitation: This drawing has been prepared on behalf of, and for the exclusive use of Jacobs' Client, and is subject to, and issued in accordance with, the provisions of the contract between Jacobs and the Client. Jacobs accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever for, or in respect of, any use of, or reliance upon, this drawing by any third party.

FIGURE 3

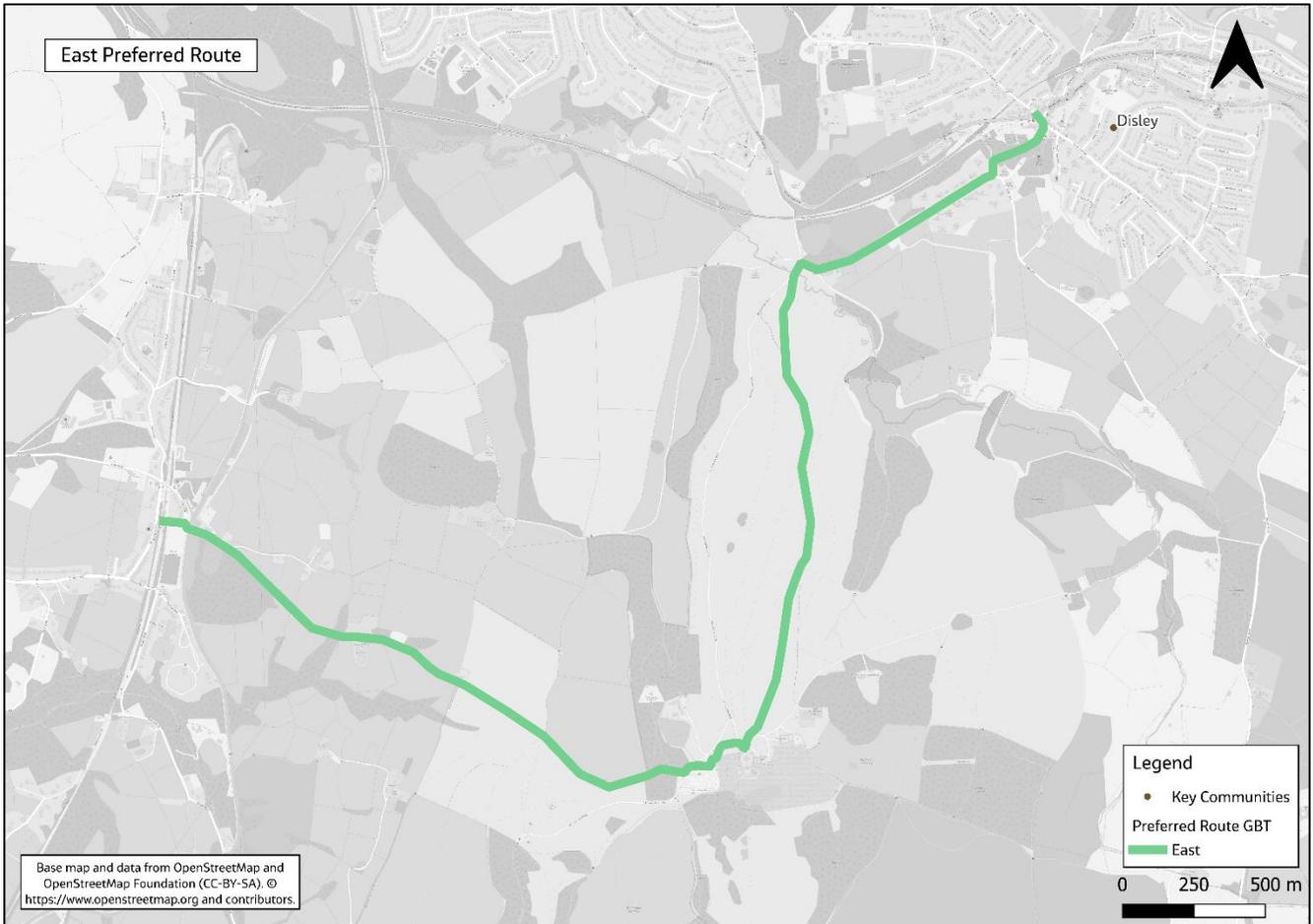
Appendix E. Route Sections







Greater Bollin Trail - Options Assessment Report



Greater Bollin Trail Stakeholder Engagement Summary

A number of briefings have been undertaken to gather feedback on the Greater Bollin Trail proposed route. The briefings were completed across November–December 2024 and January 2025 with TfGM, neighbouring Local Authorities (Warrington Borough Council, Stockport Council, Trafford Council, Manchester City Council), Sustrans, Cheshire East Council Members and Cheshire East Town and Parish Councils. Feedback from these meetings is set out below:

- Support in principle given by all Local Authorities and Sustrans – they are all keen to be kept in the loop regarding further design and progress. Written support given by Warrington Borough Council.
- Challenges raised around LTN 1/20 in rural areas and this would be the ideal standard when designs are investigated further.
- Challenges of linking into Middlewood Way from Stockport raised and would need further consideration.
- Warrington Council have a particular interest in the within their boundary including the Trans Pennine Trail and Bridgewater Way.
- TfGM are most interested in connecting into Greater Manchester and transport links. It was raised to consider the TfGM design guide and note that when progressed, sections through Greater Manchester will need to go to the TfGM Design Review Panel.
- Stockport Council have a long term aspiration for a connection between the A6 and Middlewood Way.
- Trafford Council are particularly interested in the Dunham Massey / Altrincham links. From their perspective, would like to create a route up to Bow Green (A56) and link the GBT to the canal towpath. Discussions around how this could interface with the proposed Tatton Services.
- Manchester Council have very high ambitions for active travel in South Manchester, they are interested in how GBT can connect into these routes particularly around Wythenshawe and Manchester Airport.
- It was raised by Cheshire East Council members that the A34 underpass as an issue due to lighting and maintenance, noting that solar panels could be an option to solve the lighting issue.
- Cheshire East Council members raised the Eastern section as a potential cycle route for children attending South Poynton School as it is a good alternative to cycling down the A6.
- Concerns were raised at a Town and Parish Council meeting about extra congestion that may be caused past Dunham Massey as a result of this trail – particularly around the narrow bridges across the River Bollin. It was also noted that the route into Bowdon would need a new river crossing.
- It was raised at a Town and Parish Council meeting that there is a desire for an active travel route between Wilmslow East and Macclesfield as this would be beneficial from a commuting standpoint.
- At a Town and Parish council meeting, it was raised that the Handforth Garden Village plans have changed therefore Cheshire East Council should ensure the GBT is included in these plans.
- Raised that Wilmslow Neighbourhood Plan has infrastructure projects included that may support the GBT. Suggestion to cross check the Neighbourhood Plan with where the GBT route follows.
- It was raised in general at a Town and Parish Council meeting that it is understood there are challenging aspects to the trail and the long distance.

Greater Bollin Trail Stakeholder Engagement Summary

- It was raised at a Town and Parish Council meeting that representatives would have liked to be engaged earlier in the optioneering process/technical work.
- Support given by Town and Parish Councils present at the two meetings.
- Support given by Cheshire East Councillors in attendance with the strategy/plan for the trail.
- One major landowner fully supportive of the trail.

With a large, dynamic population and economy, this area would benefit from a multipurpose route for leisure and commuter use. This would create a well-connected place via walking, wheeling and cycling routes, enhancing green transport links that are affordable. This would provide enhancements for journey quality for those travelling in the area.

Improves the attractiveness of the region for inward investment and for businesses to prosper, becoming more accessible places to work. Attracting new visitors to National Trust properties and other attractions will increase spend in the local economy and therefore new business opportunities could arise e.g. cycle hire, cafes. There is an opportunity to link into growth areas, such as Handforth Garden Village and other development sites and major employers across the area.

Linking tourism assets, for example the Trans Pennine Trail, and the Manchester Airport runway viewing area, the route would become a tourism asset in its own right. This would not only attract new visitors, but support and deliver benefits to local communities.

Walking, wheeling and cycling have wellbeing benefits in addition to overall enhanced health.

The route can support localised decongestion and have associated environmental benefits such as improved air quality, and the opportunity for environmental resilience e.g. improved flood defences.

Accessibility to rural areas, providing sustainable connectivity through local landscapes and natural capital assets, supporting biodiversity, and connecting people with nature, including green and blue areas.



LEGEND

	Proposed Greater Bollin Trail Routes		Trans Pennine Trail		Middlewood Way		Railway		Major Road
	A523 – Roy Chadwick Way Route		Bridgewater Way		Manchester Rd Wilmslow		Motorway		Local Authority Boundary
							Potential Future Links		National Trust Site
							Railway Station		

This page is intentionally left blank

Highway and Transport Committee

3rd April 2025

**Report Title: Wildlife & Countryside
Act 1981 – Part III, Section 53.**

**Application No CN-7-24: Application to
delete Public Footpath 19 in the Parish
of Audlem**

Report of: Philip Cresswell, Executive Director of Place

Report Reference No: HTC /46/24-25

Ward Affected: Audlem

For Decision or Scrutiny: Decision

Purpose of Report

- 1 The report outlines the investigation of an application to amend the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way by deleting Public Footpath 19 Audlem and shown on Plan WCA/40 between points 1 and 6 (“The Plan”). This includes a discussion of the consultations carried out in respect of the claim, the historical evidence, witness evidence and the legal tests for a Definitive Map Modification Order to be made. The report makes a recommendation based on this information for quasi-judicial decision by members as to whether an order should be made to delete a footpath.
- 2 The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Corporate Plan aim of “A thriving and sustainable place”, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Executive Summary

- 3 The report considers the evidence submitted and researched in the application to amend the Definitive Map and Statement by deleting Public Footpath 19 in the parish of Audlem. This includes a discussion of the consultations carried out in respect of the claim, the historical evidence, witness evidence and the legal tests for a Definitive Map Modification Order to be made. The report makes a recommendation based on that information, for quasi-judicial decision by Members as to whether an Order should be made to delete a public footpath.
- 4 The evidence consists of the application from the landowner, supporting statements from two neighbours and documentary evidence in the form of letters, maps and photos sent to the Council.
- 5 Various historical documents have been viewed including maps such as County Maps and Ordnance Survey maps, Tithe Map and Finance Act plans and valuation book.
- 6 Section 53(2)(b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 requires that the Council shall keep the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review and make such modifications to the map and statement as appear requisite. One such event, section 53(3)(c)(iii) is where the discovery by the Authority of evidence shows that there is no public right of way over land shown in the map and statement as a highway of any description. Section 56 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 establishes that the Definitive Map and Statement are conclusive evidence as to the particulars contained therein. The report concludes whether on the balance of probabilities the Public Footpath was registered on the Definitive Map and Statement in error.
- 7 The evidence that has been submitted with this application and that considered during the subsequent consultation and investigation is considered insufficient in showing that the details contained in the Definitive Map and Statement should be modified.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Highways & Transport Committee is recommended to:

1. Decide that a Modification Order **not** be made under Section 53(3)(c)(iii) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to modify the Definitive Map and Statement to delete Footpath 19 as shown on Plan No. WCA/40 at Appendix 1.
2. The application be refused on the grounds that there is insufficient evidence to overturn the legal presumption that the Definitive Map and Statement are correct.

3. Note that in the event of objections being received, Cheshire East Borough Council be responsible for the conduct of any hearing or Public Inquiry.

Background

- 8 The application was submitted by Mr Lawrence, owner and occupier of Meadows Farm, Audlem on the 20th October 2005. The application consisted of an application form (Form D), maps showing the area in contention; Interim Memorandum Divisional Engineer East Map dated 27th April 1984, Public Rights of Way Unit map dated October 1996, map supplied by the Public Rights of Way Officer in August 2000, evidence of use forms (Form F) signed by witnesses and maps or sketch plans from each witness. The application was submitted by Mr Lawrence; however, due to his unavailability further supporting evidence was provided by the family.

Description of the application route

- 9 Commencing from Point 1 on the Plan at the junction with Footpath 31 the path leads into the field through a metal kissing gate, with a dilapidated old timber field gate to the side. There is an official signpost from the roadside with additional way marker discs on it. There are a number of home-made signs on the kissing gate requesting that walkers keep dogs on leads to avoid disturbing ground nesting birds and requesting that people “pick up” after their dog. At Point 2 the path continues past a small “hollow” and the ground becomes a little wet underfoot. The path proceeds in a south easterly direction towards the centre of the field, is well trodden and easy to follow. At Point 3 just off the alignment of the Footpath there is a clear “hollow” in the ground, which is difficult to see on the photograph in appendix 2 but quite clear on site. At Point 4 it passes through a gap in the hedge line; there is a slight depression in the ground indicative of a stream or open drain, and it is clear the ground can be wet here at times. There are signs of an old fence and timber structure in the undergrowth with an official Cheshire East Council way marker on it. Heading towards Point 5 the path follows the hedge line in a south easterly direction along a well-trodden route, which is easily followed. It continues along the hedge line until it reaches a metal kissing gate at Point 6 which is the junction with Bridleway 31. Alongside the kissing gate is an older timber field-gate that has fallen into disrepair.

Photographs

- 10 Photographs of the Footpath can be seen at Appendix 2

Main Issues

- 11 Section 53(2)(b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 requires that the Council shall keep the Definitive Map and statement under continuous review and make such modifications to the Map and Statement as appear requisite in consequence of the occurrence of certain events:-
- 12 One such event, section 53(3)(c)(iii) is where:

“(c) the discovery by the authority of evidence which (when considered with all other relevant evidence available to them) shows:-

(iii) that there is no public right of way over land shown in the map and statement as a highway of any description, or any other particulars contained in the map and statement require modification.
- 13 There has to be a discovery of evidence and this evidence can consist of documentary/historical evidence or witness evidence or a mixture of both. All the evidence must be evaluated and weighed, and a conclusion reached whether, the evidence outweighs the conclusivity of the Definitive Map and Statement. Any other issues, such as safety, security, suitability, desirability or the effects on property or the environment, are not relevant to the decision.
- 14 The Planning Inspectorate’s Consistency Guidelines (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Definitive Map Orders) indicates that a proof of a negative is seldom easy, and the more time that elapses, the more difficult will be the task of adducing the positive evidence that is necessary to establish that a right of way that has been marked on a Definitive Map has been marked there by mistake.”
- 15 The case of *Trevelyan v Secretary of State For Environment, Transport & Regions* [2001] EWCA Civ 266 is of particular relevance in applications to delete Public Rights of Way. Lord Phillips stated at paragraph 38 that:

“Where the Secretary of State or an inspector appointed by him has to consider whether a right of way that is marked on a Definitive Map in fact exists, he must start with an initial presumption that it does. If there were no evidence which made it reasonably arguable that such a right of way existed, it should not have been marked on the map. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, it should be assumed that the proper procedures were followed and thus that such evidence existed. At the end of the day, when all the evidence has been considered, the standard of proof required to justify a finding that no right of way exists is no more than the balance of probabilities. But evidence of some substance must be put in the balance, if it is to outweigh the initial presumption that the right of way exists. Proof of a negative is seldom easy, and the more time that elapses, the more difficult will be the task of adducing the positive

evidence that is necessary to establish that a right of way that has been marked on a Definitive Map has been marked there by mistake.”

The investigation

- 16 An investigation of the available evidence has been undertaken. The documentary evidence that has been examined is referred to below and a list of all the evidence taken into consideration can be found in Appendix 3.

County Maps 18th/19th Century

- 17 These are small scale maps made by commercial map-makers, some of which are known to have been produced from original surveys and others are believed to be copies of earlier maps. All were essentially topographic maps portraying what the surveyors saw on the ground. They included features of interest, including roads and tracks. It is doubtful whether mapmakers checked the status of routes or had the same sense of status of routes that exist today. There are known errors on many map-makers' work and private estate roads and cul-de-sac paths are sometimes depicted as 'cross-roads'. The maps do not provide conclusive evidence of public status, although they may provide supporting evidence of the existence of a route.
- 18 The Footpath which is subject to the application is not shown on the P.P. Burdett 1777 map nor the Swire and Hutching's map of 1829 nor A Bryant's Map of 1831.

Tithe Map

- 19 Tithe Awards were prepared under the Tithe Commutation Act 1836, which commuted the payment of a tax (tithe) in kind, to a monetary payment. The purpose of the Award was to record productive land on which a tax could be levied. The Tithe Map and Award were independently produced by parishes and the quality of the maps is variable. The 1836 Act relieved the Tithe Commissioners of the need to certify all maps.
- 20 It was not the purpose of the Awards to record public highways. Although depiction of both private occupation and public roads may provide good supporting evidence of the existence of a route, especially since they were implemented as part of a statutory process. Colouring of a track may or may not be significant in determining status. In the absence of a key, explanation or other corroborative evidence the colouring cannot be deemed to be conclusive of anything.
- 21 The Tithe Commutation Act 1836 (as amended by the Tithe Act Amendment Act, 1837) established two classes of tithe map. First class

maps had the Commissioners' seal attached, showing them to be reliable as a true record of matters relating to the purposes for which the map was designed. However, second class maps, which failed in some, often minor, way to meet the stringent test for first class status, are not necessarily inferior from a cartographic point of view. Both first and second class maps have been accepted by the courts as evidence.

- 22 The Tithe map for the Township of Audlem produced c.1842 is a second class map. The Footpath is not shown on the map. The Footpath as registered on the Definitive Map appears to run through plots number 437 (pasture), 434 (arable), 418 (pasture), 422 (meadow) and possibly 435 (mill fields). All the plots apart from plot 435 were all registered to the same owner.

Ordnance Survey Records (OS)

- 23 OS mapping was originally for military purposes to record all roads and tracks that could be used in times of war; this included both public and private routes. These maps are good evidence of the physical existence of routes, but not necessarily of status. Since 1889 the Ordnance Survey has included a disclaimer on all of its maps to the effect that the depiction of a road is not evidence of the existence of a right of way. It is argued that this disclaimer was solely to avoid potential litigation. Recent research into the instructions given to the field surveyors and the development of the OS shows they appear to have tried to depict all routes, paths and ways that were physical features and if observed to be used by the public. However, there is no documentation to show the OS went through a statutory process of checking with the local authorities to establish the status of a way or path. Research by Yolande Hodson indicates there was tension in the modern era within the OS to agree what would be shown on the maps, who were their audience and how to depict the condition and status and at the published scales, what should be omitted. The maps are good evidence of the existence of a way or path and can support any other evidence claiming public rights of way.

- 24 O.S. 1st Edition County Series 6" to 1 mile 1882

A double pecked line is shown following more or less along public Footpath 19 as recorded on the Definitive Map. Some field boundaries have changed since this map was produced. On the map, comparative with the path between Point 1 and point 2 on The Plan there is a small pond just to the south the path; the path is shown skirting its edge.

- 25 O.S 2nd Edition 25" to 1 mile 1898

There are no physical indications of Footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the Footpath 19

commences, however it runs over to the nearby farm (currently known as "Meadows Farm").

- 26 O.S. 2nd Edition County Series 6" to 1 mile 1899

There are no physical indications of Footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the Footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm ("Meadows Farm").

- 27 O.S. 2nd Edition 6" to 1 mile 1903

There are no physical indications of Footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the Footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm ("Meadows Farm")

- 28 OS 2nd Edition County Series 6" to 1 mile 1912

There are no physical indications of Footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the Footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm ("Meadows Farm"). The letters FP are shown by the double pecked lines.

- 29 OS 2 ½" to 1 mile 1963

There are no physical indications of Footpath 19 on this map.

Finance Act 1910

- 30 The Finance Act of 1910 involved a national survey of land by the Inland Revenue so that an incremental value duty could be levied when ownership was transferred. Land was valued for each owner/occupier and this land was given a hereditament number. It is thought that exclusion of highways on the maps came under S35(1) of the Act not to charge on land or an interest in land held by a rating authority.

- 31 Landowners could claim tax relief where a highway crossed their land. Although the existence of a public right of way may be admitted it is not usually described or a route shown on the plan. This Act was repealed in 1920.

- 32 Two sets of plans were produced: the working plans for the original valuation and the record plans once the valuation was complete. Two sets of books were produced to accompany the maps; the field books, which record what the surveyor found at each property and the so-called 'Domesday Book', which was the complete register of properties and valuations.

- 33 Hereditament number 205 includes all fields through which the entire length of public Footpath 19 runs, passing through OS field numbers 464, 478 and 481.
- 34 The valuation book lists “1 Footpath” under fixed charges, easements, common rights and restrictions. It identifies a deduction of £33.00 for public rights way or user. There is no consistent approach to value of deduction in relation to the length of path however it is highly likely that the public right of way being referred to is Footpath 19 as no other public right of way exists or is otherwise recorded in the hereditament number for which Meadows Farm is located. No other public rights of way recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement exist within hereditament 205.

Pre Definitive Map records

- 35 The Public Rights of Way team hold records that pre-existed the Definitive Map process.
- 36 The “Nantwich Footpath map” (circa 1930) identifies Footpaths which existed in the Rural District of Nantwich and are categorised as: Footpaths that simply exist and which no repair appear to have been carried out shown coloured red. Footpaths previously repaired by the Rural District Council shown coloured blue. Footpaths previously repaired by the Parish Councils shown coloured green. Each Footpath is numbered to correspond with schedule on file: G.M. 180. Footpath 19 is shown coloured red and numbered as path number 308 indicating that it was a Footpath that existed but no repairs had been undertaken.

Definitive map process – National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

- 37 The Definitive Map and statement is based on surveys and plans produced in the early 1950’s by each parish in Cheshire, of all the ways they considered to be public at that time. The surveys were used as the basis for the draft Definitive Map.

Audlem Parish Survey Schedule and Map (1951)

- 38 On page 1 of the parish schedule the Footpath is numbered as 19 and described as commencing at Monks Lane opposite what appears to say Mill Lane Farm. There are hand drawn arrows on the page that indicate that the commencement point and termination point of the path should be read the other way around from how it is written on the page.
- 39 The length shows 100yds struck out and replaced by 555yds. The lettering (stile)S.1, F.2, (Field gate) FG.3 (Field Gate) and Gap 4 are included in the general description; these correspond to those included

in the draft Definitive Map. The general description identifies that S.1 is now part of the hedge/fencing and “no” use as a stile. The path is described as across meadowland and not defined.

- 40 On page 2, under details of any old maps, diversion orders, dedication agreements, parish minutes etc there is a faint text stating “see file 5/680”, which is also the reference number on the Audlem Parish Survey extract. There is other text which is difficult to decipher but could be read as “G.M 1150 GEN. Closed under Defence Regs. Order” followed by a word that is unclear followed by the year 1946. Under the section relating to whether any part of the path has been disputed this is left blank. The names of those carrying out the survey have been included and is dated Sept 1951.
- 41 The parish survey makes reference to the path being closed under the “Defence Regs”. It is known that some public rights of way throughout the country would have been closed during the War periods, for various reasons including food production/agricultural purposes and that these were on a temporary basis, revoked at the end of the war. It is understood that County executive committees would have had a role in these but that they were largely undocumented.
- 42 For the closures to take permanent effect it would have required further orders as indicated by the Planning Inspectorate’s Consistency Guidelines (Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Definitive Map Orders), which confirms that any temporary closures of rights of way made under emergency powers during the First or Second World Wars would have ceased to have effect on 28 June 1920 or 31 December 1958 as appropriate. There is no evidence that any subsequent order was made in this instance.
- 43 The position regarding the Defence Regulations is outlined in a letter from Cheshire East to the applicant on the 26th June 1995.
- 44 On the parish survey map Footpath 19 is shown broadly following the alignment on the Definitive Map. It is a red broken line commencing from the unclassified road (UC/5/68) and leading in a generally south easterly direction. File 5/680 is written on the map pointing to Footpath 19. Just due west of Meadows Farm an unbroken red line has been drawn running roughly east-west crossing Footpath 19 and ending at Meadows Farm. Footpath 19 continues south to meet Mill Lane.

Draft Definitive Map (Published 6th February 1956)

- 45 Footpath 19 is shown commencing at a stile (S.1) to the west of Meadows Farm, at the unclassified road (UC/5/68). It is shown passing through a field boundary, referenced as F.2 on the map. It heads south for a short

distance through what appears to be an open field before reaching a field gate (FG.3) at Mill Lane. The path is shown continuing along and what will eventually be registered as path number 30 (Mill Lane) before arriving at a point referenced as Gap.4 on a bend in the unclassified road (UC/5/68). Paths number 30 and 31 are not shown on the map.

Provisional Definitive Map (Published 2nd December 1969)

- 46 Footpath 19 is shown commencing to the west of Meadows Farm, at the junction with Footpath 31 at the unclassified road (UC/5/68). It heads through what appears to be an open field before heading in a more southerly direction to meet Bridleway 30 at Mill Lane.

Definitive Map (Published 21st December 1973)

- 47 Footpath 19 is shown commencing to the west of Meadows Farm, at the junction with Footpath 31 at the unclassified road (UC/5/68). It heads through what appears to be an open field before heading in a more southerly direction to meet Bridleway 30 at Mill Lane.

Aerial Images

- 48 A number of aerial images were available for the location spanning the period from the 1940's through to 2024

- 49 Black and white image 1940's

The fields through which the Footpath runs are largely over exposed and its impossible to see if there are any walked routes shown on the ground along Footpath 19. There is a circular shadow in the field just due east of where it meets the unclassified road (UC/5/68); it is unclear what this is but it looks most like a mark or stain on the photo.

- 50 Black and white image (colour) 1970's

The field layout is very similar to the 1940's map with the exception of the removal of some of the smaller enclosures. The picture quality is greater than for the 1940's image. It is not possible make out any walked alignment along the route of Footpath 19.

- 51 Aerial image (colour) 1980's

The field layout has changed very little. There is a large grey/brown "scar" in the field just beneath where Footpath 19 runs due west of Meadows Farm; it is unclear what this but is just south of the alignment of the Footpath. It is not possible make out any walked alignment along the route of Footpath 19.

52 Aerial image (colour) 2024

The field layout is largely unchanged. There is no indication of a walked line in the field immediately off Bridleway 30 (Mill Lane) however where it leads north westerly in the adjoining field there is a very distinct line along route of Footpath 19.

Applicants case

53 There is one owner who is also the applicant and they included evidence from two other individuals in their application to corroborate that the path had not been used historically. The application was submitted by Mr Lawrence; however due to his unavailability, further supporting evidence was provided by the family. A signed statement identifies a number of issues that they believe supports their case that Footpath 19 has been incorrectly registered.

54 The Footpath was not identified in the deeds to the property when it was purchased in 1953 and as such that they did not know that a public right way existed until 1995, when they were contacted by Cheshire East Council. They cite that as an operational dairy farm they would have undoubtedly seen people using the Footpath and that any gates either end of the path would have been for agricultural purposes rather than for public access.

55 They are of the belief that there is no historical evidence which would corroborate the need for a Public Footpath at this location and reference how sparsely populated Little Heath would have been. They are of the view that the logical way to have travelled to the nearby mill would have been via Mill Lane (Bridleway 30) and that any rights of access would have been a private right for the miller who previously lived at Meadows Farm. They refer to the previous entrance to Meadows Farm coinciding with where Footpath 19 leave Monks Lane, prior to the new entrance being installed at a later date.

56 They submit a number of aerial images including one from 1932 which indicates a hedge running between Monks Lane and the "front field", with a second parallel internal field hedge, which they argue would make pedestrian access impassable. They are keen to stress that the post 2005 aerial images which show a well-trodden route along the alignment of Footpath 19 are in contrast to the older aerial images dated 1932, 1971-73, 1983 and 1999-2003 which do not show any such indication of use.

57 Seven maps were also submitted as part of the application, titled maps A, B, C, D, E and enclosures 211, 212 and 213; map A appears to replicate the map in enclosure 211.

- 58 Map A is also included as part of enclosure 211, which accompanies a memorandum to the Divisional Engineer on the 27th April 1984 with a request to deliver two stiles for installation on a nearby path. Footpath 19 is not shown on this map, however the purpose of the map is to depict the location of the Footpath where the stiles are required rather than to show any other public rights of way.
- 59 Map B relates to Road Used as Public Path (RUPP) 30 Audlem dated October 1996. Footpath 19 is not shown on this map, however the purpose of the map is to depict the location of RUPP 30 and land owned alongside the RUPP, rather than to show any other public rights of way.
- 60 Map C is a copy the OS map, 6" to 1-mile 1912 Edition Cheshire Sheet LXVI N.W. There are no physical indications of Footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the Footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm (what is modern day Meadows Farm). The letters FP are shown by the double pecked lines. OS maps are a good indication of the physical existence of a route on the ground however they were not created to record public rights of way and the inclusion or otherwise of a route is not conclusive evidence of the existence or lack of existence of public rights of way.
- 61 Map D is an extract of an OS map, which is not titled, but is likely to be the 2nd Edition 25" to 1 mile Cheshire LXVI.2 map 1898. The map is enlarged to show Meadows Farm and there are no physical indications of Footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the Footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to Meadows Farm. OS maps are a good indication of the physical existence of a route on the ground however they were not created to record public rights of way and the inclusion or otherwise of a route is not conclusive evidence of the existence or lack of existence of public rights of way.
- 62 Map E appears to be a reproduction of the 1" to 1 mile OS map which, is not titled; however in the submission statement as part of the application it is referenced as Combermere Estates (Sales particulars 1917) showing Footpath 17 and 18 but not Footpath 19. The scale means it is difficult to decipher the detail, but it does not appear to show any route in the vicinity of Footpath 19. As with Map C and D above, OS maps are a good indication of the physical existence of a route on the ground however they were not created to record public rights of way and the inclusion or otherwise of a route is not conclusive evidence of the existence or lack of existence of public rights of way.
- 63 Enclosure 212 is a map relating to the reclassification of Road Used as Public Path (RUPP) 30 under the Definitive Map and Statement for the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich (Reclassification of Roads Used as

Public Paths) Order 1996. Footpath 19 is not shown on this map; however the purpose of the map is to depict the location of RUPP 30, which is subject to the order being made rather than to show any other public rights of way.

- 64 Enclosure 213 is a map which was shared by Cheshire East Council with the applicant is the appears to be an extract of a working copy of the Definitive Map. It appears to depict Footpath 19 in the location where it is currently registered on the Definitive Map.

Witnesses evidence

- 65 There were two witness statements included in the application; one of whom is now deceased and the other unavailable to provide further detail.
- 66 One witness who lives near where Footpath 19 leaves Monks Lane indicated that in 18 years of living at the property, he had not seen anyone using the Footpath. The other witness indicated that a section of hedge was removed, and a gate installed near where Footpath 19 leaves Monks Lane. There is no indication of how long this witness knew the path or the area.

Consultation and Engagement

- 67 Consultation documentation was sent on 7th October 2024 to interested parties including the owners/occupier, Audlem Ward Member, the Audlem Parish Council and local user groups. Audlem Parish Council were unable to issue a formal response.
- 68 The Peak & Northern Footpath Society confirmed that they had no evidence with regards to the footpath. South Cheshire Ramblers responded indicating that the path looked well used and does not appear to affect the privacy of the farmhouse, which is shielded by trees and a hedge. The Open Spaces Society provided no evidence but were confident that the application was without merit and that publicly available data contradicts the Applicant's claims.
- 69 User evidence forms indicating use of the public Footpath was submitted by five individuals, with earliest use dating back to 1984. This use is not relevant in concluding this case as it post-dates the registration of the Footpath on the Definitive Map.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 70 Under Section 53 of the 1981 Act, the Council has a duty as the Surveying Authority to keep the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review. Section 53 (c) allows for an authority to act on the “discovery of evidence” that suggests that the Definitive Map and Statement needs to

be amended. The authority must investigate and determine that evidence and decide on the outcome whether to make a DMMO or not.

- 71 The Finance Act map and valuation books are of particular relevance in this instance in that they identify a deduction for a public right of way, thus reinforcing the existence of a public right of way. There is no consistent approach to value of deduction in relation to the length of path however it is highly likely that the public right of way being referred to is Footpath 19 as no other public right of way exists or is otherwise recorded in the hereditament number for which meadows Farm is located.
- 72 The route of Footpath 19 is depicted in its entirety on the OS map 1st Edition County Series 6" to 1 mile 1882, which is an indication that there was a physical route visible on the ground at the time of survey. The later OS maps do not depict Footpath 19 along its current alignment, rather showing a route running towards Meadows Farm. OS maps were originally prepared for defence purposes and with the intention of providing a definitive or conclusive depiction of public rights of way. OS maps are a good indication of the physical existence of a route on the ground however they are not conclusive evidence of the existence or location of public rights of way. Similarly, the lack of a route depicted on the OS maps or that a route is shown in a different location is not conclusive of there being an error in the Definitive Map and Statement
- 73 The Nantwich Footpath Map c1930 includes Footpath 19 along its alignment as shown in the Definitive Map and Statement. This is considered good supporting evidence of the existence and location of Footpath 19 as it was a document produced and used by the Cheshire County Council as a record of the existence of public Footpaths and their maintenance.
- 74 With regards to the landowners statement, there is no doubt that it is an honestly held belief that the path has been registered in error, however the evidence submitted holds insufficient weight to prove that public Footpath 19 should be deleted. There are clearly some practical issues related to management of the farm that caused difficulty when it was fully operational; however, these issues of convenience and safety cannot be considered as part of the evidence to delete the path.
- 75 The applicant submitted seven maps with their application as supporting evidence; maps A, B, C, D, E and enclosures 212 and 213. Maps C, D and E are various editions and scales of OS maps and as identified above, the lack of a route depicted on these maps or that a route is shown in a different location is not conclusive of there being an error in the Definitive Map and Statement.

- 76 It is considered that the evidence that has been submitted with the application and during the subsequent consultation is insufficient in showing that the details Definitive Map and Statement needs modifying by deleting Public Footpath 19.
- 77 The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Green aim of the Corporate Plan, the “thriving and sustainable place” priority, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Other Options Considered

- 78 If the authority was to do nothing it would not comply with Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which requires the Council to keep the Definitive Map and statement under continuous review and make such modifications to the Map and Statement as required.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 79 The legal implications in relation to highways law are set out in the Legal matters section of this report (paragraph 11-15).
- 80 The Human Rights Act is also of relevance. Whilst article 1 to the first protocol (peaceful enjoyment of property) and article 8 (right to respect for family, private life and home) are engaged, it is important to note that these rights are qualified, not absolute, which means that they can be interfered with in so far as such interference is in accordance with domestic law and is necessary in a democratic society for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. It is considered that any interference occasioned by the making of a Modification Order is both in accordance with domestic law (the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) and is in the public interest as it is necessary in a democratic society for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others, namely the public who wish to use the way. Should Members resolve that a Modification Order be made in accordance with highways legislation, this is merely the start of the legal process. Once a Modification Order is made, it must be publicised, and any person will have an opportunity to formally object to it. Should objections be received, the Modification Order would have to be referred to the Secretary of State who may hold a Public Inquiry before deciding upon whether or not to confirm the Modification Order.
- 81 Please note that the Council will not disclose the user evidence forms that form part of the background documentation at this stage in the process. The Council considers that the information provided within the user evidence documentation is exempt information under s1&2 Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, as amended.

82 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, there is no such statutory right prior to an Order having been made - persons affected are entitled to the information in the event that an Order is made following the Committee decision.

83 Once an Order is made it may be the subject of objections. If objections are not withdrawn, this removes the power of the Local Authority to confirm the Order itself and may lead to a hearing or Public Inquiry. It follows that the Committee decision may be confirmed or not confirmed. This process may involve additional legal support and resources.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

84 If objections to an Order lead to a subsequent hearing/inquiry, the Council would be responsible for any costs involved in the preparation and conducting of such. The maintenance of the Public Right of Way would continue to be the responsibility of the landowner and Council in line with legislation. The associated costs would be borne within existing Public Rights of Way revenue and capital budgets.

85 If objections to an Order lead to a subsequent hearing/inquiry, the Council would be responsible for any costs involved in the preparation and conducting of such. The maintenance of the Public Right of Way, if added to the Definitive Map and statement, would fall to the landowner and Council in line with legislation. The associated costs would be borne within existing Public Rights of Way revenue and capital budgets.

86 There are no financial implications.

Policy

87 The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Vision of the Corporate Plan of a greener Cheshire East, with the aim of “a thriving and sustainable place”, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Vision - An open, fairer, greener Cheshire East

Aim - A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Reduce impact on the environment
- A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
- Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all
- Be a carbon neutral council by 2027

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

88 An assessment in relation to the Equality Act 2010 has been carried out by the Public Rights of Way Network Management and Enforcement Officer for the area and it is considered that the proposed diversion would be no less convenient to use than the current one.

The legal tests under section 53 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 do not include an assessment of the effects under the Equality Act 2010.

Human Resources

(a) There are no direct implications for Human Resources.

Risk Management

(b) There are no direct implications for risk management.

Rural Communities

(c) There are no direct implications for Rural Communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

(d) There are no direct implications for Children and Young People

Public Health

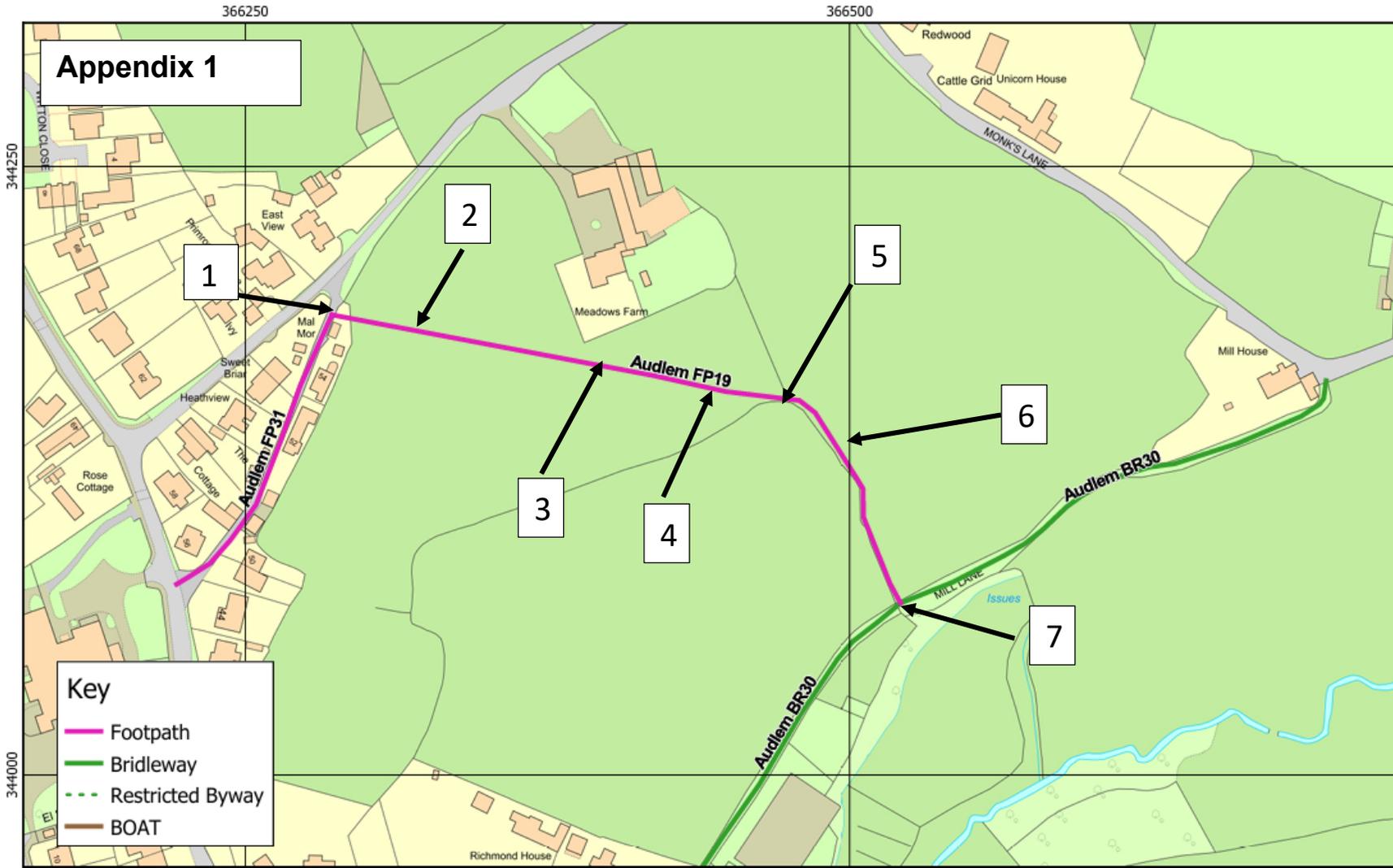
(e) The recommendations are anticipated to offer a positive overall impact on the health and wellbeing of Cheshire East residents.

Climate Change

(f) The recommendations will help the Council to reduce its carbon footprint and achieve environmental sustainability by reducing energy consumption and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Adele Mayer adele.mayer@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 Report Plan Appendix 2 Images Appendix 3 Reference List

Background Papers:	The background papers and files relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer.
--------------------	---



Appendix 1

Key

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- - - Restricted Byway
- BOAT

N
1:2000

WILDLIFE AND COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1981
DEFINITIVE MAP MODIFICATION ORDER APPLICATION RELATING TO
DELETION OF PUBLIC FOOTPATH 19 IN AUDLEM PARISH, CHESHIRE EAST

Plan No.
WCA/40

This is a working copy of the definitive map and should not be used for legal purposes



Crown copyright and database rights 2023. Ordnance Survey 100049045

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2

Point 1 looking south-east (11th October 2024)



Point 2 looking south-east (11th October 2024)



Point 3 looking north-west (11th October 2024)



Point 4 looking east (11th October 2024)



Point 5 (11th October 2024)



Point 6 looking south - (11th October 2024)



Point 7 gates from Bridleway number 30 known as Mill Lane looking north – (11th October 2024)



APPENDIX 3

List of Archive Documents –

Application No. WCA/40

To delete public footpath 19 in the Parish of Audlem

PROW = Public Rights of Way Unit

CRO = Cheshire Record Office

TNA = The National Archives, Kew

Primary Sources	Date	Site Shown/Mentioned	Reference Number/Source
County Maps			
Burdett PP	1794	Route not shown	View map: Stuart, James ; Burdett, Peter Perry, The county palatine of Chester: reduced from the large survey in four sheets - Counties of Scotland, 1580-1928 (nls.uk)
Swire & Hutchings	1830	Route not shown	View map: Swire, William. ; Hutchings, W. F., A map of the county palatine of Chester, divided into hundreds & parishes, from an accurate survey, ... - Counties of Scotland, 1580-1928 (nls.uk)
Bryant A	1831	Route not shown	View map: Bryant, Andrew, South-east sheet - Map of the county palatine of Chester from an actual survey made in the years 182... - Counties of Scotland, 1580-1928 (nls.uk)
Tithe Records			
Tithe Map	1842	Route not shown on the map. The path runs through Plots number 437 (pasture), 435 (arable), 434 (arable), 418 (pasture), and 422 (meadow)	Cheshire Tithe Maps Online (cheshireeast.gov.uk)
Ordnance Survey Maps			
O.S. 6" to 1 mile 1 st Edition	1882	A double pecked line is shown following more or less along public footpath 19 as recorded on the definitive map. Some field boundaries have changed since this map was produced	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire LXVI (inset LXVIII) (includes: Adderley; Barlaston; Buerton; Norton in Hales; Stoke on Tren... - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)
O.S "25" to 1 mile 2 nd edition	1897	There are no physical indications of footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm (what is modern day Meadows Farm)	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire LXVI.2 (Audlem; Buerton) - Ordnance Survey 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952
O.S. 6" to 1 mile 2 nd Edition	1899	There are no physical indications of footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the footpath 19	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire LXVI.NW (includes: Audlem; Buerton; Dodcott Cum Wilkesley; Newhall.) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)

		commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm (what is modern day Meadows Farm)	
O.S. 6" to 1 mile 2 nd Edition	1903	There are no physical indications of footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm (what is modern day Meadows Farm)	View map: Ordnance Survey, Shropshire III.SW (includes: Audlem; Buerton.) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)
O.S. 6" to 1 mile 1912 2 nd Edition	1912	There are no physical indications of footpath 19 on this map. A double pecked line commences at the northern end near where the footpath 19 commences, however it heads over to the nearby farm (what is modern day Meadows Farm). The letters FP are shown by the double pecked lines.	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire LXVI.NW (includes: Audlem; Buerton; Dodcott Cum Wilkesley; Newhall.) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)
O.S. 2 ½ " to 1 mile	1963	No route shown	View map: Ordnance Survey, SJ6644-SJ6744 - AA - Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale map - Ordnance Survey National Grid Maps, 1940s-1970s (nls.uk)
Bartholomew's half inch 1902 new series	1902	No route shown	View map: Bartholomew, John G., 1860-1920, sheet 12 - Cheshire - Bartholomew's 'Half Inch to the Mile Maps' of England and Wales, 1902-1906 (nls.uk)
Finance Act			
Record Plans	1910	Hereditament 205 includes all fields through which the the entire public footpath runs through OS field numbers 464, 478 and 481. No other public rights of way as shown on the definitive map exist within the hereditament.	TNA via PROW Unit
Valuation Book		Under fixed charges, easements, common rights and restrictions it lists "1 footpath" It identifies a deduction of £33.00 for public rights way or user	TNA via PROW Unit
Other Plans			

Local Authority Records			
Pre Definitive Map – Nantwich Footpath Map	Circa 1930	<p>This document identifies footpath which in exist in Nantwich and are categorised as:</p> <p>Footpaths that simply exist and which no repair appear to have been carried out shown coloured red.</p> <p>Footpaths previously repaired by the Rural District Council shown coloured blue.</p> <p>Footpaths previously repaired by the Parish Councils shown coloured green.</p> <p>Each footpath is numbered to correspond with schedule on file: G.M. 180.</p>	PROW Unit
Audlem Parish Survey Map	1950's	Footpath No 19 is shown broadly following the alignment on the definitive map. It is a red broken line commencing from the unclassified road (UC/5/68) and leading in a generally south easterly direction. File 5/680 is written on the map pointing to Footpath 19. Just due west of Meadows Farm an unbroken red line has been drawn running roughly east-west crossing footpath No19 and ending at Meadows Farm. Footpath No19 continues south to meet Mill Lane.	PROW Unit
Definitive Map	1950's	Footpath No 19 is shown commencing at path no30 Mill Lane heading north for a short distance before heading in a more north easterly direction passing through a filed boundary and to the west of Meadows Farm, to meet footpath No31 at the unclassified road (UC/5/68).	PROW Unit
Draft definitive map	1950's	Footpath 19 is shown commencing at a stile (S.1) to the west of Meadows Farm, at the unclassified road (UC/5/68). It is shown passing through a field boundary, referenced as F.2 on the map. It heads south for a short	PROW Unit

		distance through what appears to be an open field before reaching a field gate (FG.3) at Mill Lane. The path is shown continuing along and what will eventually be registered as path number 30 (Mill Lane) before arriving at a point referenced as Gap.4 on a bend in the UC/5/88. Paths number 30 and 31 are not shown on the map.	
Provisional definitive map	1950's	Footpath 19 is shown commencing to the west of Meadows Farm, at the junction with Footpath 31 at the unclassified road (UC/5/68). It heads through what appears to be an open field before heading in a more southerly direction to meet Bridleway 30 at Mill Lane	PROW Unit
Definitive survey	1950's	The statement describes the footpath as commencing from Unclassified County Road (UC/5/68) generally in an easterly direction to RP30.	PROW Unit
Parish Survey	1950's	<p>Page 1 – the footpath is numbered as 19 and described as commencing at Monks Lane opposite what appears to say Mill Lane Farm. There are arrows indicating that the commencement point and termination point should be read the other way around. The length shows 100yds struck out and replaced by 555yds. The lettering S.I, F.2, FG.3 and Gap 4 are included in the general description; these correspond to those included in the extract of the draft definitive map. The general description identifies that S.I is now part of the hedge/fencing and “no” use as a stile.</p> <p>The path is described as across meadowland and not defined.</p> <p>Page 2 - Under details of any old maps, diversion orders, dedication agreements, parish minutes etc there is a faint text stating see file 5/680, which is also the reference number on the Audlem Parish Survey extract. There is other text which is difficult to decipher but are along the lines of G.M 1150</p>	PROW Unit

		<p>GEN. Closed under Defence Regs. Order followed a word that us unclear, followed by 1946. Under the section relating to whether any part of the path has been disputed this is left blank.</p> <p>Names of those carrying out the survey have been included. It is dated Sept 1951.</p>	
Aerial Images			
Aerial image Black and white	1940's	The fields through which the footpath runs are largely over exposed and its impossible to see if there are any walked routes shown on the ground along footpath No19. There is a circular shadow in the field just due east of where it meets the unclassified road (UC/5/68); it is unclear what this is but it looks most like a mark or stain on the photo.	PROW Unit
Aerial image (black and white)	1970's	The field layout is very similar to the 1940's map with the exception of the removal of some of the smaller enclosures. The picture quality is greater than for the 1940's image. It is not possible make out any walked alignment along the route of footpath No19.	PROW Unit
Aerial image (colour)	1980's	The field layout has changed very little. There is a large grey/brown "scar" in the field just beneath where footpath No19 runs due west of Meadows Farm; it is unclear what this but is just south of the alignment of the footpath. It is not possible make out any walked alignment along the route of footpath No19.	PROW Unit
Aerial image (colour)	2024	The field layout is largely unchanged. There is no indication of a walked line in the field immediately off path no30 (Mill Lane) however where it leads north westerly in the adjoining field there is a very distinct line along route of footpath No19.	Google Maps
Planning Inspectorate Consistency Guidelines			<p>Withdrawn from the Planning Inspectorate website Nov 2024</p> <p>[Withdrawn] Definitive map orders: consistency guidelines - GOV.UK</p>

--	--	--	--

Highway and Transport Committee

3rd April 2025

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Part III Section 53, Upgrade of Public Footpath No 26 to a Restricted Byway Smithy Lane in the Parish of Mottram St Andrew

Report of: Philip Cresswell, Executive Director of Place

Report Reference No: MA/5/240

Ward(s) Affected: Prestbury

For Decision or Scrutiny: Decision

Purpose of Report

1. This report outlines the investigation into an application made by an individual to amend the Definitive Map and Statement to upgrade existing public footpath no:26 to a Restricted Byway along Smithy Lane in the parish of Mottram St Andrew under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The report includes a discussion carried out in respect of the claim, the historical evidence and legal test for a Definitive Map Modification Order to be made. The report makes recommendations based on that information, for quasi-judicial decision by Members, as to whether an Order should be made to upgrade Public Footpath no.26 to a Restricted Byway to the Definitive Map and Statement.

Executive Summary

2. This report outlines the investigation into an application made in April 2008 by an individual on behalf of Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society. The application seeks to upgrade existing Public Footpath no: 26 to a Restricted Byway along Smithy Lane then intersecting Public Footpaths no: 6 & 8 before continuing to a cul-de-sac via Woodside Farm and Barn in the village of Mottram St Andrew as shown on Plan reference WCA/50 at **Appendix 1.**

3. The application has been properly registered and must be investigated and determined. The documentary evidence that has been examined, referred to below, and a list of all the evidence taken into consideration can be found at **Appendix 2**.
4. This report includes a discussion of the consultations carried out in respect of the application, the documents and legal tests for the modifications that are requested. There is also a detailed discussion of the records relating to the Definitive Map process.
5. Photos of the claimed route can be viewed at **Appendix 3**.
6. The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Corporate Plan aim of “A thriving and sustainable place”, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Highways & Transport Committee is recommended to:

1. Decide that a Definitive Map Modification Order **not** be made under Section 53(3)(c)(i) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to modify the Definitive Map and Statement to upgrade Public Footpath no 26 between points A and B on Plan no: WCA/50.
2. That the application for the upgrade of Public Footpath No 26 to a Restricted Byway is refused on the grounds that it cannot be demonstrated that the Definitive Map and Statement needs modifying.

Background

7. The application was made to Cheshire County Council on 22nd April 2008 by an individual (“the Applicant”) on behalf of Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Preservation Society to upgrade Public Footpath No.26 to a Restricted Byway. The application consisted of historical documentary evidence including various maps, documents and photos. The application did not contain any user evidence. At the time of the Applicant’s claim, the Definitive Map for Public Footpath No: 26 showed Public Footpath No. 26 leading from the south at Point A, Grid ref: SJ388019 off Wilmslow Road (A538) and heading in a north easterly, easterly direction through Woodside Farm and past Woodside Barn to Point B, Grid ref: SJ388620 (points A-B of Plan WCA/50 of Appendix 1) where it terminated at an unnamed track. The application claims for the higher status of Restricted Byway along the claimed route.
8. Since the drafting of the Definitive Map in 1955, and submission of the claimed route in 2008, part of Public Footpath No.26 was diverted in 2012 at its eastern terminus at Grid ref: SJ388478 to skirt around Woodside Farm and Woodside

Barn to the northwest at the Junction with Footpath No.8 & No.7 Mottram St Andrews, Grid ref: SJ388541. The claim is for a Restricted Byway along the full length of what was Footpath No.26 Mottram St Andrews (shown between points A to B on Plan WCA/50, Appendix 1), which is a different route to the route that was subsequently diverted (Footpath No 26 Mottram St Andrews on the current Definitive Map).

9. The application route/ claimed route runs from Point A, Grid ref: SJ388019 off Wilmslow Road (A538), in a north easterly, easterly direction to Point B, SJ388620 and terminates on an unnamed track, as shown on Plan: (WCA/50) at **Appendix 1**. The diversion in 2012 doesn't impact on the application to upgrade Public Footpath No 26 to a Restricted Byway
10. It is worth noting at the eastern end of the claimed route and beyond there are many similar worded properties which can be confusing and are also named differently on different aged maps but in modern times the route ends at its eastern terminus around Woodside Farm and Woodside Barn / Woodside Cottage. On some old maps the physical old lane route continues south beyond Point B to terminate at a property called Mottram Wood Farm.

Legal Matters

11. Section 53(2)(b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (the "81 Act") requires that the Council shall keep the Definitive Map (DM) and Statement under continuous review and make such modifications to the Map and Statement as appear requisite in consequence of the occurrence of certain events.
12. Events listed under Section 53(2) of the 81 Act includes section 53(3)(c) where "the discovery by the authority of evidence" which (when considered with all other relevant evidence available to them) shows:-
 - (i) that a right of way which is not shown on the map and statement subsists or is reasonably alleged to subsist over land in the area to which the map relates, being a right of way such that the land over which the right subsists is a public path, a restricted byway or, subsection to section 54A, a byway opens to all traffic.

and
 - (ii) That a highway shown in the map and statement as a highway of a particular description ought to be there shown as a highway of a different description.
13. The Definitive Map and Statement is the legal record of public rights of way in England and Wales. Section 56(1) of the 81 Act states the depiction of a path on the DM is conclusive evidence that at the relevant date a public right of way existed over that path. Inclusion of a route in the DM is legally conclusive evidence of the public's right, at the relevant date without prejudice to the existence of other public rights.

14. For an application to be successful it will have to bring forward a “discovery of evidence” (Section 53 of the 81 Act). It must be shown that it is new evidence that is considered rather than the evidence that had been originally considered before the Definitive Map was published. The reason for this is set out by *Burrows v Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs [2004] EWHC 132 (Admin)* “ where the court upheld the finding by an inspector that the existence of a sign with the words ‘Private Road – Access Only’ by the side of which stood a public footpath sign was not sufficient to show that there was no intention to dedicate the way as a right of way for use by walkers and horse riders.
15. Of further relevance to this application is the matter of cul-de-sac routes. The claimed route runs to a dead end to the east not joining any other public highway, The courts have long recognised that, in certain circumstances, cul-de-sac in rural areas can be highways. e.g. *Eyre v New Forest Highways Board (1892) 56 JP 517* and *Moser v Ambleside 1925 89 JP 118*. In the case of *Moser v Ambleside 1925 89 JP 118* Atkin LJ stated that “you can have a highway leading to a place of popular resort even though when you have got to the place which you wish to see you have to return on your tracks by the same highway.....”.
16. The evidence can consist of historical evidence or user evidence or a mixture of both. All the evidence must be evaluated and weighted, and a conclusion reached whether, on the ‘balance of probabilities’ the claim could be proven, any other issues, such as safety, security, suitability, desirability or the effects on property or the environment, are not relevant to the decision.
17. The evidence considered in this report is listed in **Appendix 2**. This application has no user evidence so is purely based on historical documentation.

Historical Evidence

The Definitive Map Process

18. The Definitive Map and Statement is based on surveys and plans produced in the early 1950’s by each parish in Cheshire and was a requirement of the National Parks and Countryside Act 1949. It was a survey; of all the ways they considered to be public at that time via production of a map and associated statement of each route. A Draft and Provisional Map were produced for consideration before a final Definitive Map and Statement came into being. The surveys were used as the basis for the Draft Map and for Mottram area the date of survey is 1953 which is referred to as the “relevant date”.
19. All three stages of the Definitive Map process i.e. the Draft, Provisional and final Definitive map show existing Public Footpath no: 26 running from the Wilmslow Road along Smithy Lane in a north easterly direction to join other public footpaths and primarily connect with footpath no: 7 around Woodside Farm.

20. The Definitive Statement describes public footpath no: 26 as 770 yards in length and described "from the Class 1 County Road (A538) at Mottram Cross generally in a north easterly direction to connect with footpath 7.
21. No indication of higher status of existing public footpath no:26 was evidenced during the Definitive Map process either on maps or statements.

Ordnance Survey maps

22. Ordnance Survey mapping was originally for military purposes to record all roads and tracks that could be used in times of war; this included both public and private routes. These maps are good evidence of the physical existence of routes, but not necessarily of status. Since 1889 the Ordnance Survey has included a disclaimer on all its maps to the effect that the depiction of a road is not evidence of the existence of a right of way. It is argued that this disclaimer was solely to avoid potential litigation.
23. Ordnance Survey mapping from 1819 (2nd edition 1:25inch), 1828 (1"to 1mile New Series) and 1831(3rd edition 1:25 inch) all show Smithy Lane as a clearly defined lane feature running to where the claimed route ends around Woodside Farm. Ordnance Survey mapping from 1840 (Original Drawing NW81 2" to the mile) on A2 plus enlarged copy onwards shows the same as earlier 1800 maps but the lane now extends beyond Woodside Farm to the southeast to finish at Mottram Wood Farm but is not shown as a through route beyond here but is a cul de sac lane and again this is shown as extending past Woodside Farm to a cul de sac on 1957 OS Map (survey sheet SJ 8878) . By 1993 (Ordnance Survey map sheet SJ8878) the route is shown again the same as in 1840 but does not go as far east from Woodside Farm as it did in 1840 and is just truncated just under 1km southeast of Woodside Farm again showing a cul de sac lane feature.

Old county commercial maps

24. These are small scale maps made by commercial mapmakers, some of which are known to have been produced from original surveys and others are believed to be copies of earlier maps. All were essentially topographic maps portraying what the surveyors saw on the ground. They included features of interest, including roads and tracks. It is doubtful whether mapmakers checked the status of routes or had the same sense of status of routes that exist today. There are known errors on many mapmakers' work and private estate roads and cul-de-sac paths are sometimes depicted as 'cross-roads'. The maps do not provide conclusive evidence of public status, although they may provide supporting evidence of the existence of a route.
25. Early commercial scale county maps Greenwood (1819), Swire & Hutchings (1828) show Smithy Lane as one lane from the main Wilmslow Road leading to Woodside Farm /Cottage.
26. By 1831 Bryant mapping and Bartholomews mapping of 1842 both show Smithy Lane again as a lane from the main Wilmslow Road but now leading past

Woodside Farm /Cottage and heading southeast for just under 1Km to cul-de-sac dead end. Both these maps interestingly also show a short spur of lane very near to and joining Smithy Lane also starting from Wilmslow Road opposite the Bulls Head pub known as Green Lane which is discussed later in this report under Enclosure Award section.

Aerial Photos

27. Various historical aerial photos taken around Woodside Farm from the 1950's onwards clearly show Smithy Lane as a clear route running east past Woodside Farm including the earliest RAF photo (National Monuments Ref: RAF/82/1243), Cheshire East Planning Records photo (ref: 0255) shows Smithy Lane as a through route in the farm yard area and photos 1979a & 1979 B shows 5 black and white photos of Woodside Farm and Smithy Lane as clear through route around the farm.

Tithe Map

28. Tithe Awards were prepared under the Tithe Commutation Act 1836, which commuted the payment of a tax (tithe) in kind, to a monetary payment. The purpose of the award was to record productive land on which a tax could be levied. The Tithe Map and Award were independently produced by parishes and the quality of the maps is variable. It was not the purpose of the awards to record public highways. Although depiction of both private occupation and public roads, which often formed boundaries, is incidental, they may provide good supporting evidence of the existence of a route, especially since they were implemented as part of a statutory process. Non-depiction of a route is not evidence that it did not exist; merely that it did not affect the tithe charge. Colouring of a track may or may not be significant in determining status. In the absence of a key, explanation or other corroborative evidence the colouring cannot be deemed to be conclusive of anything.
29. From an online copy viewed (Ref: EDT282/2) titled Township of Mottram St Andrew and dated 1848 with a key in black and white but that can be understood Smithy Lane is shown as well as nearby spur Green Lane. Smithy Lane is shown running all the way to and through Woodside Farm and beyond for approx. 1Km but to terminus in field. Its colouring suggests it was considered a highway of some sort but beyond this it is difficult to determine more from this map.
30. There is no number allocated to either Smithy Lane or Green Lane on the tithe map and nothing listed in the accompanying apportionment of this location.

Enclosure Award

31. The purpose of enclosure was to replace the communal system of open field cultivation and common grazing with a system of land divided into individual plots and fields, redistributed amongst the existing owners. There were three methods of inclosing land: informal enclosures, enclosure by agreement (but often confirmed by a court of law), and enclosure by private or general act of parliament.

None of these belong to a strict period in time. By the end of the 18th century all processes were in use. Non-parliamentary enclosure was nationally the dominant form. Parliamentary enclosure was effectively halted in 1876.

32. Early 18th century enclosure awards were usually the result of private acts of parliament or agreements sponsored by individuals. The general enclosure acts of 1801 and 1845 provide a standard set of clauses, speeding up the procedure and reducing costs.
33. Enclosure Awards are usually in two parts, the handwritten award and the accompanying plan. The commissioners responsible for producing the document were empowered to stop up, divert and create public highway and private roads through and to enclosed land. Particular attention should be paid to the wording of the award, and whole documents should be read in conjunction with the accompanying map[s] and the relevant act(s) of parliament. They vary in quality, scale and detail.
34. The Enclosure Award Plan (ref: QDE 1/34), Plan of Commons and Wastelands in the township of Mottram St Andrew tracing of original has been reviewed and shows Smithy Lane as well as Green Lane. Smithy Lane is shown as physical lane feature all the way from the main road to at least around Woodside Farm. Green Lane is also shown in the same way as Smithy Lane but as a very short physical lane feature from the main road to opposite Bulls Head pub and then joining Smithy Lane described in the award as 300 yards or thereabouts.
35. An extract from the same reference is text that relates to Green Lane being stopped up. It refers to Green Lane joining with the "other public road or highway leading from Hayley Hill aforesaid to the Woodside Farm". The other public road or highway referring to Smithy Lane the claimed route in this application. The term highway could refer to any status of highway from a footpath to road.

Highway Plan (Hundred of Macclesfield) 1865

36. On this plan ref: (CRO CH1/2/17) Smithy Lane is coloured as far as the eastern end of the claimed route around Woodside Farm and coloured the same as the main Wilmslow Road.

Finance Act Map Records (1910)

37. The Finance Act of 1910 involved a national survey of land by the inland revenue so that an incremental value duty could be levied when ownership was transferred. Land was valued for each owner/occupier and this land was given hereditament number. Landowners could claim tax relief where a highway crossed their land. Although the existence of a public right of way may be admitted it is not usually described or a route shown on the plan. This Act was repealed in 1920.
38. Two sets of plans were produced: the working plans for the original valuation and the record plans once the valuation was complete. Two sets of books were

produced to accompany the maps: the field books, which record what the surveyor found at each property and the so-called 'Domesday Book', which was the complete register of properties and valuations.

39. The Finance Act Working Copy Plan (Cheshires XXVIII) (CRO NVB.28.11) shows that the land north and south of the claimed route all owned by the same landowner. Smithy Lane, the claimed route is uncoloured and annotated number 255 about halfway along route and is not clearly all excluded from land parcels to both the south and north. There is some separation of the claimed route from the parcels to the south namely land parcels 315 and 317 by very faint red and blue lines surrounding land parcels. To the north the claimed route at the southern end has some land parcels abutting which are outlined in red but only far as abutting a property called 'The Pheasantry'. For the rest of the claimed route to the north of it is not marked as separate from the large parcel number 397 to the north.
40. The valuation book ref: CRO NVA 4/1 shows all the surrounding land of the claimed route owned by landowner Julia C Wright.
41. There are deductions for paths shown in the filed books ref: NA: IR58 20049 that the applicant mentions over numerous field numbers: 251, 210, 212 and 230 which are mostly around Mottram Hall to the north of the claimed route but this merely indicates public route tax deductions for these routes and the field books provide nothing directly on the claimed route along Smithy Lane and does not have any clarity on route status.
42. The original Finance Act map sheets XXVIII unfortunately are not available as this has been checked with the National Archives so overall not too much can be conclusively drawn from the working copy alone which is not clearly showing the route as a fully separated uncoloured lane or any clear deduction for any public right of way along Smithy Lane.

Railway Plan

43. Railway Plans were created by Acts of Parliament around 1865 and often carry some weight in public rights of way cases where routes can be shown on plans crossing or nearby. However, lots of railway plans were often drawn up as proposed railway lines that never came into being so have to be studied carefully.
44. A railway plan showing titled '*Section of Plan of a Proposed Brach Railway from the intended Manchester, Cheshire and Staffordshire railway to line to Macclesfield*' dated 1837, ref: CRO QDP142 was examined in relation to this claim and does show the length of Smithy Lane coloured yellow and the north end of Green Lane uncoloured. The parcel no 36 on this plan relating to Smithy Lane refers to it as an occupation road which is ambiguous and unclear terminology as clarify to private and /or public rights. The term occupation road was introduced in the Inclosure Act of 1845 can be broad sweeping and such roads are intended to benefit the local nearby properties and landowners, and they are usually for private use although they may also have public rights. There is a key option for Public Highway, but Smithy Lane is not shown as a Public

Highway on this proposed railway plan so is likely in this case that Smithy Lane was an occupation road with private rights along it.

Other documents

45. Black and white photos from 1979 and 1990 have been examined around the location of Woodside Farm. Both show Smithy Lane as a clear track feature with the 1990 photo showing a wooden fence obstruction across the route which led to the applicant complaining about the obstruction.
46. Prestbury Highways Map 1865 has been brought to light by Cheshire Highways Records officer as well as the applicant which clearly shows Smithy Lane marked as a cul-de-sac public highway/road at this date extending beyond Woodside Farm to Mottram Wood Barn to the southeast but finishing here and not joining any other public highway to the southeast. Smithy Lane is coloured in indicating some sort of District Road at the time. The claimed route is not on the current List of Streets though held by the Highways Authority.

Consultation and Engagement

47. Consultations were sent out in October 2024. The applicant is deceased since the application was made and therefore contact could not be made. Attempts have been made to contact Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society given the application was made at the time on their behalf but unfortunately no response or contact has been able to be made.
48. The Peak and Northern Footpath Society responded to state that their records show that the section of the claimed route through Woodside Farm was originally on the Definitive line of Public Footpath number 26 prior to it being diverted to its current line but made no further comments.
49. Cheshire East Ramblers responded with some history on regarding the applicant and that the applicant had in 1990 noted the width of the route had been restricted by unlawful obstructions that led to the application for a Restricted Byway. However, a footpath diversion in 2012 diverted the footpath at this end of the claimed route to the northwest around Woodside Farm and Barn. They commented they felt the application should also be withdrawn and had also tried to contact the Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Preservation Society but discover they had been disbanded in July 2024.
50. The Highways Records Officer for Cheshire East Council has been contacted regarding any information they hold on their highways records and although Smithy Lane is not on the councils list of highways maintainable at public expense it does appear from the Prestbury Highway Board Map dated 1865 to very clearly have been a highway maintained at public expense at that time. However, whilst this shows Smithy Lane from the south clearly running from Point A it also runs beyond Point B of the claimed route well past Woodside Farm curving south from here but even in 1865 appeared to be cul-de-sac highway not joining any other public route.

Reasons for Recommendations

51. There is no user evidence submitted with this application so therefore the only basis for analysis has been reviewing documentary evidence.
52. At the time of the Applicant's claim, the claimed route was already public footpath no.26 which was recorded on the Definitive Map and Statement which originally ran along the whole of the claimed route. Until in 2012 part of Public Footpath no 26 was diverted at its eastern terminus to skirt around Woodside Farm and Woodside Barn to the northwest with the junction with footpaths No.8 & No.7 Mottram St Andrews. The claim is for a Restricted Byway along the full length of what was Footpath No.26 Mottram St Andrews, a different route to that was subsequently diverted (public footpath) and has no impact on the application to determination for Restricted Byway.
53. This investigation therefore investigates whether higher rights can be demonstrated to exist from documentary sources along the whole of the claimed route from Point A to Point B of Plan WCA/50 (Appendix 1)
54. From the documentary sources analysed above whilst it is clear a physical route on the ground has existed in the form of a lane from the mid 1840's from Point A through Woodside Farm and continuing to curve then south but to a dead end at Mottram Wood Farm southeast of Point B. However, we don't believe there is sufficient documentary evidence to prove higher status along the claimed route and nearly all the maps viewed don't provide any evidence of status but merely physical presence of a lane.
55. For any public rights of way claim of any status to be successful it would have to go highway to highway whether that is a public road or public right of way. For any route to be successfully claimed as a cul-de-sac (i.e. dead-end route) this is often rare, and circumstances must be considered. The courts have long recognised that, in certain circumstances, cul-de-sac in rural areas can be highways. e.g. *Eyre v New Forest Highways Board (1892) 56 JP 517* and *Moser v Ambleside 1925 89 JP 118*. In the case of *Moser v Ambleside 1925 89 JP 118* Atkin LJ stated that "you can have a highway leading to a place of popular resort even though when you have got to the place which you wish to see you have to return on your tracks by the same highway.....".
56. Most frequently, such a situation arises where a cul-de-sac is the only way to or from a place of public interest or where changes to the highways network have turned what was part of a through road into a cul-de-sac. In this case Mottram Wood Farm southeast of Point B would not be considered a place of public interest.
57. The Enclosure Award from the 1800's whilst mentioning Smithy Lane as a "public road or another highway" is just too ambiguous and by the 1950's the claimed route was a public footpath on the Definitive Map and therefore a highway of some sort already.

58. The Finance Act map and associated field book is just too unclear to draw any conclusions about routes or higher status routes.
59. The 1865 Highways Board Map does indicate that back in time Smithy Lane was considered of higher status than a public footpath to Woodside Farm (Point B) and beyond to Mottram Wood Farm but this is a matter for the Highways (Roads) section and the route is not a public road on the councils List of Streets and apart from this map no evidence it has been.
60. The Highways Board Map is the only piece of historical evidence with some sort of indication of higher rights along footpath 26 but the claim remains as a cul-de-sac route at the eastern end. As mentioned before in the legal section and in this conclusion cul-de-sac paths must have some special circumstance to be successful and usually end at some sort of public place of resort. This is not the case with this route which ends at historical farms / properties.
61. Therefore overall, the claimed route is lacking in robust evidence to indicate on a balance of probabilities the route is of a higher Restricted Byway status and also is a cul-de-sac claim with no historical evidence of public interest and it therefore the recommendation is to refuse the application.
62. The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Green aim of the Corporate Plan, the “thriving and sustainable place” priority, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Other Options Considered

63. If the authority was to do nothing it would not be complying with its statutory duty under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which requires the Council to keep the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review and make such modifications to the Map and Statement as required.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

64. The Council are complying with their duties under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 which are set out in the Legal Matters section of this report.
65. As this is a decision of the Council, there is a risk that a member of the public could be dissatisfied with the decision and apply for a judicial review of the decision of the Council, the cost of which would need to be borne by the Council.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

66. If objections to an Order lead to a subsequent hearing/inquiry, the Council would be responsible for any costs involved in the preparation and conducting of such. The maintenance of the Public Right of Way, if added to the Definitive Map and Statement, would fall to the landowner and Council in line

with legislation. The associated costs would be borne within existing Public Rights of Way revenue and capital budgets.

Policy

67. The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Vision of the Corporate Plan of a greener Cheshire East, with the aim of “a thriving and sustainable place”, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Vision - An open, fairer, greener Cheshire East

Aim - A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Reduce impact on the environment
- A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
- Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all
- Be a carbon neutral council by 2027

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The legal tests under section 53 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 do not include an assessment of the effects under the Equality Act 2010.

Human Resources

- a. There are no direct implications for Human Resources.

Risk Management

- b. There are no direct implications for risk management.

Rural Communities

- c. There are no direct implications for Rural Communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- d. There are no direct implications for Children and Young People

Public Health

- e. The recommendations are anticipated to offer a positive overall impact on the health and wellbeing of Cheshire East residents.

Climate Change

- f. The recommendations will help the Council to reduce its carbon footprint and achieve environmental sustainability by reducing energy consumption and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	John Lindsay john.lindsay@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1: Plan WCA/50 Appendix 2: Historical document list Appendix 3: Photographs of claimed route.
Background Papers:	The background papers and files relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer.

This page is intentionally left blank

388000

388250

388500

388750

379000

379000

378750

378750

378500

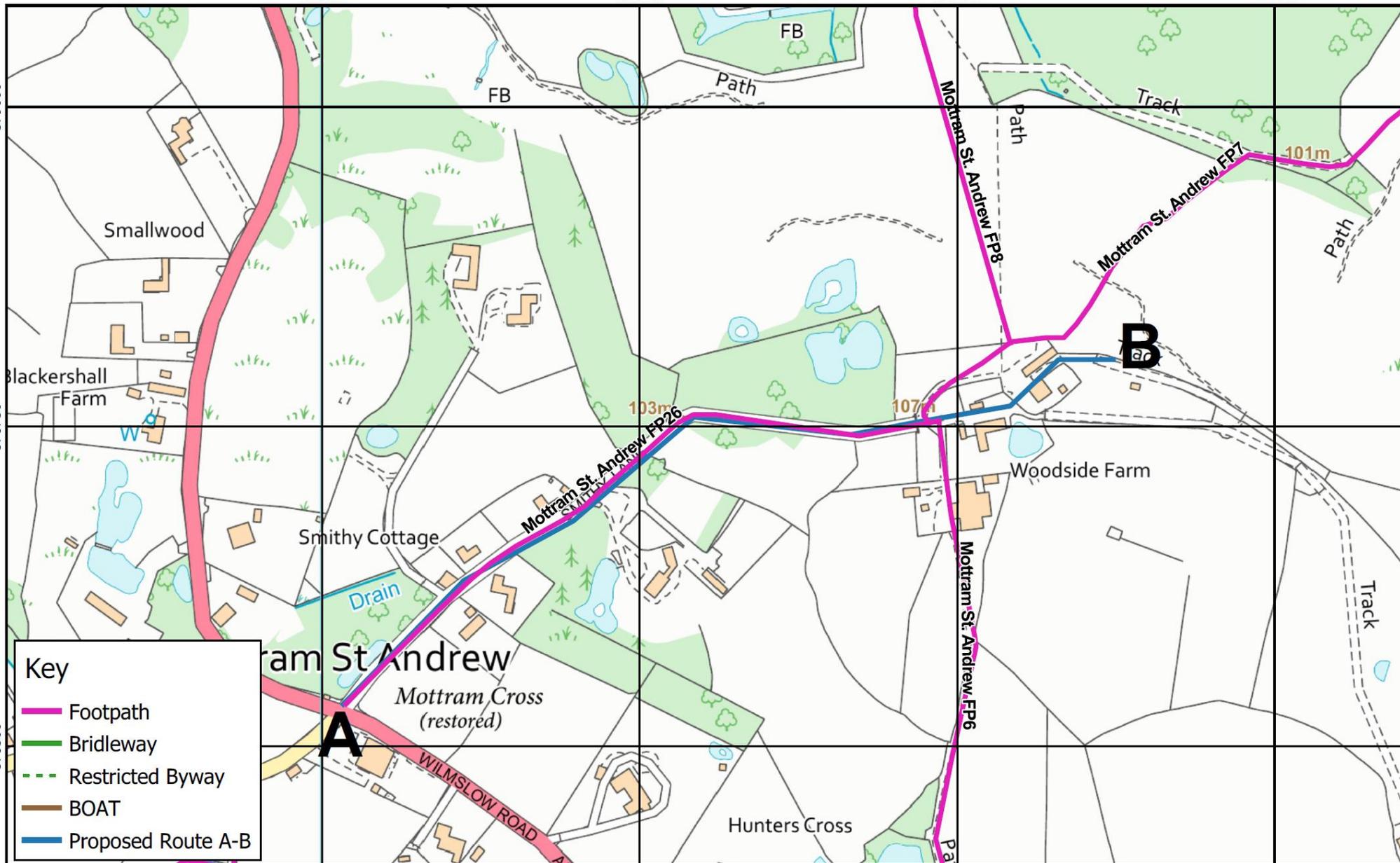
378500

388000

388250

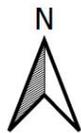
388500

388750



Key

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- - - Restricted Byway
- BOAT
- Proposed Route A-B



1:3875

Application under section 53 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to upgrade footpath No.26 Mottram St Andrews to Restricted Byway from points A to B

Plan No.
WCA/50

This is a working copy of the definitive map and should not be used for legal purposes



Crown copyright and database rights 2023. Ordnance Survey 100049045

OFFICIAL

This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 2

List of Archive Documents –

Application No. MA/5/240

Application to upgrade Public Footpath no: 26 to a Restricted Byway Smithy Lane, Mottram St Andrew

PROW = Public Rights of Way Unit

CRO = Cheshire Record Office

TNA = The National Archives, Kew

Primary Sources	Date	Site Shown/Mentioned	Reference Number/Source
County Maps			
C Greenwood	1819	Smithy Lane shown as one lane leading to Woodside Cottage	Online (National Library of Scotland)
Swire & Hutchings	1828	Smithy Lane shown as one lane leading to Woodside Cottage	Online (National Library of Scotland)
Bryant	1831	Both Smithy Lane and Green Lane shown with Smithy Lane now continuing past woodside cottage.	Online (National Library of Scotland)
Bartholomews	1842	Smithy Lane extending past Woodside Cottage	Online (National Library of Scotland)
Tithe Records			
Tithe Map	1848	Smithy Lane and Green lane tinted yellow. No numbering, no apportionment.	CRO EDT 282/2
Enclosure Award Plan & extract (Plan of Commons and Wastelands, Township of Mottram St Andrew)	1851	Shows route of Smithy Lane coloured same as main road as well as Green Lane. Extract referring to stopping up of Green Lane that joins Smithy Lane and refers to Smithy Lane as occupation road	CRO- QDE 1/34

O.S. Original Drawing NW81, 2 inch to 1 mile	1840	Smithy lane shown continuing past Woodside Cottage	PROW/Cheshire East Council
O.S. 2 nd Edition 1:25 inch	1819	Smithy Lane shown as lane finishing at Woodside Farm.	PROW/Cheshire East Council
O.S 1" to 1mile New Series	1828	Smithy Lane shown as lane finishing at Woodside Farm.	PROW/Cheshire East Council
O.S. 3 rd Edition 1:25 inch	1831	Smithy Lane shown as lane finishing at Woodside Farm.	PROW/Cheshire East Council
OS map	1851 1993	Smithy lane shown continuing past Woodside Cottage	PROW/Cheshire East Council
OS map (map sheets SJ 8878)	1957 &	Smithy Lane shown continuing past Woodside Cottage.	PROW/Cheshire East Council
Finance Act			
Working Copy Map	1910	Route shown uncoloured and excluding from some heradiments to south but not many from north.	CRO NVB.28.11
Valuation Book	1910	Show plots 315,317,374,397 & 398 owned by Julia C Wright	CRO NVA 4/1
Field Books	1910	Various deductions mainly for land north of claimed route, none along claimed route.	NA : IR58/20049
Rail Plan 'section of plan of a proposed Brach Railway from the intended Manchester, Cheshire and Staffordshire railway'	1837	Shows Smithy Lane coloured yellow and the north end of Green Lane uncoloured.	CRO QDP142

Local Authority Records			
Plan of Highway	1865	Route shown just past woodside farm	PROW Unit
Definitive Map & Statement	1953	Route shown as PROW public footpath along lane to just past Woodside Farm.	PROW Unit
Additional Records			
Photos	2024	Site photos taken in 2024 of claimed route	PROW Unit – see photo sheet
List of Streets	2022	Not Shown	CE Highways Unit

**Photo Sheet of claimed Restricted Byway (already mostly existing public footpath no.26), Mottram St Andrews
Case Ref: MA/240**

Point A at Mottram Cross, looking down Smithy Lane



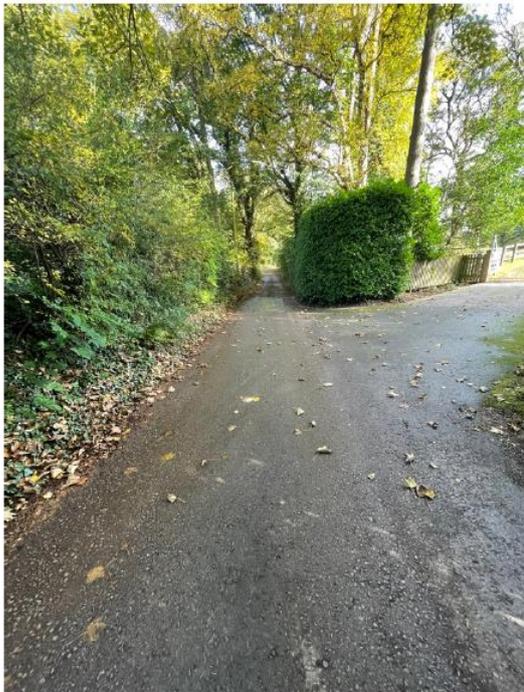
Approx 80 m east along Smithy Lane from point A approaching Smithy Cottage on left



Continuing east along Smithy Lane between Point A & B



Continuing down Smithy Lane Tarmac ends and turns into rough track



Continuing along Smithy Lane approaching Point B looking towards Wood side Farm Entrance



Driveway split left to Mottram Barn and Cottage and straight on to Woodside Farm. Hedge across lane.



Point B showing grassed route between hedges



Highways and Transport Committee**3rd April 2025****Report Title: Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 – Part III, Section 53.****Application No. MA/5/244: Application for Modification Order to add a Bridleway between Buxton Old Road and Footpath No.39, Parish of Disley, and upgrade (in part) to Bridleway Public Footpath No.39 Disley****Report of: Philip Cresswell, Executive Director of Place****Report Reference No: HTC/49/24-25****Ward(s) Affected: Disley****For Decision or Scrutiny: Decision****Purpose of Report**

- 1 This report outlines the investigation into an application made to modify the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way to add a Bridleway between Buxton Old Road and Footpath 39, Parish of Disley, and upgrade (in part) to Bridleway Public Footpath 39. This report includes a discussion of the consultations carried out in respect of the claim, the documentary and witness evidence investigated and the legal tests for the making of a Definitive Map Modification Order (“DMMO”). The report makes a recommendation based on this information for quasi-judicial decision by Members as to whether an Order should be made to add a Bridleway.

Executive Summary

- 2 The report considers the evidence submitted and researched in the application to amend the Definitive Map and Statement in adding a Bridleway between Buxton Old Road and Footpath 39, Parish of Disley,

and upgrade (in part) to Bridleway Public Footpath 39. This includes a discussion of the consultations carried out in respect of the claim, the historical evidence, witness evidence and the legal tests for a Definitive Map Modification Order to be made. The report makes a recommendation based on that information, for quasi-judicial decision by Members as to whether an Order should be made to record a Public Bridleway.

- 3 The evidence consists of 2 standard user evidence forms submitted by witnesses who claimed to have travelled the path on horseback, supported by a further 18 statements signed by witnesses who also claim to have used the path on horseback. An additional witness statement was received during the informal consultation process held during the investigation of the application. The report determines whether on the balance of probabilities a public Bridleway has been shown to subsist along Footpath 39 (points of A–B Appendix 1) and reasonably alleged to subsist along the route between points B–C of Appendix 1.
- 4 Various historical documents have been viewed including various maps such as County Maps and Ordnance Survey maps, Tithe Map and Finance Act plan. A number of witness statements were submitted with the application and whilst it was only possible to interview a small number of individuals, this evidence is considered sufficient to satisfy the tests that a public Bridleway has been shown to subsist along Footpath 39 (points A–B of Appendix 1) and reasonably alleged to subsist along the route between points B–C of Appendix 1.
- 5 The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Corporate Plan aim of “A thriving and sustainable place”, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Highways & Transport Committee is recommended to:

1. Decide that a Definitive Map Modification Order be made under Sections 53(3)(c)(i) and 53(3)(c)(ii) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 to upgrade (in part) Disley Footpath 39 to Bridleway from points A – B of Plan No WCA/049 of Appendix 1 and to add a Bridleway between Buxton Old Road and Disley Footpath 39 Disley, from points B – C of Plan No WCA/049 of Appendix 1, in the Parish of Disley.
2. Decide that public notice of the making of the Order be given and in the event of there being no objections within the period specified, the Order be confirmed in the exercise of the powers conferred on the Council by the said Act.
3. Note that in the event of objections being received, Cheshire East Borough Council be responsible for the conduct of any hearing or Public Inquiry.

Background

- 6 The application was submitted by an individual on the 25th of September 2008. The application consisted of user evidence forms from 2 individuals and 18 witness statements claiming use on horseback.

Description of the application route

- 7 Description of Footpath 39 to be upgraded to Bridleway (points A–B of Appendix 1):

Travelling north to south and using the plan Ref: WCA/049 of Appendix 1 as a reference, the application shows a route starting from Ward Lane from point A, OS grid reference SJ 398596 for a distance of approximately 110 metres to point B at OS grid reference SJ 398618. The claimed Bridleway runs along Footpath No.39 Disley, commencing at Ward Lane at a signpost at Point A and heads south in between old stone walls; the stone walls at this part of the route are in a poor condition with little left on the western wall. The path is approximately 1.8 wide between the walls, is of a stone/loose gravel type surface with signs of shallow timber steps or maybe water bars in the surface for the first 50m. The path starts to widen out to approximately 2.4 meters between the walls, where there is also a pedestrian gate accessing Greens Hall Cottage. The condition of the walls have improved by this point albeit it is difficult to view them due to the encroaching vegetation. Whilst the distance between the walls has widened along this section, the usable width is narrow due to the encroaching vegetation. There is a clear trodden route through the centre of the path and the surface has now become more natural and the stones larger and almost “cobbled” in nature, with a combination of old brick in some locations. At Point B the path narrows down to approximately 1.8 meters between the walls, with the western wall having been restored at some time. Footpath No.39 Disley continues towards the west through a way-marked field-gate at Point B.

8. Description of route to be added as Bridleway between Footpath 39 and Buxton Old Road (points B–C of Appendix 1):

From the gate at Point B, OS Grid Reference SJ 398618 the claimed Bridleway widens out to approximately 3.5 meters continuing south between the adjoining stone walls. Whilst the width between the wall is approximately 3.5 meters the useable width is much narrower due to encroaching vegetation. The path then narrows to approximately 2 meters, passing by the pedestrian

access to the adjoining properties. Continuing south passing in between Byron House to the west and Rock House to the east the path is approximately 2.3 meters wide. The vegetation from the sides of the lane is generally well maintained and there is a clear trod route down the centre. The surface is mostly of a natural earth/grass finish with some larger stones visible in some locations. The stone walls either side and are in generally good condition where they adjoin the neighbouring properties. There are no signs on the section between point B and C to indicate that it is public nor that it is private. The route to be added terminates at point C, OS Grid Reference SJ 398616, Junction with Buxton Old Road.

Photographs

9. Photographs of the claimed route can be seen at Appendix 2.

Legal issues

10 Section 53(2)(b) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (WCA) requires that the Council shall keep the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review and make such modifications to the Map and Statement as appear requisite in consequence of the occurrence of certain events: -

11 Such events are,

Section 53(3)(c)(i) where:

“(c) the discovery by the authority of evidence which (when considered with all other relevant evidence available to them) shows: -

(i) that a right of way which is not shown on the map and statement subsists or is reasonably alleged to subsist over land in the area to which the map relates, being a right of way such that the land over which the right subsists is a public path, a restricted byway or, subsection to section 54A, a byway open to all traffic.”

Section 53(3)(c)(ii) where:

“(c) the discovery by the authority of evidence which (when considered with all other relevant evidence available to them) shows: -

(ii) that a highway shown in the map and statement as a highway of a particular description ought to be there shown as a highway of a different description.

12 The evidence can consist of documentary/historical evidence or user evidence or a mixture of both. All the evidence must be evaluated and

weighed, and a conclusion reached whether, on the 'balance of probabilities' the rights are shown to exist. Any other issues, such as safety, security, suitability, desirability or the effects on property or the environment, are not relevant to the decision.

- 13 An order can be made to add a route to the Definitive Map where it can be shown that it is reasonably alleged to subsist whereas an order to upgrade a route already shown on the Definitive Map must exist on the balance of probabilities.
- 14 Where the evidence in support of the application is user evidence, section 31(1) of the Highways Act 1980 applies. This states; -

“Where a way.....has been enjoyed by the public as of right and without interruption for a full period of twenty years, the way is deemed to have been dedicated as a highway unless there is sufficient evidence that there was no intention during that period to dedicate it.
- 15 This requires that the public must have used the way without interruption and as of right; that is without force, secrecy or permission. Section 31(2) states that “the 20 years is to be calculated retrospectively from the date when the right of the public to use the way is brought into question”.
- 16 For public rights to have come into being through long use, as stated above, a twenty-year period must be identified during which time, use can be established. Where no challenge to the use has occurred, this period can be taken as the twenty years immediately prior to the date of the application.
- 17 In this case, whilst it appears that some users were challenged in their use of the route on horseback it has not been possible to identify when this challenge first occurred and as such the date of the application will be used to calculate the relevant 20-year period.
- 18 Where a path is already recorded as a Public Footpath it is possible to acquire higher rights of access through use on a bike or on horseback, if that use meets the tests outlined in section 31 of the Highways Act or at Common Law. Sufficient use on horseback over a twenty-year period could raise the presumption that Bridleway rights have been acquired. A Bridleway provides access to the public on foot on a bicycle, on horseback or leading a horse.
- 19 The matter of Public Nuisance needs to be considered in upgrade cases; the Bakewell judgment (*Bakewell Management Ltd v Brandwood [2004] UKHL 14*) provides that if a public nuisance had been caused by such use, then the use does not qualify towards dedication under s31. Any nuisance must have already taken place – it cannot be determined on the

basis that horses may cause a nuisance in the future and there must be evidence of this.

- 20 Public rights can also be established under common law based on evidence of public use and there is no requirement for a period of twenty years. It is possible to create route through implied dedication, where the owner is aware of the public using the route and has taken no steps to deter the public from using the route.

The investigation

- 21 An investigation of the available evidence has been undertaken. The documentary evidence that has been examined is referred to below and a list of all the evidence taken into consideration can be found in Appendix 3.

County Maps 18th/19th Century

- 22 These are small scale maps made by commercial mapmakers, some of which are known to have been produced from original surveys and others are believed to be copies of earlier maps. All were essentially topographic maps portraying what the surveyors saw on the ground. They included features of interest, including roads and tracks. It is doubtful whether mapmakers checked the status of routes or had the same sense of status of routes that exist today. There are known errors on many mapmakers' work and private estate roads and cul-de-sac paths are sometimes depicted as 'cross-roads'. The maps do not provide conclusive evidence of public status, although they may provide supporting evidence of the existence of a route.

P.P. Burdett map (1794)

- 23 The map appears to show a route in the vicinity of Footpath 39 heading in a north-south direction towards Badgers Clough which is identified on the map. Badgers Clough is a small farm immediately east of Rock View Cottage providing some context as to the location of the route. The map is not of a sufficient quality in terms of scaling and detail to identify whether the alignment of Footpath 39 or the unregistered path between point B-C (Appendix 1) is depicted where it leads out to Buxton Old Road. There are buildings shown on both sides of the route where it meets Buxton old Road. Ward Lane, which terminates at Lane Ends is not depicted.

Swire & Hutchings (1830)

- 24 The map appears to show a route in the vicinity of the order route heading in a north-south direction towards Badgers Clough which is not identified on the map. The map is not of a sufficient quality in terms of scaling and

detail to identify whether the alignment of Footpath 39 or the unregistered path between points B–C (Appendix 1) is depicted where it leads out to Buxton old Road. There are no buildings depicted in the vicinity of Byron House and Rock View Cottage. Ward Lane, which terminates at Lane Ends is not depicted.

Bryant A (1831)

- 25 The map appears to show a route in the vicinity of the order route heading in a north-south direction towards Badgers Clough which is identified on the map. The map is not of a sufficient quality in terms of scaling and detail to identify whether the alignment of Footpath 39 or the unregistered path between points B – C (Appendix 1) is depicted where it leads out to Buxton old Road. Some of the buildings are shown, including what may be Rock View Cottage but the scale is such it is not shown clearly. Ward Lane, which terminates at Lane Ends is depicted on the map.

Tithe Map

- 26 Tithe Awards were prepared under the Tithe Commutation Act 1836, which commuted the payment of a tax (tithe) in kind, to a monetary payment. The purpose of the Award was to record productive land on which a tax could be levied. The Tithe Map and Award were independently produced by parishes and the quality of the maps is variable. The 1836 Act relieved the Tithe Commissioners of the need to certify all maps.
- 27 It was not the purpose of the Awards to record public highways. Although depiction of both private occupation and public roads may provide good supporting evidence of the existence of a route, especially since they were implemented as part of a statutory process. Colouring of a track may or may not be significant in determining status. In the absence of a key, explanation or other corroborative evidence the colouring cannot be deemed to be conclusive of anything.
- 28 The tithe map produced c1842 is a second-class map (Maps that met the rigorous standards set by the Tithe Commissioners were classified as ‘first class’ whilst those classified as ‘second class’ varied in quality and scope) and shows the route from Badgers Clough with what appears to be a gate at the road with Buxton Old Road. The route from points A–C (Appendix 1) is shown in its entirety as is the continuation of Footpath 39 through Byron House. The book of reference describes this hereditament as “*road from Lane End to Turnpike Road near Green’s Hall with a land use of thoroughfare*”.

Ordnance Survey Records (OS)

29 OS mapping was originally for military purposes to record all roads and tracks that could be used in times of war; this included both public and private routes. These maps are good evidence of the physical existence of routes, but not necessarily of status. Since 1889 the Ordnance Survey has included a disclaimer on all its maps to the effect that the depiction of a road is not evidence of the existence of a right of way. It is argued that this disclaimer was solely to avoid potential litigation. Recent research into the instructions given to the field surveyors and the development of the OS shows they appear to have tried to depict all routes, paths and ways that were physical features and if observed to be used by the public. However, there is no documentation to show the OS went through a statutory process of checking with the local authorities to establish the status of a way or path. The maps are good evidence of the existence of a way or path and can support any other evidence claiming public rights of way.

30 O.S. 6" to 1 mile 1st Edition County Series 1881

Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. It appears quite narrow for the first 30/40 metres part before becoming wider. It continues north to where it meets Ward Lane/Cork Lane, albeit it seems unclear how it exits the lane as there is a boundary, it is assumed there would be a gate at this location. FP 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road

31 O.S. 6" to 1 mile 2nd Edition 1899

Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. It appears to be of more of a uniform width at Rock View Cottage than the previous 1881 map. There appears to be a more of a defined exit onto Ward Lane/Cork Lane; this entrance appears to be gated as it has black line across the route. Footpath 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road

32 OS 25" to 1 mile 2nd Edition Cheshire XX.15 1897

Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what may be a gated entrance. There is a brace just north of where the lane leaves Buxton Old Road tying the land either side of the lane.

A black line, maybe indicative of a gate extends across the lane near where FP 39 heads West through Byron House.

The lane is provided its own parcel number of 252 with an acreage of 0.152.

33 O.S. 6" to 1 mile 2nd Edition 1912

Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. There again appears to be more of a defined exit onto Ward Lane/Cork Lane; this entrance appears to be gated as it has black line across the route. FP 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road

34 O.S. 6" to 1 mile 1912 Edition 1924

Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. There again appears to be more of a defined exit onto Ward Lane/Cork Lane; this entrance appears to be gated as it has black line across the route. FP 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road

Bartholomew's Half Inch to a Mile

35 Bartholomew was a Scottish company with a good reputation of publishing maps from the late 19th century. Between c1911 and 1928 there was an arrangement with the Cyclists Touring Club for their members to send in revisions and their logo was shown on the maps where this arrangement was in place. The maps were based on OS base maps. The maps set out a classification of use, although there is a caveat that the depiction of any route was not evidence of a public right of way and background to the maps indicates that they relied on user reviews to make any corrections. Comparison of map publication dates may show any consistent depiction of a particular route.

36 Bartholomew's half inch 1902-1906 new series (1904)

The route is not shown on the map. Ward Lane/Cork Lane is shown as a secondary road.

37 Bartholomew's revised half inch 1919-1924 series (1920)

The route is not shown on the map. Ward Lane/Cork Lane is shown as a secondary road.

38 Bartholomew's revised half inch 1940-47 (1941)

The route is not shown on the map. Ward Lane/Cork Lane is shown as a secondary road

Finance Act 1910

39 The Finance Act of 1910 involved a national survey of land by the Inland Revenue so that an incremental value duty could be levied when ownership was transferred. Land was valued for each owner/occupier and this land was given a hereditament number. It is thought that

exclusion of highways on the maps came under S35(1) of the Act not to charge on land or an interest in land held by a rating authority. Landowners could claim tax relief where a highway crossed their land. Although the existence of a public right of way may be admitted it is not usually described or a route shown on the plan.

40 Two sets of plans were produced: the working plans for the original valuation and the record plans once the valuation was complete. Two sets of books were produced to accompany the maps; the field books, which record what the surveyor found at each property and the so-called 'Domesday Book', which was the complete register of properties and valuations.

41 The exclusion of vehicular roads stems from s35 of the Finance Act 1910 which provided that no duty under this part of the Act shall be charged in respect of any land or interest in land held by or on behalf of a Rating Authority. A Highway Authority was considering a Rating Authority.

42 The Wildlife and Countryside Act Definitive Map Orders Consistency Guidelines indicate that:

"..if a route in dispute is external to any numbered hereditament, there is a strong possibility that it was considered a public highway, normally but not necessarily vehicular, since Footpaths and Bridleways were usually dealt with by deductions recorded in the forms and Field Books."

43 In the case of *Fortune v Wiltshire CC [2012] EWCA Civ 334* Lewison J gave consideration to the interpretation of routes excluded from adjacent hereditaments. In essence he concluded that the Finance Act records are not definitive; they are "simply one part of the jigsaw puzzle" to be considered along with other relevant material particular to each case.

44 Reinforcing the view of Lewison J, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Definitive Map Orders: Consistency Guidelines¹ concluding comment states:

It should not be assumed that the existence of public carriageway rights is the only explanation for the exclusion of a route from adjacent hereditaments although this may be a strong possibility, depending on the circumstances.

Working Plans

45 Evidence of the possible existence of a public right of way in Finance Act documentation usually arises in one of two ways:

¹ Planning inspectorate, updated 27th January 2022

Reference to it in one or more of the various documents forming part of the valuation process, or

Exclusion of a route from the assessable parcels of land shown on the map record.

- 46 The plan covering OS sheet Cheshire XX.15 was available at Cheshire Archives; this would be the working plan. The record plan was not available at The National Archives.
- 47 The Finance Act documents inspected shows that part of Footpath 39 is excluded from assessable parcels of land (points A – B Appendix 1). Routes that are uncolored are sometimes referred to as “white roads” as they are separate from abutting hereditaments.
- 48 The section of the map that depicts between Byron House and Rock View Cottage has no hereditaments in the enclosures abutting the route between points B–C (Appendix 1). As such this does not therefore provide any indication of the status of the route in this vicinity.
- 49 There is certainly an indication from the Finance Act Map that part of Footpath 39 (between points A–B) may have carriageway rights. There is unfortunately no detail on section of unregistered route between points B–C (Appendix 1).

Definitive Map Process – National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949

- 50 The Definitive Map and Statement is based on surveys and plans produced in the early 1950s by each Parish in Cheshire, of all the ways they considered to be public at that time. The surveys were used as the basis for the Draft Definitive Map.
- 51 Disley Rural District Walking Survey

Described as a Footpath of approximately 200 yards in length, commencing at Ward Lane, Higher Disley and terminating at Byron House, Higher Disley. General description states that the Footpath divides at the rear of Byron House, with outlets onto Buxton Old Road on the East and West side of Byron House. It goes on to describe the path as a narrow path commencing at right angles to Ward Lane, and ascending to Byron House, and out on to Buxton Old Road. About halfway up one passes a fairly large house with well-kept garden. Path is very narrow and is not well kept being muddy and grassy. In handwriting it then states that “walls about 20” apart”. There is a further short comment in handwriting that is not entirely clear.

- 52 Draft Definitive Map July 1950

Footpath 39 is shown travelling north to south along what seems to be a bounded lane. On reaching Byron House the path splits and is shown as existing on both sides of the property, matching what is described in the walking survey. There were no objections from landowners at the time to the addition of Footpath No 39 Disley to the map. Provisional Definitive Map 1st November 1954.

- 53 Footpath 39 is shown travelling north to south along what seems to be a bounded lane, leading in a Westerly direction passing by Byron House. There is no route showing on the Eastern side of Byron House. There were no objections to the addition of Footpath No.39 Disley to the map.

Definitive Map

- 54 This replicates what was in the earlier Provisional Definitive Map with Footpath 39 shown travelling north to south along what seems to be a bounded lane, leading in a Westerly direction passing by Byron House. There is no route showing on the Eastern side of Byron House.

Definitive Statement

- 55 The path is described as “From Ward Lane in a southerly direction to Buxton Old Road (UC/4/24) at Badgerclough”; and as being generally about 20ft wide.

Land Registry information

- 56 None of the land over which the application route runs (from point A – C of Appendix 1) is registered with the Land Registry.

Aerial Images

- 57 A number of aerial images were available for the location spanning the period from 1948 through to 2021

- 58 RAF Aerial image Sortie: RAF/541/25

The picture quality is poor. It is possible to make out what appears to be a track running in the vicinity of Footpath 39 but this appears to be located further east.

- 59 Aerial image (black and white) 1971

Very poor-quality image, it is not possible to decipher much from it.

- 60 Aerial image (colour) 1999-2003

Poor quality image; looks like its taken in Winter due to lack of tree cover. Possible to see the general outline of the route and abutting properties.

- 61 Aerial image (colour) 2010

Image taken in Autumn with a fair bit of tree cover. Long shadows covering parts of the route. Bounded lane visible running between Byron House and Rock View Cottage.

- 62 Aerial image (colour) 2015-17

Image taken in Summer, with a lot of tree cover. Bounded lane running between Byron House and Rock View Cottage just about visible at the junction with Buxton old Road.

- 63 Aerial image (colour) 2019-21

Image taken in Autumn with a fair bit of tree cover. Long shadows covering parts of the route. Bounded lane running between Byron House and Rock View Cottage just about visible at the junction with Buxton old Road but mostly obscured by shadows.

Footpath 39 Diversion Order 1987 and Secretary of State decision notice

- 64 The diversion order relates to the section of Footpath 39, which is not subject to the current application; however, it provides valuable insight into the use of the path at that time and corroborates some of the evidence submitted in the witness statements in the current application. The diversion order made under the Highways Act 1980 received objections and was determined by way of a public inquiry. Two of the individuals who submitted witness statements for the current application gave evidence at the public inquiry reinforcing their use of the route on horseback.

- 65 The inspector makes reference to the use of the route on horseback describing it as “much used” and refers to the east route (between points B – C of Appendix 1) as probably a well-established public right of way.

Witness evidence

- 66 There are no registered owners along the route; the abutting owners were contacted as part of the informal consultation held between the 3rd October 2024 and 14th November 2024. Site notices were also erected either end of the claimed path during the informal consultation period.

- 67 With regards to user evidence there were two who completed User Evidence Forms (referenced as UEF) and 18 who provided witness statements (referenced as WS). On further examination one of the witness statements indicates that the person in question had not used the route on horseback themselves, rather they owned livery nearby and could attest to use by others.

- 68 Contact was attempted with all witnesses; however, it has only been possible to interview two of the users who supported the application. Eleven indicating that they had used the paths for a period of twenty years. In total the use spans 44 years, between 1964 and 2008.
- 69 One further witness was interviewed as part of the investigations. Discussions with the applicant confirms that the majority of those who provided supporting evidence at the time of the application will have either moved away, are too elderly to provide further information or have passed away.
- 70 One person had not used the route themselves but owned a nearby stables for over sixty years and attests that it was a “common sight” to see the route being used by horse riders. Three individuals either currently live or have lived in Byron House which is situated part way along the Footpath number 39 and such their use on horseback was only along part of the path being claimed and could possibly be considered private in nature.

Witnesses interviewed

- 71 Only two of those who provided evidence in support as part of the original application were available for interview.
- 72 One user (UEF1) lived on the route and only used the part that is currently registered as Footpath 39 (point A–B of Appendix 1). They were able to provide a good indication of use by others due to their vantage point from the location and proximity of their property to the route. They had lived at the property since 2002 and would have known the route for 6 years by the time of application.
- 73 The other user (UEF2) also lived nearby, not on the route itself but certainly close enough to be able to see the route and those using it. They had used the route since 1998 when they moved to the property and continued to use it after the application was submitted. Both UEF 1 and 2 lived close proximity to the route and not only used it themselves but also seen others do so.
- 74 Both UEF 1 and UEF 2 indicated that they were challenged by the owner of Rock View Cottage. There was a dispute over landownership and private rights of access, with UEF2 also indicating that the owner of Rock View Cottage would also challenge users on occasion. It is unclear when these challenges would have occurred; however it did not appear to have the effect of stopping or limiting use. It does appear that these challenges were what eventually led to the submission of the application to upgrade and register the route as a public Bridleway.

- 75 Neither users ever recall there being any physical barriers along the route and that it has always existed as a through on the ground running between the stone walls. They used it themselves and also knew of and saw others that they knew and some that they did not know frequently using the route on horseback.
- 76 One user came forward (WS19) during the informal consultation period and was related to WS4. They provided a written statement attesting that they had used the route since around 1984 on a frequency of two to three times a week, often with others. They were related to the person who ran a riding school close by and claimed to have used the route with many others, up to nine at a time and had always considered it to be a route they had access to. They confirmed that there were issues at times with the owner of Rock View Cottage but that this again did not prevent or deter usage. Both WS4 and WS19 provided supporting evidence at the public inquiry for the diversion of Footpath 39 in 1987, where they attested to their use of the path on horseback.

Witnesses not interviewed

- 77 It can be difficult to evaluate evidence when individuals are not available for interview. This is particularly true in this case where those who were not interviewed, provided their evidence by means of signed standard witness template rather than a User Evidence Form.
- 78 The statements are all standard text and brief; five are supplemented with some further details around their use of the route. It is not possible to evaluate whether the users had connections with the land, had obtained or sought permission or had otherwise been challenged; however they were all willing to provide their support that they had used the route and that they considered it public.
- 79 For ease of reference the witness statements are referred to as WS followed by the individual's number.
- 80 WS1 indicated that they had not used the route on horseback nor owned a horse; however, they had lived on Ward Lane for over 60 years and could attest to its use by pedestrians and horse riders during that time.
- 81 WS3 is only relevant to the section relating to Footpath No.39 Disley (points A - B of Appendix 1) as they were the previous occupiers of Byron House, between 1983 and 2002. They claim to have used the route on horseback for 30 years. They provide additional information on use of the route by others, which they saw whilst they occupied Byron House.
- 82 WS4 claims use for 48 years and also provide further information beyond that of the standard template. They indicate that they have lived in Higher Disley for over 40 years, including at Badgerclough Farm, which is

directly opposite where the claimed path leaves Buxton Old Road. They claim to have used the route on horseback on a constant basis and that nobody had ever objected to this use and that it provided a safe alternative to Buxton Old Road.

83 WS5 is only relevant to the section relating to Footpath 39 (points A-B of Appendix 1) as they lived at Byron House during the six years that they used the route.

84 WS6 claims to have used the route for 36 years and that they ridden up and down the path since they were a small child. They state that access is even more important due to the speed of traffic on Buxton old Road.

85 None of the other witness statements provide any further detail than a name, address, the years they have used the route and where they kept their horses.

Landowner rebuttal

86 Whilst the evidence of use may be considered sufficient to show that Bridleway rights can be presumed to exist, these can still be rebutted if there is sufficient evidence that there was no intention during that period to dedicate it as such.

87 The Land Registry information suggests that there route itself (in its entirety between point A–C of Appendix 1) is unregistered. The fact that the land is not included in the Land Registry is evidence that land is not registered rather than it not being owned.

88 Challenging the use of a way by the public can be done by a person who is not the owner of the way in question. The Planning Inspectorate, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Definitive Map Orders: Consistency Guidelines indicates that the “bringing into question” does not have to arise from the action of the owner of the land or on their behalf quoting *Applegarth v Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions [2001] EWHC Admin 487*, where the owner of a property whose access was via a track claimed to be a Bridleway, challenged the public use although he did not own the track. A lack of intention to dedicate, in effect rebutting public rights can only be done by the landowner or someone with the authority to do so on their behalf.

89 Understanding when the challenge was made is an important factor in determining whether a public right of way has been established through long usage as it determines the relevant period and whether there was any evidence during that period which may have led to those rights being rebutted.

- 90 In *Applegarth v Secretary of State for Environment, Transport and the Regions [2001] EWHC Admin 487*, Munby J stated: "Whether someone or something has "brought into question" the "right of the public to use the way" is...a question of fact and degree in every case." Thus any action which raises the issue would seem to be sufficient. Where there is no identifiable event which has brought into question the use of a path or way, section 31 (7A) and (7B) of Highways Act 1980 (as amended by s69 of Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006) provides that the date of an application for a modification order under WCA81 s53 can be used as the date at which use was brought into question.
- 91 It is evident from the witnesses interviewed that the owners of Rock View Cottage did challenge users who were travelling on horseback on occasion and that this is ultimately what led to the submission of the application. It has not however been possible to determine a date when the owner of Rock View Cottage began to challenge use. The owners of Rock View Cottage did submit an objection to the Council following the service of notice of application in 2008.
- 92 In this instance there is no clearly identifiable date as to when the challenge to use occurred and as such the date of the application is considered the date the rights of the public were challenged as provided for by section 31 (7A) and (7B) of HA80 (as amended by s69 of NERC06) and provides the relevant period i.e. 2008-1988.
- 93 Having established the relevant period, consideration is given to whether a lack of intention to dedicate has been shown by the owner or someone acting with authority on their behalf. All abutting owners were contacted as part of the consultation, with notices erected at the commencement of Footpath No.39 on Ward Lane (point A of Appendix 1) and Buxton Old Road (point C of Appendix 1).
- 94 No evidence was discovered nor submitted during the consultation period that would indicate that the presumption of public rights under section 31 of the Highways Act 1980 were in any way rebutted by any individual with a capacity to do so. There is nothing to indicate that the landowner has undertaken any acts that would indicate to the public that they were not using a public Bridleway and as such there appears to have been no rebuttal of the rights.

Public Nuisance

- 95 The matter of Public Nuisance needs to be considered in upgrade cases; the Bakewell judgment (*Bakewell Management Ltd v Brandwood [2004] UKHL 14*) provides that if a public nuisance had been caused by such use, then the use does not qualify towards dedication under s31.

- 96 Whilst the owners of Rock View Cottage challenged use on horseback on occasion and the Parish Council included reference to a stile being needed to limit use on horseback there does not appear to be any further information or evidence that use on horseback was considered a public nuisance.
- 97 The lack of actual evidence of incidents implies that use on horseback has not caused a public nuisance.

Consultation and Engagement

- 98 Consultation documentation was sent to abutting landowners owners and occupiers on the 3rd October 2024 providing 6 weeks for a response.
- 99 In addition to the owners and occupiers, a consultation was sent on 3rd October 2024 to the Disley Ward Member, the Disley Parish Council and local user groups.

Responses were received from:

- 100 The Peak & Northern Footpath Society confirmed that they had no objection to the application. They offered no further evidence.
- 101 The local representatives of the British Horse Society offered their support for the application but provided no additional evidence.
- 102 East Cheshire Ramblers provided no evidence but stated that they considered a formal order as being unnecessary as it was already open for use by horse riders
- 103 The Green Lane Association object to the application indicating that they believe the routes in question should in fact be shown as public carriageways and provided evidence in support of their case. This evidence consisted of:
- 104 Copy of the Finance Act map, which they interpret as depicting the routes as 'white roads', used to indicate Byway rights, with Bridleways not having been excluded from adjacent land parcels in this way.
- 105 Tithe map and apportionment. They indicate that the way the route is shown in the tithe map is consistent with other local carriage roads indicative of Byway rights. Furthermore that groups of highways in Disley were given numbers on the tithe map and described in the apportionments as 'road' and "thoroughfare" and that such terms would not have been used to refer would not have been used to refer to a Bridleway.
- 106 Minutes from the Disley Footpath Society 30.11.07 indicating that Footpath 39 was officially diverted in 1988 but the landowner has created

a new unofficial diversion and that a stile is needed further along to keep horses off the path". Furthermore, on the 4th August 2008 it is recorded that horses are entering the private track by Byron House and then joining Footpath 39. There is also an indication that they have photos from 2013 which shows that work was completed to the surface to bring the Footpath up to Bridleway standard.

- 107 Railway Plans for the Manchester Midland Junction Railway and Manchester and Buxton Railway. Greenshall Lane can be seen continuing south past Green Hall towards the application route, shown in the same manner as other carriage roads are shown.
- 108 Photographs of the route and of adjoining Greenshall Lane referencing that public money has clearly been spent on the maintenance of these routes (as indicated by public highway furniture along the route of Greenhalls Lane, and signs erected by Disley Parish Council).
- 109 Reference is also made to the Land Registry's INSPIRE data, where all registered parcels of land are marked green - the order route is excluded from those parcels
- 110 Cheshire Riders Group support the application but did not provide any evidence in support.
- 111 A response from Disley Parish Council was received confirming that they had no objection to the application.
- 112 There were no representations that questioned the validity of the application, nor any evidence submitted in rebuttal of that submitted by the applicants and the witnesses.

Other Matters

- 113 One matter that was raised during the consultation is the status of the "road" from which Footpath 39 commences (Ward Lane) and that it is not currently included on the Council's list of streets. The same applies for Greenshall Lane and Cork Lane further on. This has been confirmed by Cheshire East Highways Officers.
- 114 The list of streets is a record of publicly maintainable highways and not of a record of public rights and its omission is not conclusive with regards to its status. The case in favour of Ward Lane being a public highway is that it clearly has a reputation of being public in terms of its usage and that there are number of public rights of way culminating or commencing from it. It would seem implausible that all these would have been recorded as dead ends.

- 115 The status in terms of exactly what rights exist on Ward Lane is a matter to be confirmed however recording Footpath 39 as a Bridleway should not be prejudicial to this - the case in favour of Ward Lane and adjoining roads having at least Bridleway rights would need to be made, however.
- 116 There is nothing that prohibits the making of an Order where it creates a cul de sac. In particular where there is clearly an onward route even if that onward route has no formal designation. In this instance there is of course already a Public Footpath which is recorded as commencing on Ward Lane so clearly Ward Lane was considered capable of accommodating public rights at the time the Definitive Map was being prepared. The status of Ward Lane and other adjoining highways would be a matter to consider separately; it is clear from their physical attributes and use that there are public rights being exercised and likely to be higher than Footpath status.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 117 Under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside 1981 Act, the Council has a duty as the Surveying Authority to keep the DM under continuous review. Section 53(3)(c) allows for an authority to act on the “discovery of evidence” that suggests that the DM needs to be amended. The authority must investigate and determine that evidence and decide on the outcome whether to make a DMMO or not.
- 118 There are two different strands of Section 53 (c) under consideration in this application, Section 53(3)(c)(i) and Section 53(3)(c)(ii) and whilst this will lead to some repetition with regards to the recommendations, they are dealt with separately due to the slightly differing tests required to be met to make an order to amend the Definitive Map and Statement.

Upgrading of Footpath No.39 Disley to Bridleway under Section 53(3)(c)(ii) of the Wildlife and Countryside 1981 Act (between points A and B of Appendix 1)

Documentary evidence –

- 119 All of the OS maps viewed show that there has been a physical route on the ground between points A–B (Appendix 1) since the earliest map viewed (O.S. 6” to 1 mile 1st Edition County Series 1881).
- 120 A through route is shown on the P.P. Burdett map (1794) map, the Swire and Hutching’s map (1830) and Bryant’s Map (1831). These maps show the route between points A–B (Appendix 1); however the maps are of insufficient quality in terms of scaling and detail to show which route is followed from point B (Appendix 1) onwards to Buxton Old Road.
- 121 The tithe map includes the alignment of Footpath 39 in its entirety and described as a thoroughfare. It is depicted in the same way as other

routes that are depicted as public rights of way, with private ways being differentiated as occupation roads. There are other routes depicted on the tithe map in a similar manner that are now public carriageways, however there are also others which are shown on the Definitive Map as Public Footpaths such as Disley Footpath 75 and Disley Footpath 28, i.e there is no uniform approach. This gives us an indication that the route had some public status, which reinforces its later inclusion on the Definitive Map albeit it does not provide further indication of its status and whether this was considered to have higher rights than its currently recorded Footpath status.

- 122 The documents considered as part of the preparation of the Definitive Map include the Disley Rural Walking Survey, The Draft Definitive Map, The Provisional Definitive Map and the Definitive Map and Statement. All of these documents describe the route as a Public Footpath and no evidence has been discovered that indicates that this status was in any way disputed through the various stages of preparation of the Definitive Map.
- 123 The Finance Act documents inspected shows that part of Footpath 39 are excluded from assessable parcels of land (points A – B of Appendix 1). Routes that are uncolored are sometimes referred to as “white roads” as they are separate from abutting hereditaments.
- 124 There is an indication from the Finance Act Map that the route may have carriageway rights, being uncolored and unnumbered and excluded from neighboring hereditaments.
- 125 The Planning Inspectorate, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Definitive Map Orders: Consistency Guidelines indicates that there is a strong possibility that a route being external to any numbered hereditament, would be considered a public highway, normally but not necessarily vehicular, since Footpaths and Bridleways were usually dealt with by deductions recorded in the forms and Field Books.
- 126 Documents and plans produced under the Finance Act 1910 can provide good evidence regarding the status of a way. In all cases the evidence needs to be considered in relation to the other available evidence to establish its value. It must be remembered that the production of information on such ways was very much incidental to the main purpose of the legislation.
- 127 In the case of *Fortune v Wiltshire CC [2012] EWCA Civ 334* Lewison J gave careful consideration to the interpretation of routes excluded from adjacent hereditaments. In essence he concluded that the Finance Act records are not definitive; they are “simply one part of the jigsaw puzzle”

to be considered along with other relevant material particular to each case.

- 128 Railway Plans for the Manchester Midland Junction Railway and Manchester and Buxton Railway were submitted by the Green Lane Association however these do not show Footpath 39 between point A – B (Appendix 1);
- 129 The documentary evidence provides support of there being higher rights along Footpath 39 between points A – B (Appendix 1); however it is not considered sufficient in its own right to show that the route in Appendix 1 should be shown as a public Bridleway on the balance of probabilities.

User Evidence

- 130 It is clear that a number of people were willing to attest to their use of the route and that this dated back over many years (44 years in total), between 1964 and 2008; with eleven indicating they had used the route for a period of twenty years or more.
- 131 One person had not used the route themselves but owned a nearby stables for over sixty years and attests that it was a “common sight” to see the route being used by horse riders
- 132 The users that were interviewed either live or have lived near the route and had a good knowledge of the route and would have used it and seen others do so over many years. They also used it with other local horse riders and the proximity of stables (on Ward Lane) and a former riding school (on Buxton Old Road) adds some weight to this.
- 133 Those that were interviewed suggest that use would have been challenged on occasion by the owner of Rock View Cottage. Despite the challenge it did not appear to be effective in deterring use and riders continued to use the route and do so to this day; there are no signs to indicate that the lane is not available for public use or is otherwise private.
- 134 Those interviewed indicate they always believed the path to be a Bridleway, they had not encountered any physical obstructions, they had not entered through force, nor had they sought or been provided permission to be there.
- 135 One user attested that they had used the route since around 1984 on a frequency of two to three times a week, often with others. They were related to the person who ran a riding school close by and claimed to have used the route with many others, up to nine at a time and had always considered it to be a route they had access to.

- 136 The Diversion Order in 1987 provides valuable corroborating evidence of use on horseback with one of the witnesses who provided a statement as part of the current application, (who was unavailable for interview), providing evidence at the public inquiry (WS4). Another witness who was available for interview (WS19) also provided evidence at the inquiry. The inspector at the inquiry makes reference to the level of use on horseback as do other witnesses.
- 137 It is considered that there is sufficient use of the claimed route without force, secrecy, or permission, that is without interruption and as of right that demonstrates that it has been in existence and used for over 20 years.
- 138 No evidence was discovered nor submitted during the consultation period that would indicate that the presumption of public rights under section 31 of the Highways Act 1980 were in any way rebutted.
- 139 In summation the level of use, the length of use, the reputation of the route and the documentary evidence taken together suggests that Footpath No.39 Disley (between points A-B Appendix 1) has acquired Bridleway status on the balance of probabilities.

Addition of a Bridleway between Disley Footpath 39 and Buxton Old Road (points B-C of Appendix 1) under Section 53(3)(c)(i) of the Wildlife and Countryside 1981 Act

Documentary evidence –

- 140 All of the OS maps viewed show that there has been a physical route on the ground between points B – C (Appendix 1) since the earliest map viewed (O.S. 6” to 1 mile 1st Edition County Series 1881) and access may have been gated at the junction with Buxton Old Road (point C appendix 1).
- 141 A through route is shown on the P.P. Burdett map (1794) map, the Swire and Hutching’s map (1830) and Bryant’s Map (1831). These maps show the route between points A–B (Appendix 1); however, the maps are of insufficient quality in terms of scaling and detail to show which route is followed from point B (Appendix 1) onwards to Buxton Old Road.
- 142 The route between points B-C (Appendix 1) is identified as a thoroughfare in the tithe map. It is depicted in the same way as other routes that are depicted as public rights of way, with private ways being differentiated as occupation roads. There are other routes depicted on the tithe map in a similar manner that are now public carriageways, however there are also others which are shown on the Definitive Map as public Footpaths such as Disley Footpath 75 and Disley Footpath 28, i.e. there is no uniform

approach. This gives us an indication that the route had some public status at this time, albeit not what its status would have been.

- 143 The documents considered as part of the preparation of the Definitive Map include the Disley Rural Walking Survey, The Draft Definitive Map, The Provisional Definitive Map and the Definitive Map and Statement.
- 144 The Disley Rural District Walking Survey describes the Footpath as dividing at the rear of Byron House, with outlets onto Buxton Old Road on the East and West side of Byron House.
- 145 The Draft Definitive Map also shows the Footpath as dividing on reaching Byron House and exiting both sides of the property, matching what is described in the Disley Rural Walking Survey. In preparation of the Draft Definitive Map, the guidance from the Ministry of Town and Country Planning (Circular 91) suggested that Authorities should include all alleged public rights of way and that border line cases should be decided in favour of inclusion at the first stage.
- 146 By the time the Provisional Definitive Map was prepared the Footpath that was shown in the earlier Draft Definitive Map running between points B-C (Appendix 1) is no longer shown. To remove a Footpath that was shown in the Draft Definitive Map from the subsequent Provisional Definitive Map would have required following prescribed processes under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside 1949, which included the publishing of notices and consideration of objections and submissions both in opposition and in support of its inclusion. In cases where there was a dispute or conflict of evidence the matter would have been dealt with by the Secretary of State.
- 147 In this instance there does not appear to be any evidence as to why the Footpath was removed from the Provisional Definitive Map however a lack of evidence does not necessarily mean that the correct processes were not followed. The Planning Inspectorate, Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 - Definitive Map Orders: Consistency Guidelines indicates that a 'presumption of regularity' can be invoked where there is a lack of evidence on whether proper legal procedures were followed. In the instance of the preparation of the Definitive Map under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 this presumption is reinforced in a statutory sense in that it allowed a 6 week to period challenge the process of preparing the map, after which in the absence of challenge it is put beyond dispute (National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 Schedule1, paragraphs 9 and 10).
- 148 In support of this position is the fact that there has been no Footpath shown on the Definitive Map since its publication and this is a position that appears to have been accepted by the public at large since that time.

- 149 The section between points B–C (Appendix 1) is not shown on the Finance Act Map which gives us no indication as to its status.
- 150 Railway Plans for the Manchester Midland Junction Railway and Manchester and Buxton Railway were submitted by the Green Lane Association however these do not show the route between point B – C (Appendix 1).
- 151 The documentary evidence provides some indication that there are public rights along the route between points B–C (Appendix 1), possibly of Footpath status following its inclusion on the Draft Definitive Map however it is not considered sufficient to show that public rights can be reasonably alleged to subsist.

User Evidence

- 152 It is clear that a number of people were willing to attest to their use of the route and that this dated back over many years (44 years in total), between 1964 and 2008; with eleven indicating they had used the route for a period of twenty years or more.
- 153 One person had not used the route themselves but owned a nearby stables for over sixty years and attests that it was a “common sight” to see the route being used by horse riders
- 154 The users that were interviewed either live or have lived in close proximity to the route and had a good knowledge of the route and would have used it and seen others do so over many years. They also used it with other local horse riders and the proximity of stables (on Ward Lane) and a former riding school (on Buxton Old Road) adds some weight to this.
- 155 Those that were interviewed suggest that use would have been challenged on occasion by the owner of Rock View Cottage. Despite the challenge it did not appear to be effective in deterring use and riders still continued to use the route and do so to this day; there are no signs to indicate that the lane is not available for public use or is otherwise private.
- 156 Those interviewed indicate they always believed the path to be a Bridleway, they had not encountered any physical obstructions, they had not entered through force nor had they sought or been provided permission to be there.
- 157 One user attested that they had used the route since around 1984 on a frequency of two to three times a week, often with others. They were related to the person who ran a riding school close by and claimed to have used the route with many others, up to nine at a time and had always considered it to be a route they had access to.

- 158 The Diversion Order in 1987 provides valuable corroborating evidence of use on horseback with one of the witnesses who provided a statement as part of the current application, (who was unavailable for interview), providing evidence at the public inquiry (WS4). Another witness who was available for interview (WS19) also provided evidence at the inquiry. The inspector at the enquiry refers to the level of use on horseback as do other witnesses.
- 159 It is considered there is sufficient use of the claimed route without force, secrecy, or permission, that is without interruption and as of right that demonstrates that it has been in existence and used for over 20 years.
- 160 No evidence was discovered nor submitted during the consultation period that would indicate that the presumption of public rights under section 31 of the Highways Act 1980 were in any way rebutted.
- 161 In summation the level of use, the length of use, the reputation of the route and the documentary evidence taken together suggests that the Bridleway rights can be reasonably alleged to subsist on the route between points B - C (Appendix 1).
- 162 The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Green aim of the Corporate Plan, the “thriving and sustainable place” priority, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Other Options Considered

- 163 If the authority was to do nothing it would not be complying with its statutory duty under Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, which requires the Council to keep the Definitive Map and Statement under continuous review and make such modifications to the Map and Statement as required.

Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 164 The legal implications in relation to highways law are set out in the Legal issues section of this report.
- 165 The Human Rights Act is also of relevance. Whilst article 1 to the first protocol (peaceful enjoyment of property) and article 8 (right to respect for family, private life and home) are engaged, it is important to note that these rights are qualified, not absolute, which means that they can be interfered with in so far as such interference is in accordance with domestic law and is necessary in a democratic society for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others. It is considered that any

interference occasioned by the making of a Modification Order is both in accordance with domestic law (the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981) and is in the public interest as it is necessary in a democratic society for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others, namely the public who wish to use the way. Should Members resolve that a Modification Order be made in accordance with highways legislation, this is merely the start of the legal process. Once a Modification Order is made, it must be publicised, and any person will have an opportunity to formally object to it. Should objections be received, the Modification Order would have to be referred to the Secretary of State who may hold a Public Inquiry before deciding upon whether or not to confirm the Modification Order.

- 166 Please note that the Council will not disclose the user evidence forms that form part of the background documentation at this stage in the process. The Council considers that the information provided within the user evidence documentation is exempt information under s1&2 Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, as amended.
- 167 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, there is no such statutory right prior to an Order having been made - persons affected are entitled to the information in the event that an Order is made following the Committee decision.
- 168 Once an Order is made it may be the subject of objections. If objections are not withdrawn, this removes the power of the Local Authority to confirm the Order itself, and may lead to a hearing or Public Inquiry. It follows that the Committee decision may be confirmed or not confirmed. This process may involve additional legal support and resources.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 169 If objections to an Order lead to a subsequent hearing/inquiry, the Council would be responsible for any costs involved in the preparation and conducting of such. The maintenance of the Public Right of Way would continue to be the responsibility of the landowner and Council in line with legislation. The associated costs would be borne within existing Public Rights of Way revenue and capital budgets.

Policy

- 169 The work of the Public Rights of Way team contributes to the Vision of the Corporate Plan of a greener Cheshire East, with the aim of “a thriving and sustainable place”, and the policies and objectives of the Council’s statutory Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

Vision - An open, fairer, greener Cheshire East

Aim - A thriving and sustainable place

- A great place for people to live, work and visit
- Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
- Reduce impact on the environment
- A transport network that is safe and promotes active travel
- Thriving urban and rural economies with opportunities for all
- Be a carbon neutral council by 2027

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

170 An assessment in relation to the Equality Act 2010 has been carried out by the Public Rights of Way Network Management and Enforcement Officer for the area and it is considered that the proposed diversion would be no less convenient to use than the current one.

The legal tests under section 53 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 do not include an assessment of the effects under the Equality Act 2010.

Human Resources

(a) There are no direct implications for Human Resources.

Risk Management

(b) There are no direct implications for risk management.

Rural Communities

(c) There are no direct implications for Rural Communities.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

(d) There are no direct implications for Children and Young People

Public Health

(e) The recommendations are anticipated to offer a positive overall impact on the health and wellbeing of Cheshire East residents.

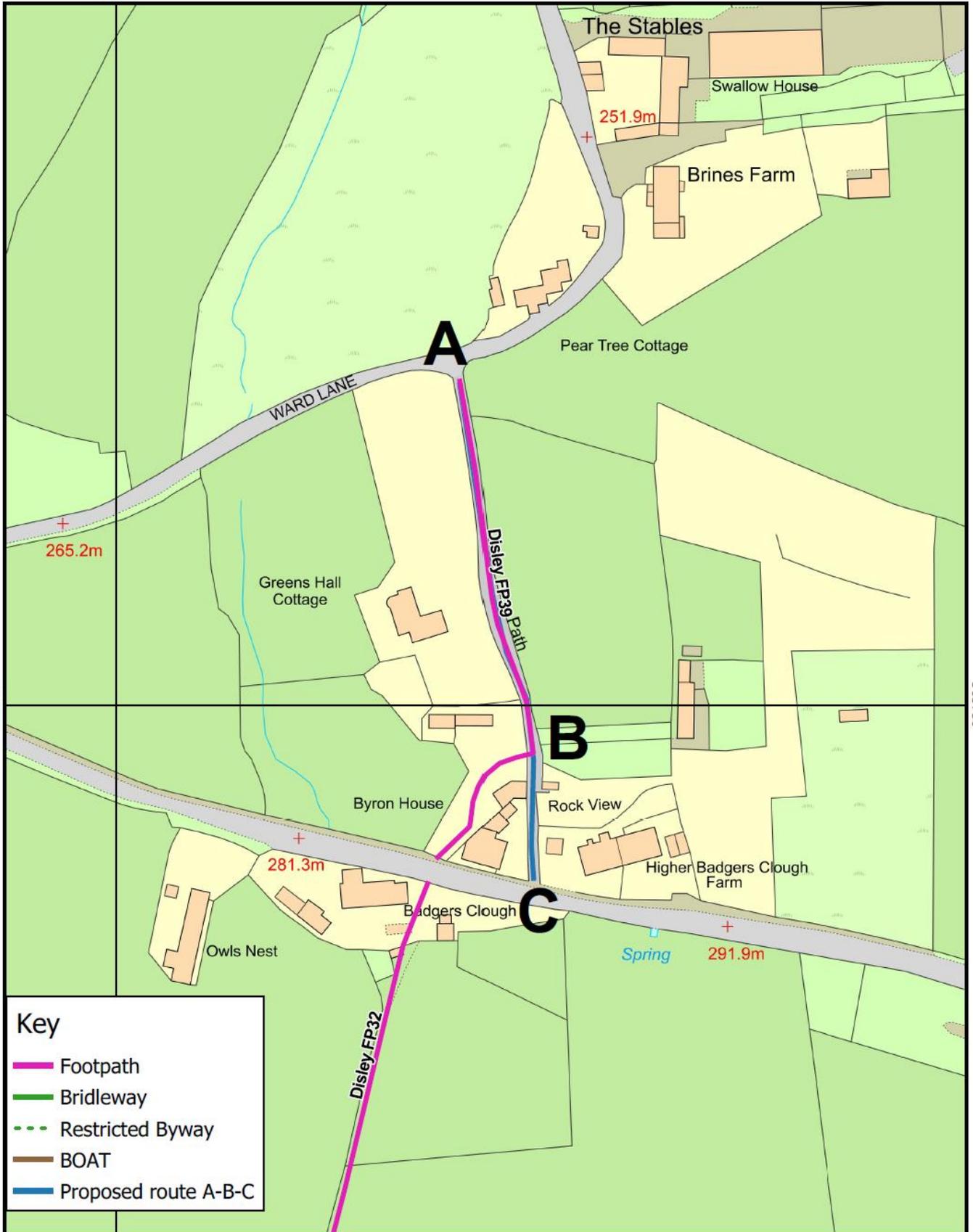
Climate Change

(f) The recommendations will help the Council to reduce its carbon footprint and achieve environmental sustainability by reducing energy consumption and promoting healthy lifestyles.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	John Lindsay john.lindsay@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Map of route Appendix 2 – User chart Appendix 3 – Documentary evidence list
Background Papers:	The background papers and files relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer.

This page is intentionally left blank

398500



383750

383750

Key

- Footpath
- Bridleway
- - - Restricted Byway
- BOAT
- Proposed route A-B-C

398500



1:1366

Application under section 53, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, to upgrade of footpath 39 Disley, between Points A-B to Bridleway and addition of a bridleway between points B-C.

Plan No.
WCA/049

This is a working copy of the definitive map and should not be used for legal purposes



This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2

Point A start of Footpath 39 at Ward Lane – (11th October 2024)



Sycamore tree on Footpath 39 (11th October 2024)



Footpath 39 – (11th October 2024)



Footpath 39 (11th October 2024)



Point B where Footpath 39 leaves through the garden of Byron House – (11th October 2024)



Footpath 39 – (11th October 2024)



Point C exit onto Buxton Old Road – (11th October 2024)



This page is intentionally left blank

APPENDIX 3

List of Archive Documents –

Application No. MA/5/244

Add a bridleway between Buxton Old Road and Footpath 39, Parish of Disley, and upgrade (in part) to bridleway Public Footpath 39

PROW = Public Rights of Way Unit

CRO = Cheshire Record Office

TNA = The National Archives, Kew

Primary Sources	Date	Site Shown/Mentioned	Reference Number/Source
County Maps			
Burdett PP	1794	The map appears to show a route in the vicinity of Footpath 39 heading in a north-south direction towards Badgers Clough which is identified on the map. The map is not of a sufficient quality to identify whether the alignment of Footpath 39 or the unregistered path between Byron House and Rock View Cottage is depicted. There are buildings shown on both side of the route where it meets Buxton old Road. Ward Lane, which terminates at Lane Ends is not depicted.	View map: Stuart, James ; Burdett, Peter Perry, The county palatine of Chester: reduced from the large survey in four sheets - Counties of Scotland, 1580-1928 (nls.uk)
Swire & Hutchings	1830	The map appears to show a route in the vicinity of the order route heading in a north-south direction towards Badgers Clough which is not identified on the map. The map is not of a sufficient quality to identify whether the alignment of Footpath 39 or the unregistered path between Byron House and Rock View Cottage is depicted. There are no buildings depicted in the vicinity of Byron House and Rock View Cottage. Ward Lane, which terminates at Lane Ends is not depicted.	View map: Swire, William. ; Hutchings, W. F., A map of the county palatine of Chester, divided into hundreds & parishes, from an accurate survey, ... - Counties of Scotland, 1580-1928 (nls.uk)
Bryant A	1831	The map appears to show a route in the vicinity of the order route heading in a north-south direction towards Badgers Clough which is identified on the map. The	Andrew Bryant - Map of the county palatine of Chester from an actual survey made in the years 1829, 1830 & 1831 - National Library of Scotland (nls.uk)

		map is not of a sufficient quality to identify whether the alignment of Footpath 39 or the unregistered path between Byron House and Rock View Cottage is depicted. Some of the buildings are shown, including what may be Rock View Cottage but the scale is such it is not shown clearly. Ward Lane, which terminates at Lane Ends is depicted on the map	
Tithe Records			
Tithe Map	1842	<p>The tithe map shows the route from Badgers Clough with what appears to be a gate at the road with Buxton Old Road. The land use is described as “thoroughfare” under Plot 619. It is described as a “road from Lane End to Turnpike Road near Green’s Hall.</p> <p>The plot is shown as including both the alignment of FP 39 where it leads through the garden of Byron House and the route that leads from FP 39, leading between Byron House and Rock View Cottage and out to Buxton Old Road.</p> <p>No further detail was available from Cheshire Archives other than what was on their website.</p>	Cheshire Tithe Maps Online (cheshireeast.gov.uk)
Ordnance Survey Maps			
O.S. 6” to 1 mile 1 st Edition	1881	Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. It appear quite narrow for the first 30/40 metres part before becoming wider. It continues north where it meets Ward Lane/Cork Lane, albeit it seems unclear how it exits the lane as there is a boundary, it is assumed there would be a gate at this location. FP 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire XX (includes: Disley; Marple; New Mills.) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)

O.S. 6" to 1 mile 2 nd Edition	1899	Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. It appears to be of more of a uniform length at Badgersclough than the previous 1881 map. There appears to be a more of a defined exit onto Ward Lane/Cork Lane; this entrance appears to be gated as it has black line across the route. FP 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire XX.SE (includes: Disley; New Mills; Whaley Bridge.) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)
OS 25" to 1 mile Cheshire XX.15 2 nd Edition	1897	<p>Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what may be a gated entrance.</p> <p>There is a brace just north of where the lane leaves Buxton Old Road tying the land either side of the lane.</p> <p>A black line, maybe indicative of a gate extends across the lane near where FP 39 heads West through Byron House.</p> <p>The lane is provided its own parcel number of 252 with an acreage of 0.152.</p>	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire XX.15 (Disley; Lyme Handley; New Mills; Whaley Bridge) - Ordnance Survey 25 inch England and Wales, 1841-1952
O.S. 6" to 1 mile Edition of 1912	1912	Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. There again appears to be more of a defined exit onto Ward Lane/Cork Lane; this entrance appears to be gated as it has black line across the route. FP 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road	View map: Ordnance Survey, Cheshire XX.SE (includes: Disley; New Mills; Whaley Bridge.) - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)
O.S. 6" to 1 mile Edition of 1924	1924	Route is shown in its entirety leading from Buxton Old Road from what appears to be a gated entrance. There again appears to be more of a defined exit onto Ward Lane/Cork Lane; this entrance appears to be gated as it has black line across the route. FP 39 is shown as a defined lane leading from Buxton Old Road	View map: Ordnance Survey, Derbyshire VIII (includes: Chapel En Le Frith; Chinley Bugsworth and Brownside; Disley; Lyme Handley... - Ordnance Survey Six-inch England and Wales, 1842-1952 (nls.uk)

Bartholomew's half inch 1902-1906 new series	1904	The route is not shown on the map. Ward Lane/Cork Lane is shown as a secondary road .	View map: Bartholomew, John G., 1860-1920, sheet 9 - Sheffield - Bartholomew's 'Half Inch to the Mile Maps' of England and Wales, 1902-1906 (nls.uk)
Bartholomew's revised half inch 1919-1924 series	1920	The route is not shown on the map. Ward Lane/Cork Lane is shown as a secondary road	View map: John Bartholomew & Son Ltd, sheet 9 - Sheffield - Bartholomew's 'Half Inch to the Mile Maps' of England and Wales, 1919-1924 (nls.uk)
Bartholomew's revised half inch 1940-47	1941	The route is not shown on the map. Ward Lane/Cork Lane is shown as a secondary road	View map: John Bartholomew & Son Ltd, Bartholomew's Revised Half-Inch Map, Merseyside - Great Britain, sheet 28 (England & Wales No 8 ... - Bartholomew's Revised Half-Inch Map, Great Britain, 1940-47 (nls.uk)
Finance Act			
Working Sheet		<p>There were two sperate maps were available at Cheshire Archives, considered to be the working plans.</p> <p>Map 1 – one hereditament is shown in the vicinity of the route, which is enclosure number 255 on the OS map; no hereditament number is shown. This hereditament abuts the north western part of the route</p> <p>Map 2 – one hereditament is shown on this map with the number 760 Pr. This hereditament covers a number of different OS enclosures such as 255, 254, 253, 259, 250 and 251, which are situated on both sides of the route. Footpath 39 is not shown to be part of any hereditament.</p> <p>There are no hereditament details in the vicinity of Bryon House and Rock View Cottage</p>	Cheshire Archives
Valuation Book		No details in reference to hereditament 760PR	Cheshire Archives
Other Plans			

Local Authority Records			
Definitive Map Extract	1950's	Footpath shown travelling north to south along what seems to be a bounded lane, leading in a Westerly direction passing by Byron House. There is no route showing on the Eastern side of Byron House on this map, differing to the draft map. There are no changes to the route shown on the provisional map	PROW Unit
Draft definitive map extract	July 1950	Footpath shown travelling north to south along what seems to be a bounded lane. On reaching Byron House the path splits and is shown as existing on both sides of the property, matching what is described in the walking survey.	PROW Unit
Definitive Statement extract	1950's	From Ward Lane in a southerly direction to Buxton Old Road (UC/4/24) at Badgerclough. The footpath is described as being generally about 20ft wide.	PROW Unit
Provisional definitive map extract	1950's	Footpath shown travelling north to south along what seems to be a bounded lane, leading in a Westerly direction passing by Byron House. There is no route showing on the Eastern side of Byron House on this map, differing to the draft map.	PROW Unit
Disley rural District Walking Survey	June 1950	Described as a Footpath of approximately 200 yards in length, commencing at Ward Lane, Higher Disley and terminating at Byron House, Higher Disley. General description states that the footpath divides at the rear of Byron House, with outlets onto Buxton Old Road on the East and West side of Byron House. It goes on to describe the path as a narrow path commencing at right angles to Ward Lane, and ascending to Byron House, and out on to Buxton Old Road. About half way up one passes a fairly large house with well kept garden. Path is very narrow	

		and is not well kept being muddy and grassy. In hand writing it then states that "walls about 20" apart". There is a further short comment in handwriting that is not entirely clear. XXXX Fp map as schedule no 2	
Aerial Images			
RAF Aerial image Sortie: RAF/541/25	Date flown: 16 May 1948	The picture quality is poor. It is possible to make out what appears to be a track running in the vicinity of FP 39 but this appears to be located further east.	raf 541 25 rs 4393 - Aerial Photo Historic England
Aerial image Black and white	1971	Very poor quality image, not possible to decipher much from it.	Cheshire Tithe Maps Online
Aerial image (colour)	1999-2003	Poor quality image; looks like its taken in Winter due to lack of tree cover. Possible to see the general outline of the route and abutting properties.	Cheshire Tithe Maps Online
Aerial Image (colour)	2010	Image taken in Autumn with a fair bit of tree cover. Long shadows covering parts of the route. Bounded lane running between Byron House and Rock View Cottage.	Cheshire Tithe Maps Online
Aerial image (colour)	Aerial image 2015-17	Image taken in Summer, with a lot of tree cover. Bounded lane running between Byron House and Rock View Cottage just about visible at the junction with Buxton old Road.	Cheshire Tithe Maps Online
Aerial image (colour)	Aerial image 2019-21	Image taken in Autumn with a fair bit of tree cover. Long shadows covering parts of the route. Bounded lane running between Byron House and Rock View Cottage just about visible at the junction with Buxton old Road but mostly obscured by shadows.	Cheshire Tithe Maps Online

Highways & Transport work Programme 2024 - 26

Highways & Transport Committee	Report Reference	Title	Purpose of Report	Corporate Plan Priority	Lead Officer	Exempt Item	Consultation	Equality Impact Assessment	Part of Budget and Policy Framework	Is the report for decision or scrutiny?
19 June 2025										
19/06/25	HTC/03/25-26	Appointments to Sub Committees, Working Groups, Panels, Board and Joint Committees	To appoint members to the Public Rights of Way Consultative Group and to agree the Terms of Reference for the Public Rights of Way Consultative Group and to note the membership of the Enhanced Partnership Board.	An effective and enabling Council	Head of Democratic Services and Governance	No	No	No	No	Decision
19/06/25	HTC/01/25-26	Final Outturn 2025/25	To note and comment on the final financial and performance outturn positions and (if necessary) to approve Supplementary Estimates and Virements	An effective and enabling Council	Executive Director Resources, and S151 Officer	No	No	No	Yes	Decision/ Scrutiny
19/06/25	HTC/02/25-26	PROW - Proposed extinguishment	To consider a report on the proposed	Improving health and	Executive Director of Place	No	Yes	Yes	No	Decision

Highways & Transport work Programme 2024 - 26

		nt of Public Footpath no.29 in the Parish of Knutsford	extinguishment of Public Footpath no.29 in the Parish of Knutsford	wellbeing;#Unlocking prosperity for all						
19/06/25	HTC/47/24-25	Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 - Part III s 53 - Application MA-5-250 Addition of 2 Public Footpaths between Public Footpath 13 and 21 Mobberley	To consider a Definitive Map Modification Order application into the addition of 2 Public Footpaths between FP13 and FP21, Mobberley	Improving health and wellbeing;#Unlocking prosperity for all	Executive Director of Place	No	Yes	Yes	No	Decision
19/06/25	HTC/10/25-26	Draft Active Travel Strategy and Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs)	To approve the draft Active Travel Strategy and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIPs) as a basis for public consultation, including a Consultation and Engagement Plan and Communications Plan.	Improving health and wellbeing;#Unlocking prosperity for all	Executive Director of Place	No	Yes	Yes	No	Decision
19/06/25	HTC/11/25-21	Bus Service Improvement Plan - 2025/26 Delivery Programme	To approve the Council's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) delivery	Unlocking prosperity for all;#Improving health and wellbeing	Executive Director of Place	No	No	Yes	No	Decision

Highways & Transport work Programme 2024 - 26

			programme for 2025/26 and associated Department for Transport (DfT) grant funding allocations.								
Sept 2025											
18/09/25	HTC/04/25-26	First Financial Review 25/26	To note and comment on the First Financial Review and Performance position of 2025/26 and (if necessary) approve Supplementary Estimates and Virements.	An effective and enabling Council	Executive Director Resources, and S151 Officer	No	No	No	Yes	Scrutiny/Decision	
18/09/25	HTC/14/24-25	Application to approve a Lane Rental Scheme	To outline the process required to develop a Lane Rental Scheme and to consider implementation of the scheme	Unlocking prosperity for all	Executive Director of Place	TBC	No	Yes	No	Decision	
18/09/25	HTC/44/24-25	Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)	The Council's current Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP) covers the period 2011-2026. It is a	Improving health and wellbeing;#Unlocking prosperity for all	Executive Director of Place	No	Yes	Yes	No	Decision	

Highways & Transport work Programme 2024 - 26

			statutory duty of the Council to prepare and publish a ROWIP, under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 s60, and it is therefore proposed to develop a new ROWIP.							
November 2025										
20/11/25	HTC/05/25-26	Second Financial Review 25/26	To note and comment on the Second Financial Review and Performance position of 2025/26, and (if necessary) approve Supplementary Estimates and Virements.	An effective and enabling Council	Executive Director Resources, and S151 Officer	No	No	No	Yes	Scrutiny/Decision
20/11/25	HTC/06/25-26	Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2026/27-2029/30	To provide feedback in relation to their financial responsibilities as identified within the Constitution and linked to the budget alignment	An effective and enabling Council	Executive Director Resources, and S151 Officer					Scrutiny

Highways & Transport work Programme 2024 - 26

			approved by the Finance Sub-Committee in March 2025							
January 2026										
22/01/26	HTC/07/25-26	Third Financial Review 2025/26	To note and comment on the Third Financial Review and Performance position of 2024/25, and (if necessary) approve Supplementary Estimates and Virements.	An effective and enabling Council	Executive Director Resources, and S151 Officer	No	No	No	Yes	Scrutiny
22/01/26	HTC/08/25-26	Medium Term Financial Strategy Consultation 2026/27 to 2029/30 Provisional Settlement	To provide feedback in relation to their financial responsibilities as identified within the Constitution and linked to the budget alignment approved by the Finance Sub-Committee in March 2025.	An effective and enabling Council	Executive Director Resources, and S151 Officer	No	No	No	Yes	Scrutiny and Decision

Highways & Transport work Programme 2024 - 26

April 2026										
02/4/26	HTC/09/25 -26	Service Budgets 2026/27	To set out the allocation of approved budgets for 2025/26 for services under the Committee's remit, as determined by Finance Sub Committee	An effective and enabling Council	Executive Director Resources, and S151 Officer	No	No	No	Yes	Scrutiny