

Project	A582 South Ribble Western Distributor	Date	23/02/2024
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Subject	Technical Note on Model Benchmarking	Version	4

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Overview

Lancashire County Council (LCC) is seeking a funding contribution from the National Roads Fund to enhance economic growth, support housing provision and relieve congestion through the delivery of a significant road improvement scheme on the A582 in South Ribble. Jacobs were commissioned to develop an Outline Business Case (OBC) for the A582 widening scheme and undertake the associated traffic forecasting and economic analysis work.

The Department for Transport (DfT)'s latest guidance on incorporating covid impacts into model forecasts was released in May 2023 and is included in its Transport Analysis Guidance Unit M4. This guidance addresses situations such as A582 OBC project, where projects are at an advanced business case stage and so revising the model to incorporate the impacts of covid becomes impractical within the project's timeline and constraints. The guidance acknowledges this but encourages project teams to provide clear explanations and justifications for the limitations imposed by the advanced business case stage. The key message is that while the ideal approach may not be feasible for projects in advanced stages, it is still crucial to acknowledge the potential impacts of significant changes and strive to account for them as much as possible.

This technical note outlines the methodology and result of the benchmarking exercise to understand the variances between the pre and post covid scenario. Following analysis have been undertaken:

- Analyse the 2019 observed traffic counts (2019 observed ATC and TRIS) by vehicle class in comparison to the 2023 observed counts to assess post-covid traffic growth
- Examine the traffic growth from 2019 to 2023 for NTEM CAS Core, Behavioural, and observed car traffic counts to evaluate how the CAS underestimates the impact of covid
- Examine the traffic growth from 2019 to 2023 for NRTP22, and observed GV traffic counts to evaluate how the impact of covid
- Compare the 2019 traffic model flows with the updated model network, which includes network changes in the scheme study area, against the 2023 traffic counts to comprehend the impact of recent network updates on traffic flow changes
- Review the DfT's published annual road traffic statistics for the North-west region and Lancashire to gain insights into traffic growth during the covid period.

2. Benchmarking Analysis

2.1 Comparison of observed counts between 2019 and 2023

Methodology

Traffic counts sites which had observed data for both 2019 and 2023 were used for this analysis. In addition to the data collected during 2019 and 2023, traffic data from the National Highways TRIS database of long-term traffic counts was also extracted for the motorway sections within the study area. Comparison analysis is shown with and without the TRIS data to understand the impact in the scheme area and motorway in the study area.

The sites for which data was analysed are shown in Figure 2-1.

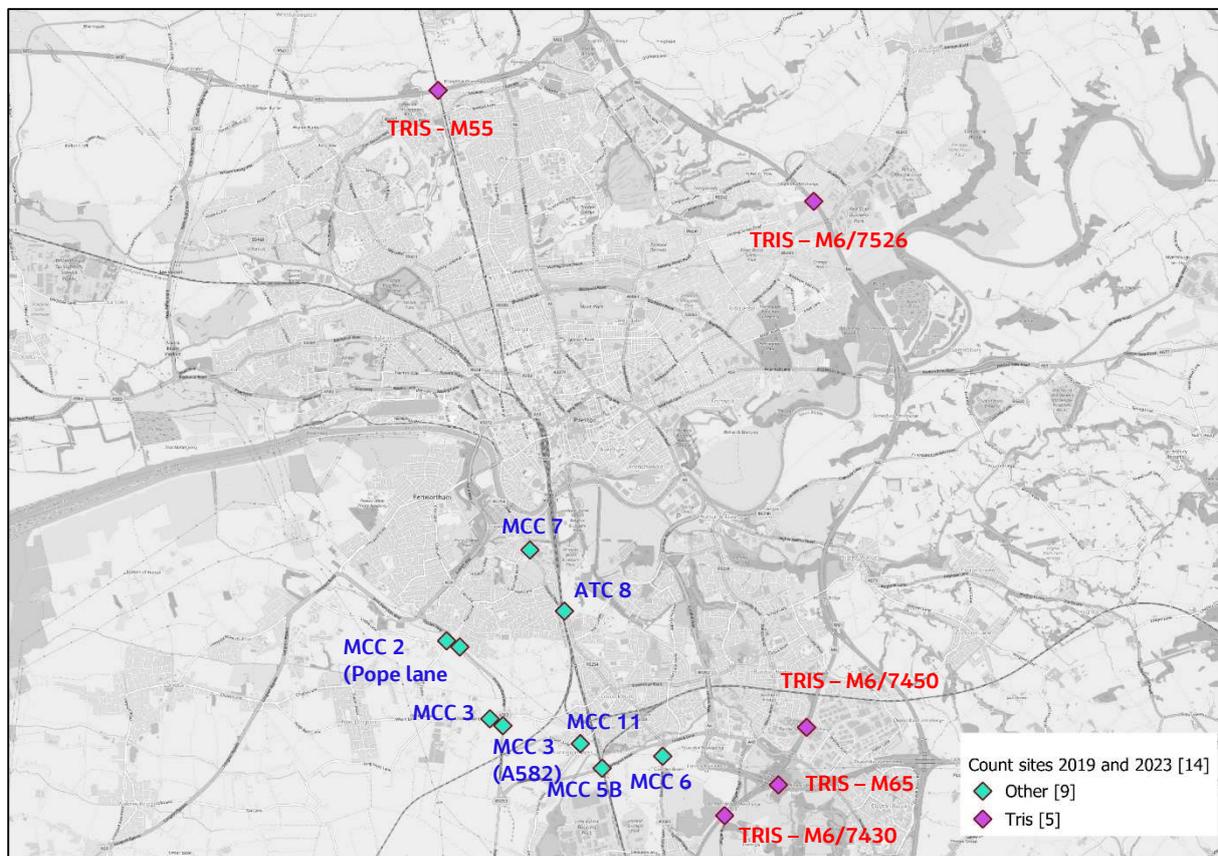


Figure 2-1 Traffic count sites used

Traffic data was extracted for these sites during the AM peak hour (0800-0900), IP (average of 1000-1600) and PM peak hour (1700-1800). The data was extracted for 2019 and 2023, to help identify significant changes that have occurred in traffic volume due to any change in travel patterns following the pandemic.

Information on the 24-hour profile of traffic was also extracted for TRIS sites. This provides a more comprehensive assessment of traffic variations throughout the entire day. This analysis helps to identify if there are consistent changes in traffic flow throughout the day, or if there have been any shifts or flattening in the traditional peak travel times.

Analysis

A comparison of total vehicles for the selected sites was conducted to assess the changes in traffic volume before and after the covid pandemic. The changes for peak hours is shown in Table 2.1 with the changes in total 24hr traffic shown in Table 2.2. Traffic comparison with and without the study area counts have been provided separately to isolate the impact of network changes in the study area.

Below is the summary of key observations:

- Across all sites, the total daily traffic reduced between 2019 and 2023 by 3.9%. There were overall reductions in the AM peak (6.5%), PM peak (6.1%) and slight increase in IP (0.4%).
- For study area sites, the overall reductions in the AM peak is 3.8%, 5.2% in the IP and 3.1% in PM peak. The total daily traffic increased between 2019 and 2023 by 27.2%. *It should be noted that there is only one ATC site in the study area, therefore the 24-hr increase in this scenario is solely because of the traffic increases at this site. This site is located along the B5254, where the traffic model with 2023 network predicts an increase in traffic due to the completion of Cawsey road.*
- For TRIS sites, the overall reductions in the AM peak (7.3%), slight increase in IP (2.2%) and reductions in the PM peak (7.0%). The total daily traffic decreased between 2019 and 2023 by 5.3%.

The traffic changes observed at the TRIS sites exhibit a similar pattern, suggesting some consistency in trends. However, it is worth noting that the traffic in the corridor area varies at each specific site. This variation indicates the impact of network changes between the years 2019 and 2023 and is further discussed in the subsequent sections.

	Direction	AM			IP			PM		
		Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)
TRIS M6/7430	NB	4,306	4,147	-3.7%	3,146	3,181	1.1%	3,901	3,781	-3.1%
	SB	3,603	3,330	-7.6%	3,392	3,473	2.4%	4,650	4,172	-10.3%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	1,070	1,058	-1.1%	838	864	3.0%	1,322	1,232	-6.8%
	SB	1,558	1,447	-7.2%	871	954	9.6%	1,318	1,353	2.6%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	3,568	3,284	-8.0%	2,608	2,653	1.7%	3,228	3,002	-7.0%
	SB	2,862	2,607	-8.9%	2,733	2,829	3.5%	3,695	3,388	-8.3%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	6,518	5,985	-8.2%	4,676	4,735	1.3%	6,208	5,736	-7.6%
	SB	5,361	4,884	-8.9%	4,893	5,028	2.8%	6,404	5,955	-7.0%
TRIS M55-525	NB	2,017	1,741	-13.7%	1,537	1,538	0.1%	1,997	1,842	-7.8%
	SB	2,813	2,734	-2.8%	1,968	1,991	1.2%	3,245	3,001	-7.5%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	511	821	60.7%	533	684	28.4%	685	921	34.5%
	Northbound	934	1,022	9.4%	595	704	18.3%	801	1,065	33.0%
MCC 2 Pope Lane (W)	From	746	440	-41.1%	290	209	-28.0%	387	332	-14.2%
	To	379	279	-26.5%	355	183	-48.5%	597	301	-49.6%
MCC 3 A582 (S)	From	1,182	1,037	-12.3%	834	759	-9.0%	1,197	1,082	-9.6%
	To	980	958	-2.2%	839	770	-8.2%	1,092	977	-10.6%
MCC 3 Chain House Lane (W)	From	441	371	-16.0%	338	309	-8.6%	389	372	-4.5%
	To	472	480	1.6%	385	340	-11.7%	518	485	-6.5%
MCC 5B A582 (E)	From	1,137	973	-14.5%	883	791	-10.4%	1,263	1,051	-16.8%
	To	916	791	-13.6%	852	782	-8.2%	944	792	-16.1%
MCC 6 Stanifield Lane	From	484	495	2.2%	501	439	-12.3%	520	479	-8.0%
	To	617	594	-3.8%	486	470	-3.3%	527	627	18.9%
MCC 7 Leyland Road (N)	From	407	589	44.7%	538	551	2.3%	779	812	4.2%
	To	981	873	-11.1%	512	537	4.9%	579	640	10.4%
MCC 11 Croston Road (N)	From	241	246	1.9%	139	137	-1.3%	192	204	6.3%
	To	279	341	22.0%	181	165	-8.8%	334	336	0.4%
Overall	All Sites	44,384	41,520	-6.5%	34,923	35,077	0.4%	46,772	43,934	-6.1%
	Study Area sites	10,707	10,305	-3.8%	8,261	7,831	-5.2%	10,804	10,472	-3.1%
	TRIS sites	33,677	31,215	-7.3%	26,662	27,246	2.2%	35,968	33,462	-7.0%

Table 2.1: - Peak Hour Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – Total Vehicles

Count Location	Direction	24 Hour (Total Vehicle)			
		Observed traffic 2019	2019 traffic uplifted to 2023 using NTEM8 Core	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)
TRIS M6/7430	NB	54,198	55,637	51,171	-5.6%
	SB	54,647	56,098	51,064	-6.6%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	14,397	14,779	13,917	-3.3%
	SB	15,878	16,300	15,955	0.5%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	44,596	45,780	41,992	-5.8%
	SB	43,159	44,305	41,148	-4.7%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	78,951	81,047	74,941	-5.1%
	SB	77,630	79,691	74,167	-4.5%
TRIS M55-525	NB	25,255	25,925	23,060	-8.7%
	SB	34,286	35,196	32,323	-5.7%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	10,067	10,335	12,152	20.7%
	Northbound	8,561	8,788	11,544	34.8%
Overall	All Sites	461,626	473,882	443,436	-3.9%
	Study Area sites	18,629	19,123	23,697	27.2%
	TRIS sites	442,998	454,759	419,739	-5.3%

Table 2.2: - Daily Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – Total Vehicles

Similar analysis was undertaken for car and GV's and is included in Appendix B. Table 2.3 summarises observed traffic growth by vehicle class. Considering all sites, the data illustrates traffic volumes for car traffic has decreased from 2019 to 2023 by 6.9%. LGV traffic shows an increase in traffic by 9.1% and HGV's traffic shows an increase in traffic by 2.5%.

Vehicle Category	Count Sites	AM	IP	PM	24-hr
Total Vehicles	All Sites	-6.5%	0.4%	-6.1%	-3.9%
	Study Area sites	-3.8%	-5.2%	-3.1%	27.2%
	TRIS sites	-7.3%	2.2%	-7.0%	-5.3%
Car	All Sites	-11.5%	-3.8%	-8.0%	-6.9%
	Study Area sites	-8.1%	-9.7%	-4.4%	40.8%
	TRIS sites	-12.7%	-1.8%	-9.2%	-9.2%
LGV	All Sites	9.5%	8.8%	4.0%	9.1%
	Study Area sites	-2.4%	-11.7%	-7.0%	-38.6%
	TRIS sites	14.0%	18.0%	7.9%	11.4%
HGV	All Sites	15.5%	17.7%	7.9%	2.5%
	Study Area sites	230.6%	184.9%	215.4%	-94.8%
	TRIS sites	7.4%	9.6%	1.9%	3.4%

Table 2.3: - Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) by Vehicle Class

The daily traffic profiles broadly show similar patterns, and an example for one site is shown in Figure 2-2. Based on the daily profile graphs, the changes in daily traffic patterns are not particularly significant. This suggests that although the overall demand has slightly decreased, the traffic patterns still broadly align with the pre-covid conditions.

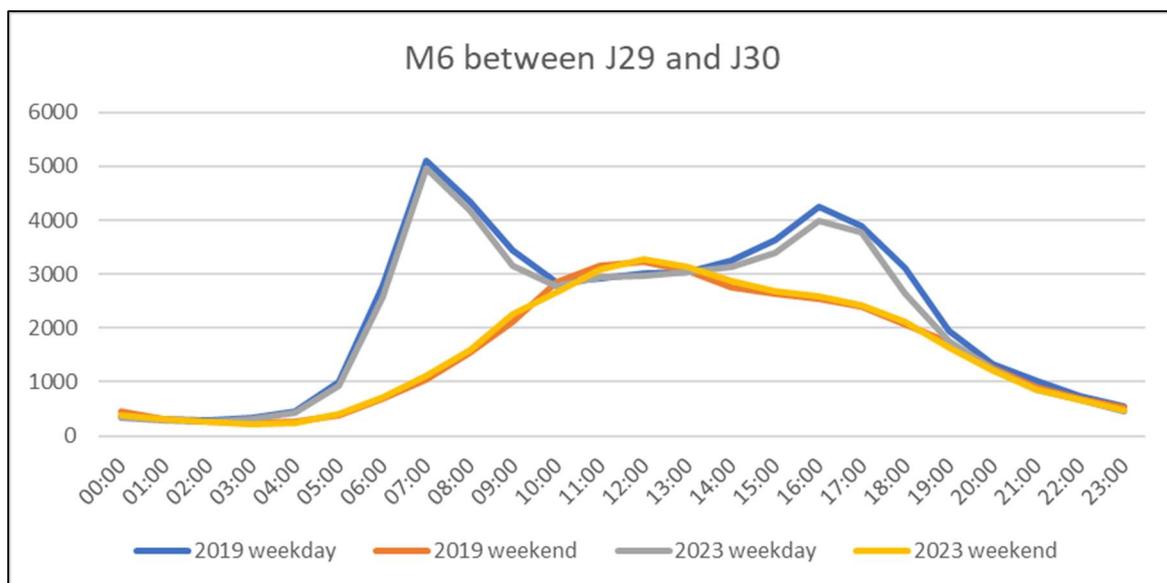


Figure 2-2 Daily total traffic comparison between 2019 and 2023 – M6 (between J29 and J30)

2.2 Car traffic growth comparison observed and NTEM CAS

Methodology

Based on DfT's feedback, an additional assessment has been undertaken to compare the growth between 2019 and 2023 from the NTEM Core and Behavioural Change scenario. The NTEM Core scenario does not explicitly account for the impact of covid and is the traffic growth assumptions used within the A582 traffic core scenario model. The NTEM Behavioural

Change scenario considers the short-term effects of the covid pandemic between 2019 and 2022.

The purpose of this assessment is to determine the extent to which the NTEM Core scenario underestimates the impact of covid and to ascertain whether the NTEM Behavioural Change scenario, which considers the short-term effects of covid, aligns with the actual observed traffic counts in 2023.

Growth factors for the period 2019 to 2023 have been extracted from DfT's NTEM 8.0 core and behavioural scenario dataset for three model time periods and for an average day. This is compared to the observed car traffic growth between 2019 and 2023.

Analysis

The growth factor between 2019 and 2023 from TEMPro 8.0 at the study area level was extracted for the three model time periods and for an average day. This shows a total predicted growth from 2019 to 2023 of just under 3% in each time period for the core scenario. And traffic is expected to decline by 4% in each time period in the behavioural scenario.

Table 2.4 summarizes car traffic growth comparison as per NTEM core and behavioural scenario to the observed growth.

This implies that, across all time period and at a 24-hr level the NTEM overestimates the traffic for both core and behavioural scenario.

Time Period	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	NTEM Core Growth (%)	NTEM Behavioural Growth (%)
AM	34,998	30,978	-11.5%	2.8%	-4.0%
IP	26,248	25,248	-3.8%	2.8%	-4.0%
PM	40,055	36,840	-8.0%	2.8%	-4.0%
24-Hr	349,314	325,245	-6.9%	2.8%	-4.0%

Table 2.4: Observed car traffic growth and NTEM8 predicted traffic growth

2.3 GV traffic growth comparison observed and NRTP22

A similar analysis was undertaken for the GV using NRTP22 growth predictions. It should be noted that NRTP22 only provides an overall growth, and therefore only 24 hr comparison has been undertaken. The comparison shows that the observed growth is slightly above the NRTP 22 predicted growth for both LGV and HGV.

Vehicle Class	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	NRTP 22 predicted Growth (%)
LGV	46,577	50,803	9.1%	8.8%
HGV	65,735	67,387	2.5%	1.9%

Table 2.5: Difference between observed GV traffic growth and NRTP22 predicted traffic growth

2.4 2019 traffic model flows (with the updated model network) comparison with the 2023 traffic counts

Methodology

Traffic data was collected for the study area in 2023, encompassing major roads and junctions. The 2019 Base year SATURN model underwent updates to incorporate road improvements implemented from 2019 to 2023 (highlighted in red in Figure 2-3). However, the base demand was intentionally left unchanged to assess the impact of covid. Subsequently, the traffic counts from 2023 were compared with the corresponding base year model traffic flows. A comprehensive analysis was conducted to identify and comprehend the disparities, aiming to gain insights into the effects of covid on travel demand and network performance.

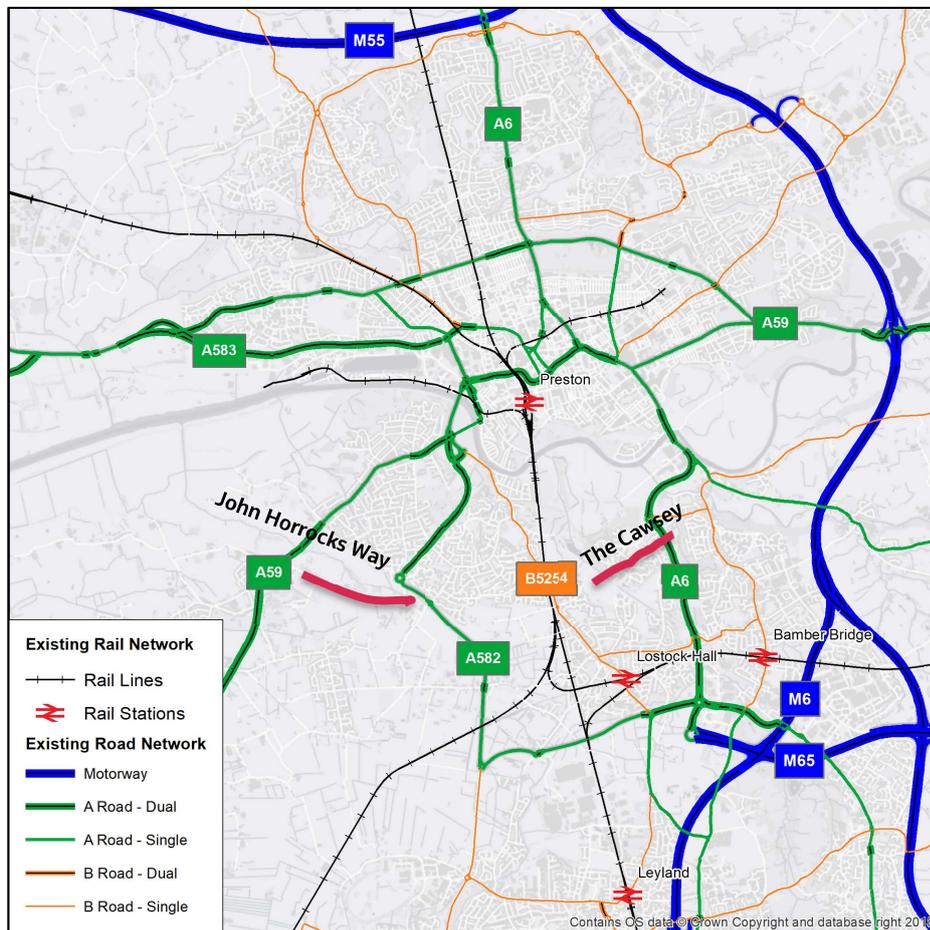


Figure 2-3 Road network in the scheme area

2023 Traffic Surveys

A total of 11 link-based traffic counts and fully classified turning counts (TMC) at 13 junctions were collected across the scheme area. All ATCs captured 1-week of continuous data during the neutral period over a continuous 24-hour period. TMCs were undertaken over 2 weekdays

over the same period as ATCs between the hours of 07.00 and 19.00 continuously. TMC data were recorded using high-definition cameras mounted on street furniture and the cameras checked regularly throughout the survey period. The locations of counts used for the benchmarking exercise is shown in Figure 2-4.



Figure 2-4 Traffic Count Location

Analysis: 2019 updated model comparison with 2023 observed flows

The performance of the model in terms of comparisons with count data is measured in two ways. The first of these is the GEH statistic, as defined below:

$$GEH = \sqrt{\frac{(M - O)^2}{(M + O)/2}}$$

Where: M is the modelled flow on a link, and O is the observed.

The second is made by reference to the following table, extracted from TAG Unit M 3-1:

Table 2.6: Link Flow Validation Criterion

Size of observed flow	Criteria for valid modelled flow
< 700 vehicles/hour	Modelled flow within 100 vehicles/hour of observed flow
700-2,700 vehicles/hour	Modelled flow within 15% of observed flow
> 2,700 vehicles/hour	Modelled flow within 400 vehicles/hour of observed

TAG advises that in ordinary circumstances the practitioner should aim to reach a state where 85% of modelled links have a GEH of less than 5 or satisfy the criterion in link flow.

The comparison of modelled flows against these counts is summarised in Table 2.7. Links meeting either TAG Criteria or GEH individual flows GEH<5 is considered as a pass.

AM	WebTAG Criteria 1 (<700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>700, <2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1	GEH Criteria	Passes at least 1 criterion
Total Count	85	51	1	116	116	116
Counts Passing	45	29	0	74	75	80
Percentage Pass	53%	57%	0%	64%	65%	69%

IP	WebTAG Criteria 1 (<700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>700, <2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1	GEH Criteria	Passes at least 1 criterion
Total Count	106	31	0	116	116	116
Counts Passing	79	26	0	105	106	111
Percentage Pass	75%	84%	-	91%	91%	96%

PM	WebTAG Criteria 1 (<700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>700, <2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1	GEH Criteria	Passes at least 1 criterion
Total Count	75	62	0	116	116	116
Counts Passing	46	54	0	100	81	103
Percentage Pass	61%	87%	-	86%	70%	89%

Table 2.7: - Comparison Summary – Total Vehicles

The comparison shows that the model achieve the TAG criteria of 85% links passing in IP and PM peak and the values fall below the TAG criteria for AM peak.

Figures showing GEH and percentage difference is shown in Appendix C and a full breakdown of comparison at the individual link level is included in Appendix D.

The notable variations in traffic flow are observed primarily along the A582 section between John Horrocks Way and Chain House Lane, as well as on Liverpool Road to the north of John

Horrocks Way. This suggests that the dissimilarities in traffic volume cannot be solely attributed to the effects of covid but rather to the recent introduction of a new bypass – John Horrocks Way.

Overall, the traffic counts in 2023 are lower compared to the modelled traffic flows in 2019. These have been quantified in the previous section. However, since these changes are specific to certain locations, it cannot be inferred as a direct consequence of covid. It is important to recognize that while there have been some overall impacts within the scheme area due to covid, isolating the exact effects is challenging due to the concurrent network improvements in the scheme corridor.

Table 2.8 provides a comparison of observed and modelled traffic flows across all count sites. The comparison indicates that, generally, the model predicts higher flows for cars and LGV across all time periods except for the PM peak. In contrast, the model predicts lower flows for HGV compared to the observed data.

Time Period	Car		%	LGV		%	HGV		%
	Obs	Model		Obs	Model		Obs	Model	
AM	79,205	81,413	2.8%	13,316	15,202	14.2%	7,919	4,496	-43.2%
IP	58,837	60,588	3.0%	11,332	13,132	15.9%	8,171	4,456	-45.5%
PM	89,469	88,166	-1.5%	10,044	11,224	11.7%	4,249	2,654	-37.5%

Table 2.8: - Modelled vs Observed flow comparison

Traffic changes due to recent road network completions

As mentioned in the previous section, 2019 base model network was updated to account the network changes from 2019 to 2023. A comparison between the model with and without network changes was undertaken to assess which roads were mainly impacted. Traffic flow differences between the two models for AM, IP and PM peak is shown in Figure 2-5 through Figure 2-7. Green bars represent increases in traffic in the model scenario with network updates while blue bars represent decreases. Following key observations can be made:

- There is a reduction in traffic flow along Liverpool Road between John Horrocks Way and Penwortham Triangle. (ATC6)
- There is an increase in traffic flow accessing Preston City Centre via John Horrocks Way and A582. (MCC 1 A59)
- A reduction in traffic flow along Lindle Lane, which runs parallel to John Horrocks Way, was observed.
- Following the opening of Cawsey, traffic increases along B5254 north of Cawsey road is observed (ATC5/ ATC8/MCC9) and traffic reductions along B5254 south of Cawsey road is observed(MCC6). Increases along A6 SB direction is also observed. (ATC 7)
- Slight traffic reductions is seen along A582 between Tank roundabout and A6 junction. (MCC 4)

- No other significant re-routing or traffic changes were noted in the wider network.

Model comparison with observed 2023 counts shows that the predicted impacts align with the observed traffic patterns and are within the reasonable limits as recommended by TAG. Table 2.9 presents a summary of the comparison for various sites within the corridor. Detailed summary of these counts is provided in Appendix D.

AM	WebTAG Criteria 1 (<700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>700, <2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1	GEH Criteria	Passes at least 1 criterion
Total Count	7	15	-	22	22	22
Counts Passing	5	11	-	16	21	21
Percentage Pass	71%	73%	-	73%	95%	95%

IP	WebTAG Criteria 1 (<700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>700, <2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1	GEH Criteria	Passes at least 1 criterion
Total Count	13	9	-	22	22	22
Counts Passing	7	4	-	11	18	18
Percentage Pass	54%	44%	-	50%	82%	82%

PM	WebTAG Criteria 1 (<700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>700, <2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1 (>2700)	WebTAG Criteria 1	GEH Criteria	Passes at least 1 criterion
Total Count	6	16	-	22	22	22
Counts Passing	4	14	-	18	19	19
Percentage Pass	67%	88%	-	82%	86%	86%

Table 2.9: - Comparison Summary for Selected Counts – Total Vehicles

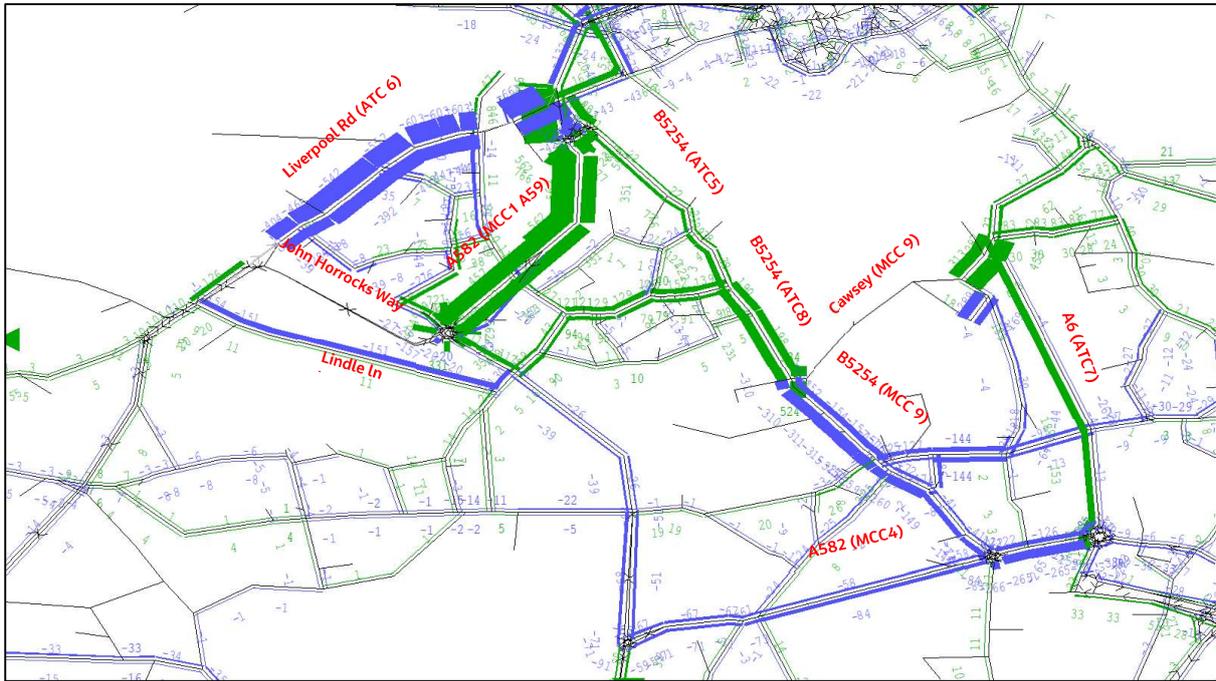


Figure 2-5 Traffic Flow Difference - AM Peak

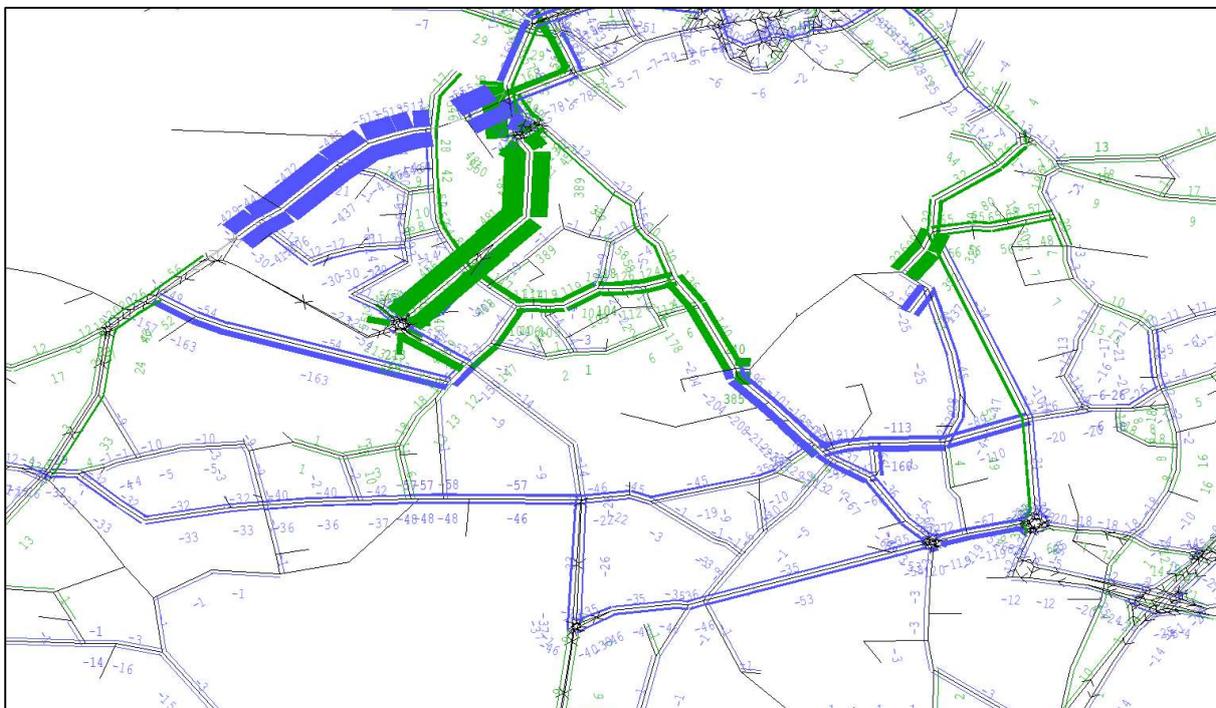


Figure 2-6 Traffic Flow Difference - IP Peak

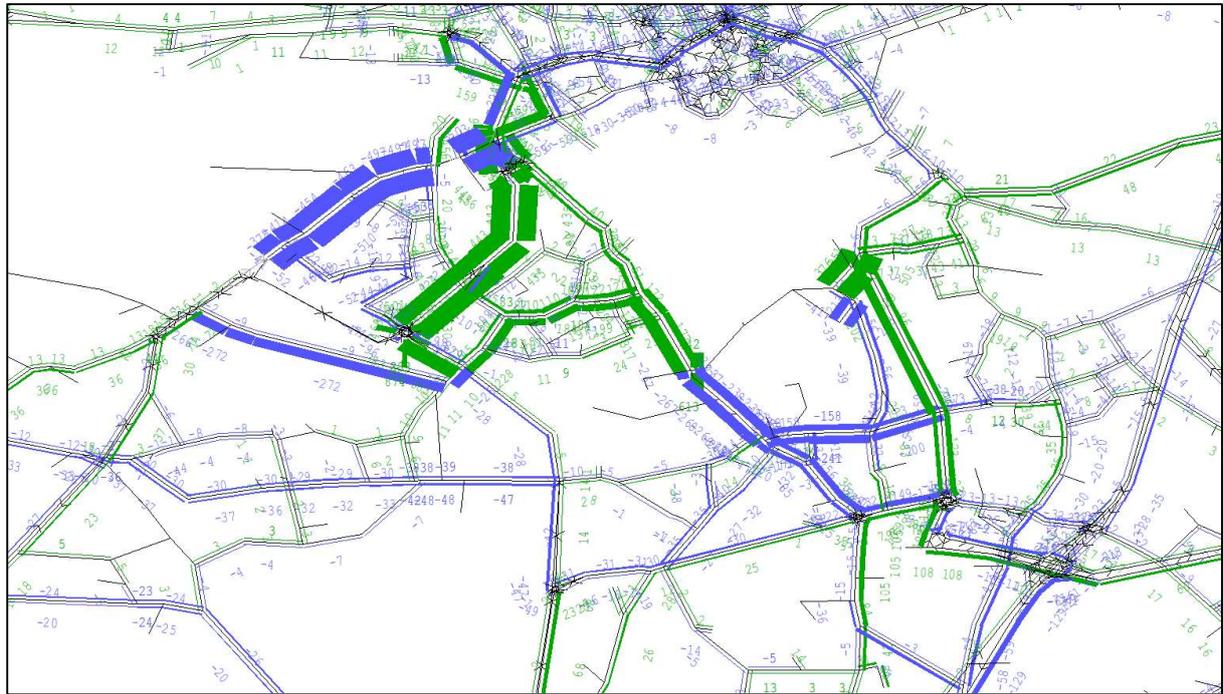
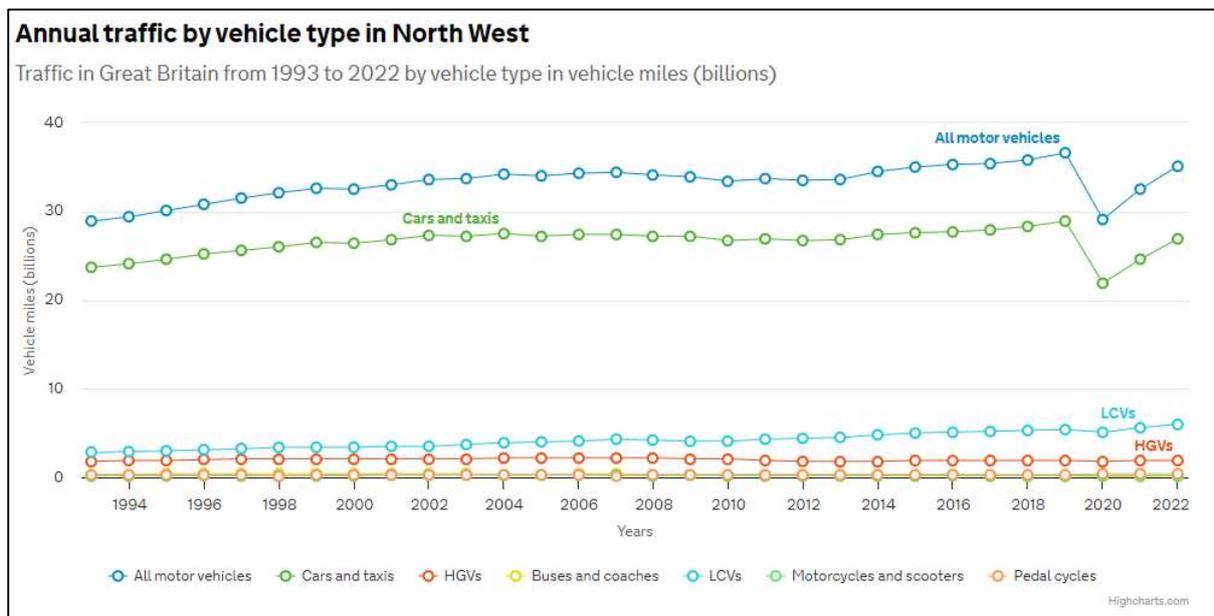


Figure 2-7 Traffic Flow Difference - PM Peak

2.5 Review of DfT's Road Statistics

In order to gain further insights into the covid impacts, we have examined the annual road traffic statistics published by the Department for Transport (DfT) for North-west region. Although historically there has been a consistent year-on-year growth in vehicle miles travelled in Great Britain from 2011 to 2019, it is important to note that the extraordinary circumstances brought about by the coronavirus pandemic can be misleading when considering long-term trends. In 2020, there was a significant decline in traffic levels, followed by a subsequent increase in 2021 compared to the previous year, yet still below the 2011 levels. The overall decrease in traffic levels can be attributed primarily to the decline observed during the estimates of 2020-2021, which aligns with the period of lockdown and restrictions imposed due to the covid pandemic. The subsequent increase in traffic levels after 2021 indicates that the decline was largely confined to the lockdown period and as restrictions eased, traffic began to recover. However, traffic levels still remain lower than pre-pandemic level.



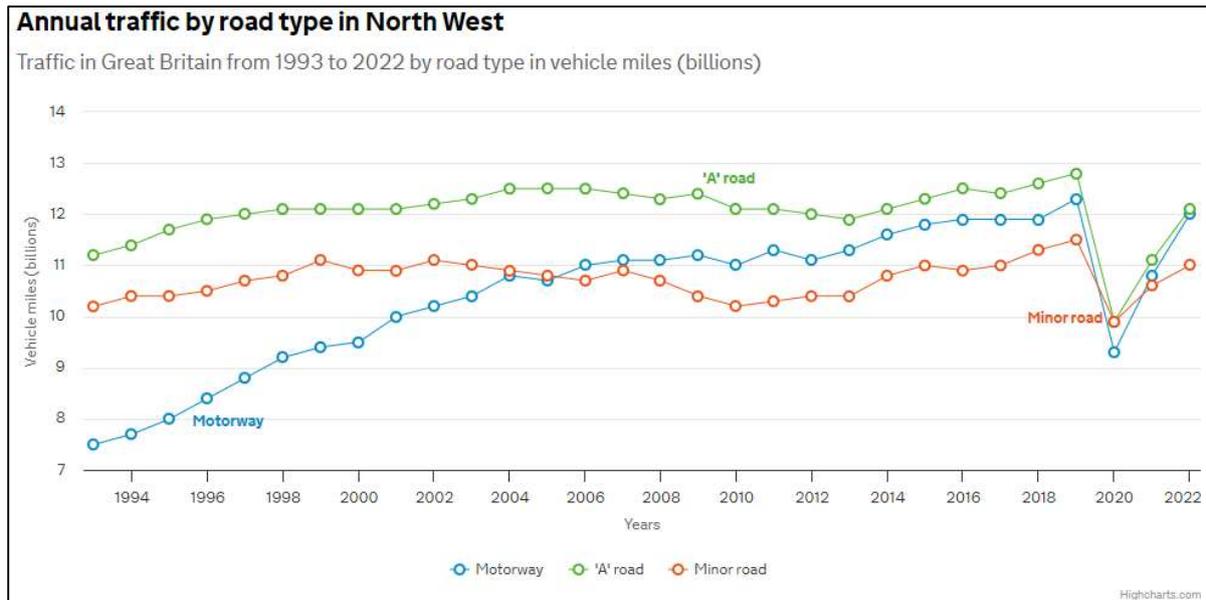
Vehicle class	2019	2022	Percentage Diff (%)
All Motor vehicles	36.6	35.1	-4.1%
Car and Taxis	28.9	26.9	-6.9%
LGV	5.4	6	11.1%
HGV	1.9	1.9	0.0%

Table 2.10: Annual traffic by vehicle type in North West in veh miles (billions)

Table 2.10 provides an overview of traffic growth in the North West region from 2019 to 2022. It indicates a 4.1% reduction in overall traffic and a 6.9% decrease in car traffic following the covid pandemic. Notably, there was an 11.1% increase in LGV traffic, while HGV traffic remained unchanged. This largely aligns with the traffic comparison mentioned in

Section 2.1, which also noted a 3.9% reduction in total traffic, a 6.9% decrease in car traffic, a 6.3% increase in LGV traffic, and 2.5% increase in HGV traffic.

Figure below and Table 2.11 illustrate the traffic growth categorized by road type. The analysis reveals that traffic decreased across all road types during the COVID-19 pandemic, with a subsequent increase in traffic after 2021. The Motorway exhibited the most significant recovery, followed by Minor Roads, while A-roads displayed the lowest level of recovery.



Vehicle class	2019	2022	Percentage Diff (%)
Motorway	12.3	12	-2.4%
A Road	12.8	12.1	-5.5%
Minor Road	11.5	11	-4.3%

Table 2.11: Annual traffic by road type in North West in vehicle miles (billions)

3. Summary

This technical note outlines the methodology and analysis undertaken to ensure compliance with the DfT's requirements for considering transport modelling in the post-covid era. The purpose of this analysis is to assess any significant changes in traffic patterns between the time when the traffic matrix was developed and the present day.

The analysis involved comparing the traffic counts obtained in 2019 and 2023 at specific locations within the study area. Additionally, traffic data from the National Highways TRIS database was utilized for motorway sections within the study area to gain a comprehensive understanding of traffic variations.

Traffic flow scenarios were examined for peak-hour traffic counts and total 24-hour traffic volumes. The comparison was conducted with and without the TRIS data to isolate the impact of network changes within the study area. The analysis also focused on the traffic volumes

categorized by vehicle type, allowing for a deeper understanding of the changes in car, LGV, and HGV traffic.

To explore changes in traffic patterns throughout the day, the daily profiles of traffic for TRIS count sites were analyzed. The data provided insights into any consistent changes in traffic flow throughout the day or shifts in traditional peak travel times.

Furthermore, a comparison was made between the traffic growth predicted by the NTEM Core and Behavioural Change scenarios and the actual observed traffic growth in 2023. This assessment aimed to determine the extent to which the NTEM Core scenario underestimated the impact of covid and whether the NTEM Behavioural Change scenario aligned with the observed traffic counts in 2023.

The analysis demonstrates that the total daily traffic decreased by 3.9% from 2019 to 2023, with reductions observed during the AM peak (6.5%), increases in the IP (0.4%), and reductions in PM peak (6.1%). When compared to the predictions made by NTEM, it becomes evident that the actual traffic growth was lower than what NTEM had projected, underscoring the influence of the covid pandemic on traffic levels. It's important to acknowledge, however, that certain recent road network updates in the study area have also had an impact on traffic flow within that region.

The study also included a thorough examination of the updated traffic model, incorporating changes in the network from 2019 to 2023. By comparing the model with and without network updates to the 2023 traffic counts, the impact of recent network improvements on traffic flow changes was ascertained.

Upon analysis, it has been determined that, with the exception of a few locations, there are no significant or substantial differences between the traffic model flows and the observed traffic flows during the specified time period.

The assessment indicates that although the traffic model developed using the 2019 data provides fair representation of the current traffic conditions in 2023, the traffic flows at an overall level is higher than the observed. As a result, an adjustment to address this is required.

It is acknowledged that traffic patterns may have been influenced by the covid pandemic. However, in this scenario, there are no observed origin-destination surveys available to directly compare and confirm any changes in traffic patterns. The absence of such data makes it challenging to precisely quantify the impacts of covid on specific origin-destination flows within the scheme area. Therefore, it becomes more difficult to ascertain the extent to which the pandemic has affected traffic behavior and to what degree it should be considered in the analysis.

4. Conclusion and proposed approach to account covid

TAG Unit M4 - Forecasting and Uncertainty, issued in May 2023, recommends three options to account for covid in modelling and appraisal. Table 4.1 provides an overview of the main advantages and disadvantages associated with each of these three options.

Based on the analysis results, it is recognized that there has been a decline in traffic from 2019 to 2023. However, accurately isolating the specific impact of covid on this decline is challenging, and the long-term sustainability of these impacts remains uncertain. It is acknowledged that isolating the individual impact of covid is difficult and the extent to which impacts will be sustained long-term is unclear. There is also a debate as to what extent the decrease in traffic volumes seen in 2022 and 2023 has been caused by impacts other than covid, including the general cost of living pressure and the increase in the price of fuel/electricity.

In the short-term, it is understood that DfT does not plan to update the NTEM in accordance with the latest guidance on incorporating covid impacts. Consequently, it becomes the responsibility of each individual modelling team to "predict" the future impact of covid on trip-making behaviour and make necessary adjustments to the NTEM data. However, it is essential to note that producing an adjusted NTEM dataset would be a time-consuming process, and inconsistencies might arise between different scheme appraisals.

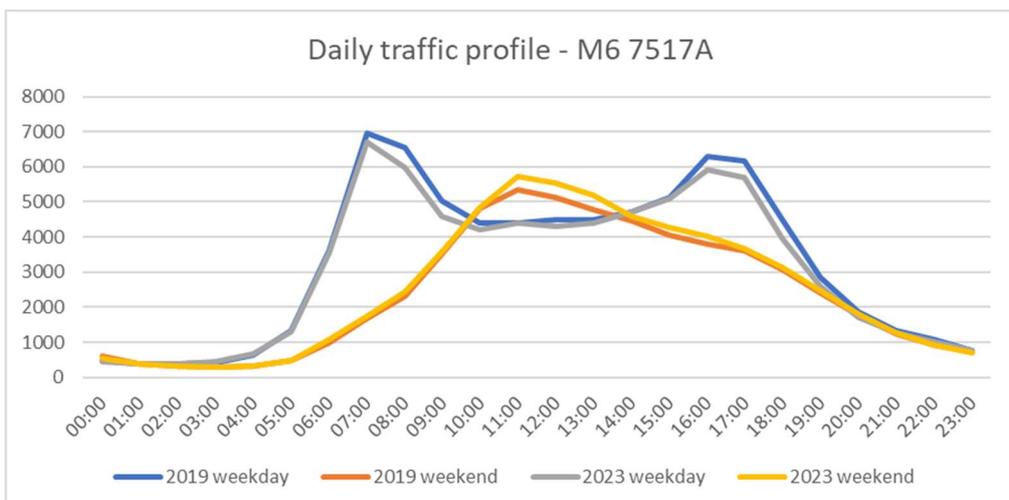
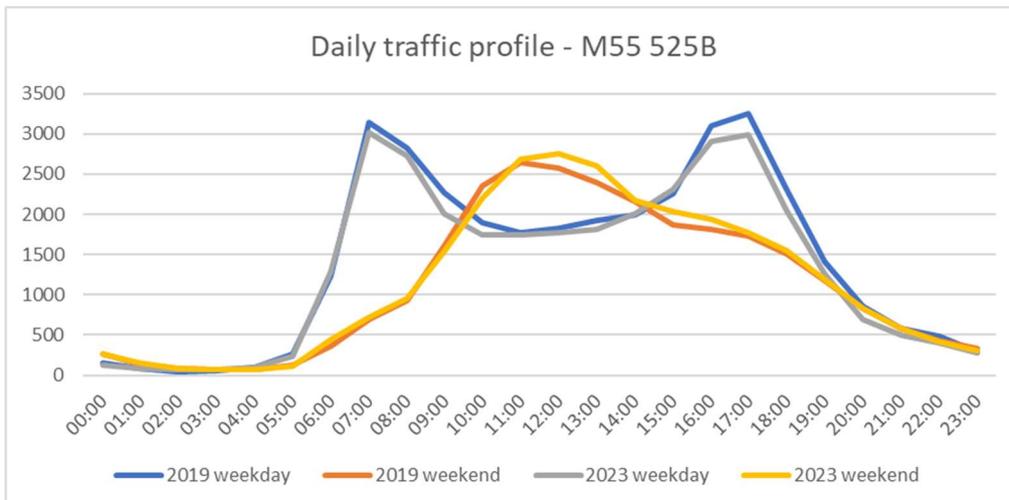
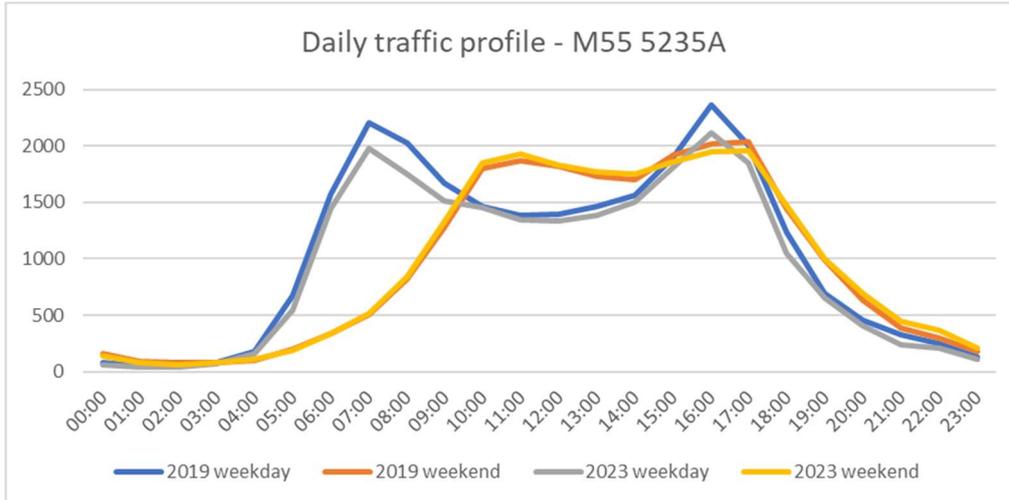
Following further discussion, it was agreed with DfT that a future 2023 reference model will be created using the traffic growth analysis conducted within the benchmarking exercise. A high-level validation of the model will be undertaken using the existing traffic survey data. This 2023 model will serve as the new reference year, from which all future years will be pivoted. The methodology and model results is summarised in the Technical note on Rebasing.

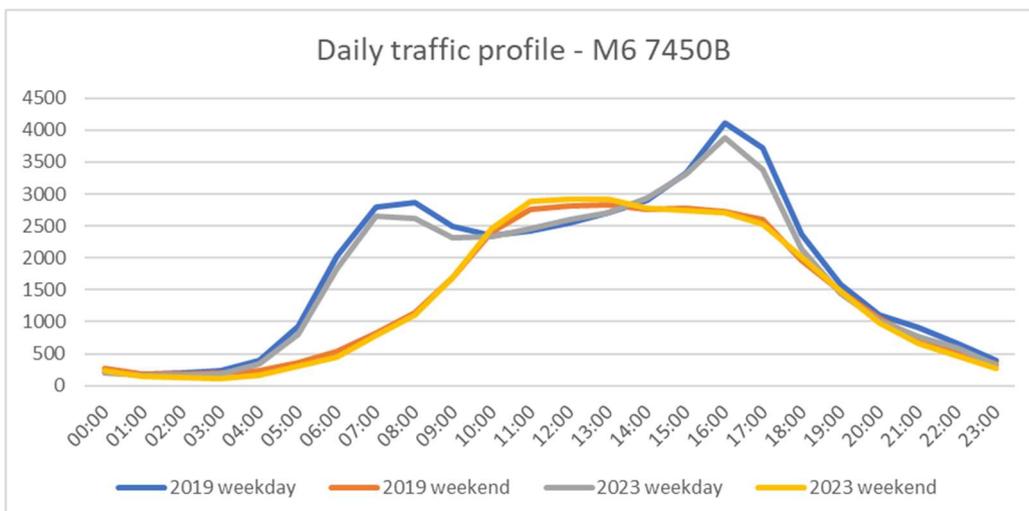
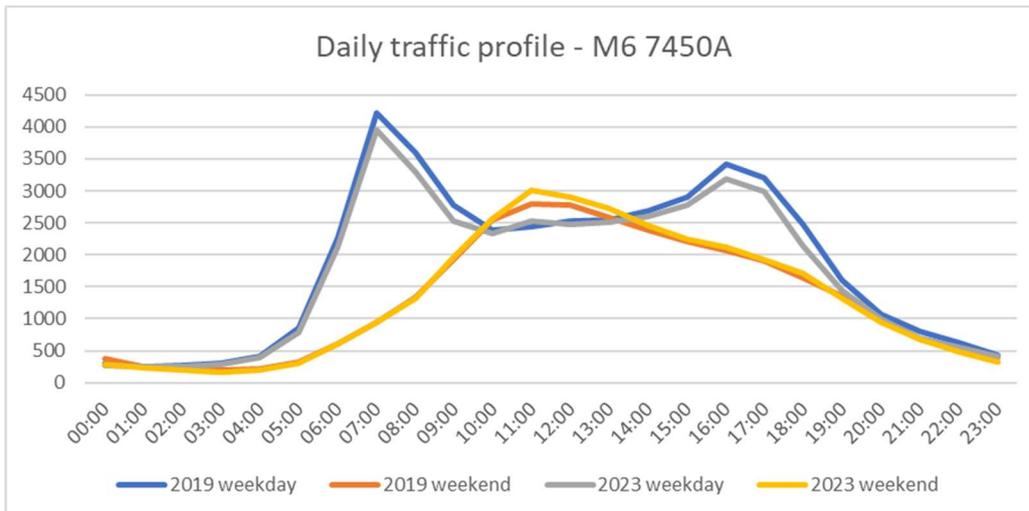
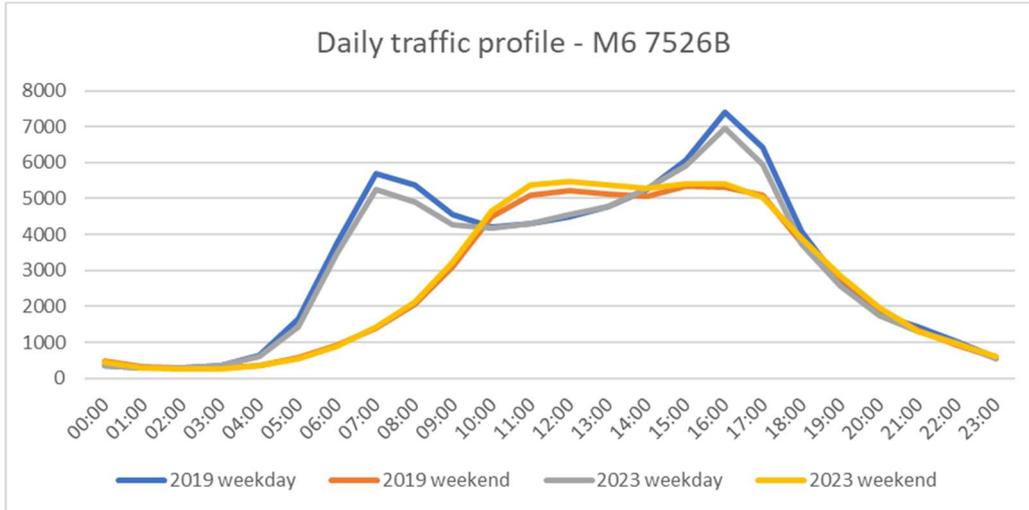
Table 4.1: - Comparison of Options to account for Covid

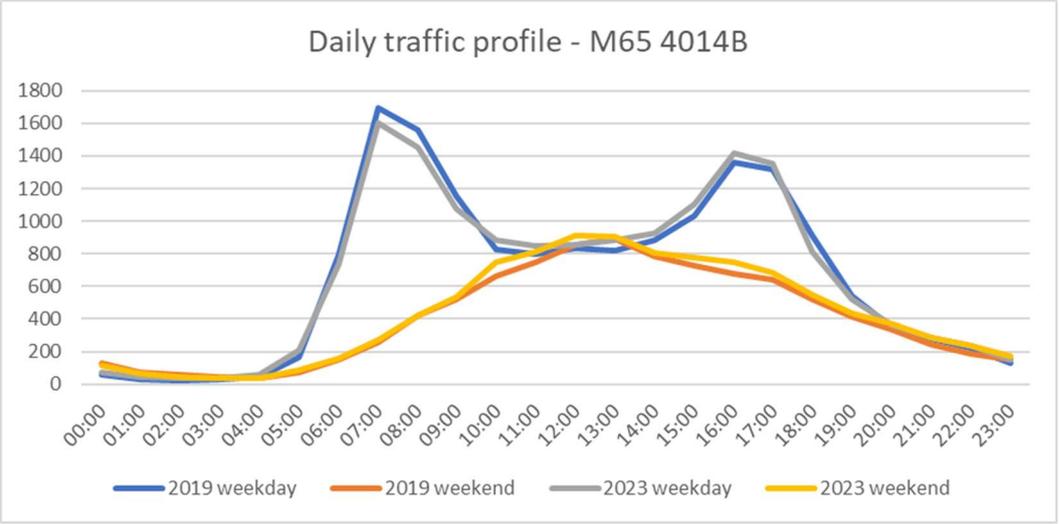
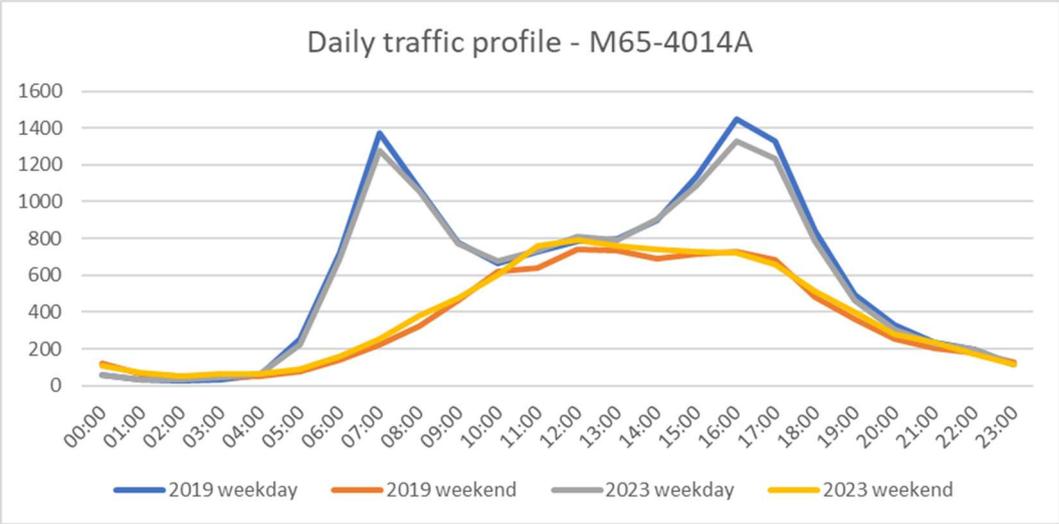
DfT Options for accounting Covid	Pro	Cons
<p>Option 1 - Create a forecast to the present day by applying adjustments to include a COVID-19 impact, based on observed data. This forecast can be used as a "new base year" as a substitute basis for scheme forecast.</p>	<p>This option will allows analysts the potential for a check of travel patterns and/or traffic flow against current observations or statistics in their modelled area</p>	<p>This option is not considered proportionate due to several reasons. Validating and potentially re-calibrating the present year forecast to match post-COVID data sources would be a lengthy and expensive undertaking. The required datasets for such calibration and validation are currently unavailable, making the process even more challenging. Collecting the necessary data would involve significant costs and resources, leading to a considerable delay in scheme programs, possibly extending the timeline by at least one year. Moreover, the observed 2023 data is only available for the scheme corridor, which means that model validation and calibration based solely on this data might produce skewed results when compared to other areas undergoing detailed modelling.</p>
<p>Option 2 - Apply adjustments to a forecast year model to produce a new scheme opening year forecast, or the first required forecast year, that include a COVID-19 impact to that point. This will be the new pivot off which further forecast years are based.</p>	<p>The positive of Option 2 is that it allows the practitioner to account for COVID-19 impacts at the reference case stage (the input to variable demand modelling) and then allow for variable demand impacts to occur.</p>	<p>Implementing Option 2 and creating adjusted trip ends would require additional evidence to accurately isolate the individual impact of COVID-19 on trip ends. Obtaining such evidence could prove challenging.</p>
<p>Option 3 - Apply the adjustment globally to model results as a post-model adjustment.</p>	<p>Option 3 is a low-cost option which can be done quickly and is easily repeatable if the adjustment value changes. It also aligns with the approach taken by DfT in the production of the National Road Traffic Projections 2022.</p>	<p>The downside to Option 3 is that the variable demand model run will not consider COVID-19 impacts. Therefore, traffic will only respond to the demand changes brought about by COVID-19 in terms of re-routing. Variable demand impacts, such as changing trip origins/destinations, and/or changing modes, will not be considered directly.</p>

APPENDIX A

24 Hour Profile – TRIS Sites







APPENDIX B

Count Location	Direction	AM			IP			PM		
		Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)
TRIS M6/7430	NB	3,316	2,989	-9.9%	2,286	2,243	-1.9%	3,244	3,074	-5.2%
	SB	2,736	2,371	-13.3%	2,490	2,455	-1.4%	3,981	3,492	-12.3%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	871	797	-8.5%	629	615	-2.2%	1,184	1,080	-8.8%
	SB	1,287	1,153	-10.4%	662	687	3.7%	1,155	1,177	1.9%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	2,673	2,262	-15.4%	1,903	1,864	-2.0%	2,658	2,412	-9.2%
	SB	2,204	1,939	-12.0%	2,011	2,025	0.7%	3,131	2,817	-10.0%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	5,124	4,426	-13.6%	3,614	3,539	-2.1%	5,453	4,924	-9.7%
	SB	3,605	3,072	-14.8%	3,079	2,983	-3.1%	4,716	4,201	-10.9%
TRIS M55-525	NB	1,726	1,415	-18.0%	1,228	1,176	-4.2%	1,827	1,648	-9.8%
	SB	2,292	2,133	-7.0%	1,624	1,592	-2.0%	3,011	2,747	-8.8%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	439	778	77.2%	449	629	40.0%	632	888	40.5%
	Northbound	815	977	19.9%	492	663	34.7%	712	1,030	44.7%
MCC 2 Pope Lane (W)	From	667	394	-40.9%	248	176	-29.0%	342	306	-10.7%
	To	354	236	-33.5%	302	153	-49.3%	543	275	-49.4%
MCC 3 A582 (S)	From	997	801	-19.7%	650	561	-13.7%	1,054	917	-13.0%
	To	786	772	-1.8%	652	580	-11.1%	974	867	-11.0%
MCC 3 Chain House Lane (W)	From	410	305	-25.6%	293	247	-15.8%	356	337	-5.3%
	To	401	364	-9.4%	320	259	-19.2%	472	420	-11.0%
MCC 5B A582 (E)	From	913	678	-25.8%	686	508	-26.0%	1,127	853	-24.4%
	To	773	577	-25.4%	664	510	-23.2%	831	678	-18.5%
MCC 6 Stanfield Lane	From	422	387	-8.3%	414	332	-19.7%	461	424	-8.1%
	To	531	459	-13.6%	410	350	-14.5%	486	534	9.8%
MCC 7 Leyland Road (N)	From	350	470	34.1%	453	438	-3.3%	719	725	0.8%
	To	857	726	-15.3%	423	416	-1.7%	514	546	6.2%
MCC 11 Croston Road (N)	From	207	211	1.9%	117	113	-3.1%	177	176	-0.6%
	To	243	290	19.1%	149	136	-8.7%	296	296	-0.2%
Overall	All Sites	34,998	30,978	-11.5%	26,248	25,248	-3.8%	40,055	36,840	-8.0%
	Study Area sites	9,165	8,422	-8.1%	6,722	6,070	-9.7%	9,696	9,269	-4.4%
	TRIS sites	25,833	22,556	-12.7%	19,526	19,178	-1.8%	30,359	27,572	-9.2%

Peak Hour Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – Car

Count Location	Direction	24 Hour (Car)		
		Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)
TRIS M6/7430	NB	40,206	36,560	-9.1%
	SB	40,761	36,562	-10.3%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	11,645	10,784	-7.4%
	SB	13,006	12,543	-3.6%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	32,547	29,275	-10.1%
	SB	32,161	29,728	-7.6%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	61,556	56,219	-8.7%
	SB	50,876	45,720	-10.1%
TRIS M55-525	NB	21,320	18,604	-12.7%
	SB	29,367	26,906	-8.4%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	8,687	11,568	33.2%
	Northbound	7,182	10,778	50.1%
Overall	All Sites	349,314	325,245	-6.9%
	Study Area sites	15,869	22,346	40.8%
	TRIS sites	333,445	302,899	-9.2%

Daily Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – Car

Count Location	Direction	AM			IP			PM		
		Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)
TRIS M6/7430	NB	410	529	29.1%	308	351	13.8%	296	324	9.4%
	SB	317	365	15.0%	313	378	20.8%	265	294	10.8%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	117	152	29.9%	115	142	23.4%	99	111	12.0%
	SB	169	180	6.3%	110	146	32.7%	107	123	14.8%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	378	451	19.4%	267	315	18.1%	274	280	2.3%
	SB	251	247	-1.5%	249	286	15.1%	211	235	11.2%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	576	704	22.3%	366	446	21.8%	324	355	9.4%
	SB	977	991	1.5%	932	1,065	14.2%	1,114	1,154	3.7%
TRIS M55-525	NB	147	171	16.3%	136	163	19.3%	96	119	23.8%
	SB	237	289	22.1%	150	185	23.4%	141	163	15.6%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	69	37	-46.4%	80	46	-42.7%	53	30	-43.4%
	Northbound	110	35	-68.2%	99	34	-66.0%	87	27	-69.0%
MCC 2 Pope Lane (W)	From	67	37	-45.5%	38	26	-32.5%	42	23	-45.2%
	To	23	35	50.0%	48	23	-51.2%	54	24	-56.5%
MCC 3 A582 (S)	From	143	159	11.2%	145	129	-10.8%	124	138	11.3%
	To	179	133	-26.0%	149	121	-18.9%	104	85	-18.8%
MCC 3 Chain House Lane (W)	From	29	53	82.8%	40	49	22.9%	32	30	-7.8%
	To	66	99	49.2%	58	64	10.3%	43	58	34.9%
MCC 5B A582 (E)	From	207	174	-15.9%	157	159	1.3%	120	142	18.3%
	To	111	134	20.3%	148	157	6.1%	98	84	-14.3%
MCC 6 Stanfield Lane	From	57	74	28.9%	83	68	-17.7%	57	43	-25.4%
	To	83	99	18.7%	73	75	2.5%	41	62	51.2%
MCC 7 Leyland Road (N)	From	55	91	64.5%	81	88	8.3%	60	75	25.0%
	To	115	126	9.1%	85	100	17.4%	63	82	30.2%
MCC 11 Croston Road (N)	From	33	24	-27.3%	21	18	-13.9%	15	23	50.0%
	To	33	42	27.3%	30	23	-24.2%	37	34	-8.1%
Overall	All Sites	4,959	5,428	9.5%	4,282	4,657	8.8%	3,959	4,117	4.0%
	Study Area sites	1,380	1,348	-2.4%	1,335	1,179	-11.7%	1,030	958	-7.0%
	TRIS sites	3,579	4,081	14.0%	2,947	3,477	18.0%	2,929	3,159	7.9%

Peak Hour Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – LGV

Count Location	Direction	24 Hour (LGV)		
		Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)
TRIS M6/7430	NB	4,832	5,364	11.0%
	SB	4,539	5,135	13.1%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	1,625	1,871	15.2%
	SB	1,657	1,995	20.4%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	4,374	4,799	9.7%
	SB	3,529	3,854	9.2%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	5,843	6,729	15.2%
	SB	13,852	14,856	7.2%
TRIS M55-525	NB	1,899	2,267	19.3%
	SB	2,280	2,615	14.7%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	1,082	569	-47.4%
	Northbound	1,066	751	-29.6%
Overall	All Sites	46,577	50,803	9.1%
	Study Area sites	2,148	1,319	-38.6%
	TRIS sites	44,429	49,484	11.4%

Daily Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – LGV

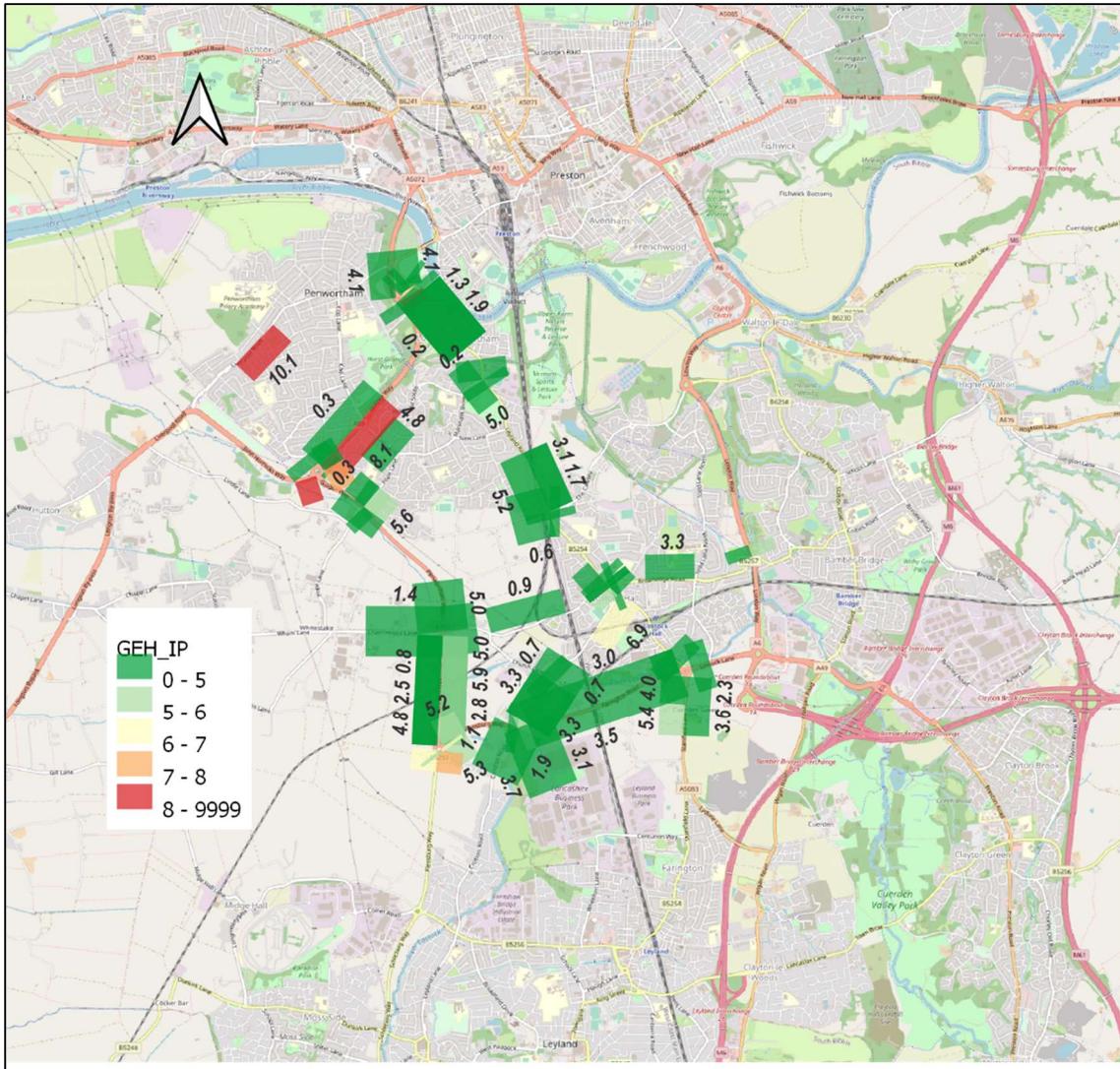
	Direction	AM			IP			PM		
		Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	Observed traffic 2019	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)
TRIS M6/7430	NB	580	629	8.5%	552	587	6.4%	362	384	6.0%
	SB	551	594	7.9%	589	640	8.7%	403	386	-4.3%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	82	108	32.9%	94	107	13.3%	39	41	5.7%
	SB	103	115	11.7%	98	121	23.6%	56	53	-4.5%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	517	571	10.3%	439	474	8.0%	296	310	4.7%
	SB	407	420	3.1%	474	517	9.3%	353	336	-4.9%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	819	854	4.3%	695	750	7.9%	431	457	6.1%
	SB	778	821	5.5%	882	980	11.2%	575	599	4.2%
TRIS M55-525	NB	144	155	7.7%	173	200	15.3%	74	74	1.0%
	SB	284	312	9.7%	194	215	10.8%	92	90	-2.1%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	3	6	100.0%	4	10	150.0%	0	3	0.0%
	Northbound	9	10	11.1%	4	7	79.2%	2	8	300.0%
MCC 2 Pope Lane (W)	From	12	9	-25.0%	4	7	70.8%	3	4	16.7%
	To	2	9	325.0%	5	6	28.3%	0	3	0.0%
MCC 3 A582 (S)	From	42	77	82.1%	39	69	76.1%	19	27	39.5%
	To	15	54	260.0%	38	69	82.5%	14	25	78.6%
MCC 3 Chain House Lane (W)	From	2	13	525.0%	5	13	163.3%	1	5	400.0%
	To	5	18	250.0%	7	17	147.6%	3	7	116.7%
MCC 5B A582 (E)	From	17	121	611.8%	40	125	211.3%	16	57	253.1%
	To	32	81	153.1%	40	116	189.0%	15	31	103.3%
MCC 6 Stanfield Lane	From	5	34	580.0%	4	39	870.8%	2	13	525.0%
	To	3	36	1100.0%	3	45	1394.4%	0	31	0.0%
MCC 7 Leyland Road (N)	From	2	29	1350.0%	4	25	522.9%	0	12	0.0%
	To	9	21	133.3%	4	22	441.7%	2	12	475.0%
MCC 11 Croston Road (N)	From	1	11	950.0%	1	6	475.0%	0	6	0.0%
	To	3	9	200.0%	2	6	208.3%	1	6	500.0%
Overall	All Sites	4,426	5,114	15.5%	4,393	5,172	17.7%	2,758	2,977	7.9%
	Study Area sites	162	536	230.6%	204	581	184.9%	78	246	215.4%
	TRIS sites	4,264	4,578	7.4%	4,189	4,591	9.6%	2,680	2,731	1.9%

Peak Hour Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – HGV

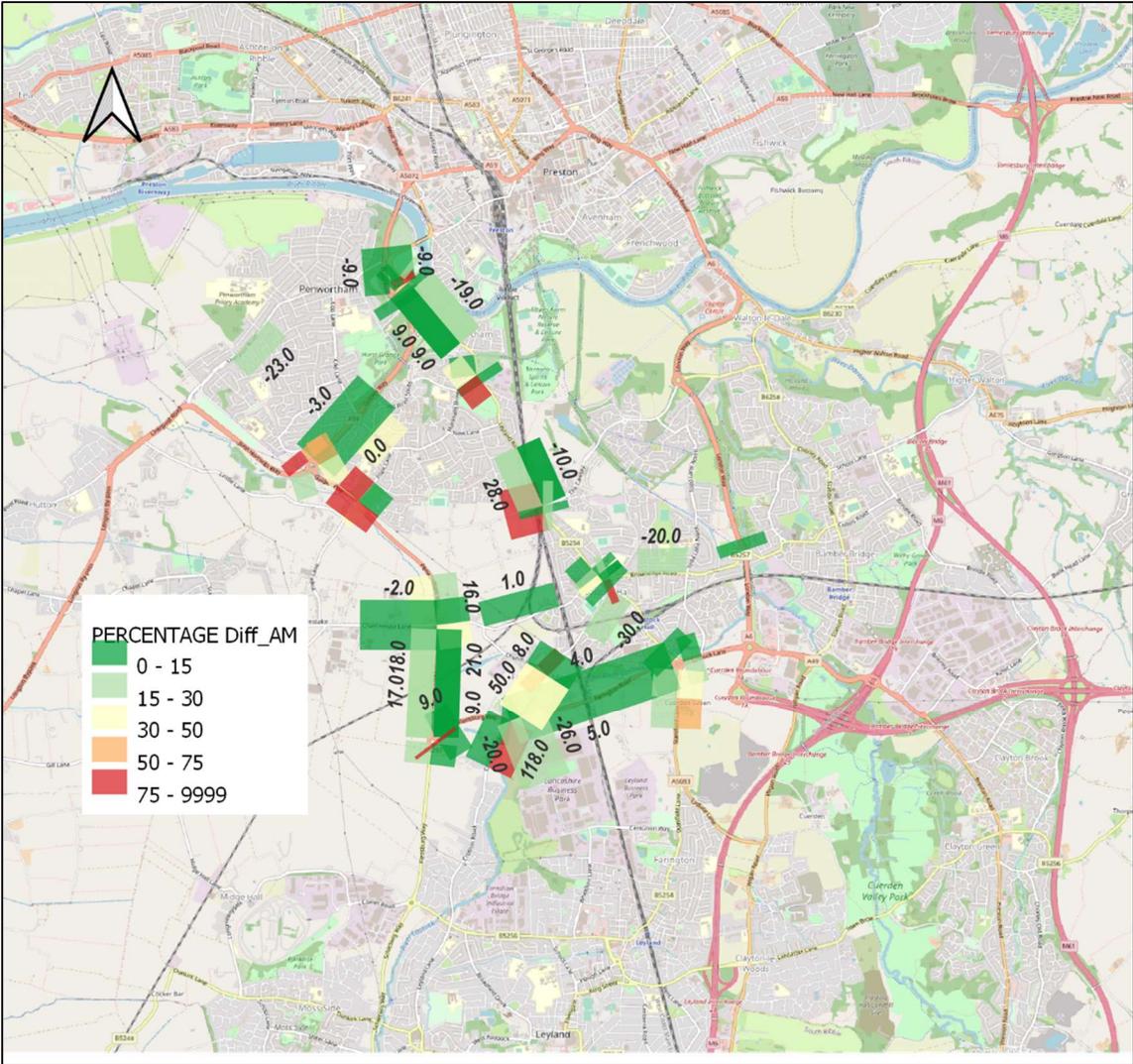
	Direction	24 Hour (HGV)				Difference between observed 2023 and 'NTEM8 predicted' 2023 traffic
		Observed traffic 2019	2019 traffic uplifted to 2023 using NTEM8 Core	Observed traffic 2023	Observed traffic growth (%)	
TRIS M6/7430	NB	9,159	9,402	9,248	1.0%	-1.6%
	SB	9,347	9,595	9,367	0.2%	-2.4%
TRIS M65-4014	NB	1,127	1,157	1,262	12.0%	9.1%
	SB	1,216	1,248	1,418	16.7%	13.6%
TRIS M6-7450	NB	7,675	7,878	7,918	3.2%	0.5%
	SB	7,470	7,668	7,566	1.3%	-1.3%
TRIS M6-7526	NB	11,552	11,859	11,994	3.8%	1.1%
	SB	12,903	13,245	13,591	5.3%	2.6%
TRIS M55-525	NB	2,035	2,089	2,190	7.6%	4.8%
	SB	2,640	2,710	2,802	6.1%	3.4%
ATC 8 Leyland Road	Southbound	299	307	16	-94.6%	-94.8%
	Northbound	313	321	16	-95.0%	-95.1%
Overall	All Sites	65,735	67,480	67,387	2.5%	-0.1%
	Study Area sites	612	628	32	-94.8%	-95.0%
	TRIS sites	65,123	66,852	67,356	3.4%	0.8%

Daily Observed Traffic Growth Percentage (2019 to 2023) – HGV

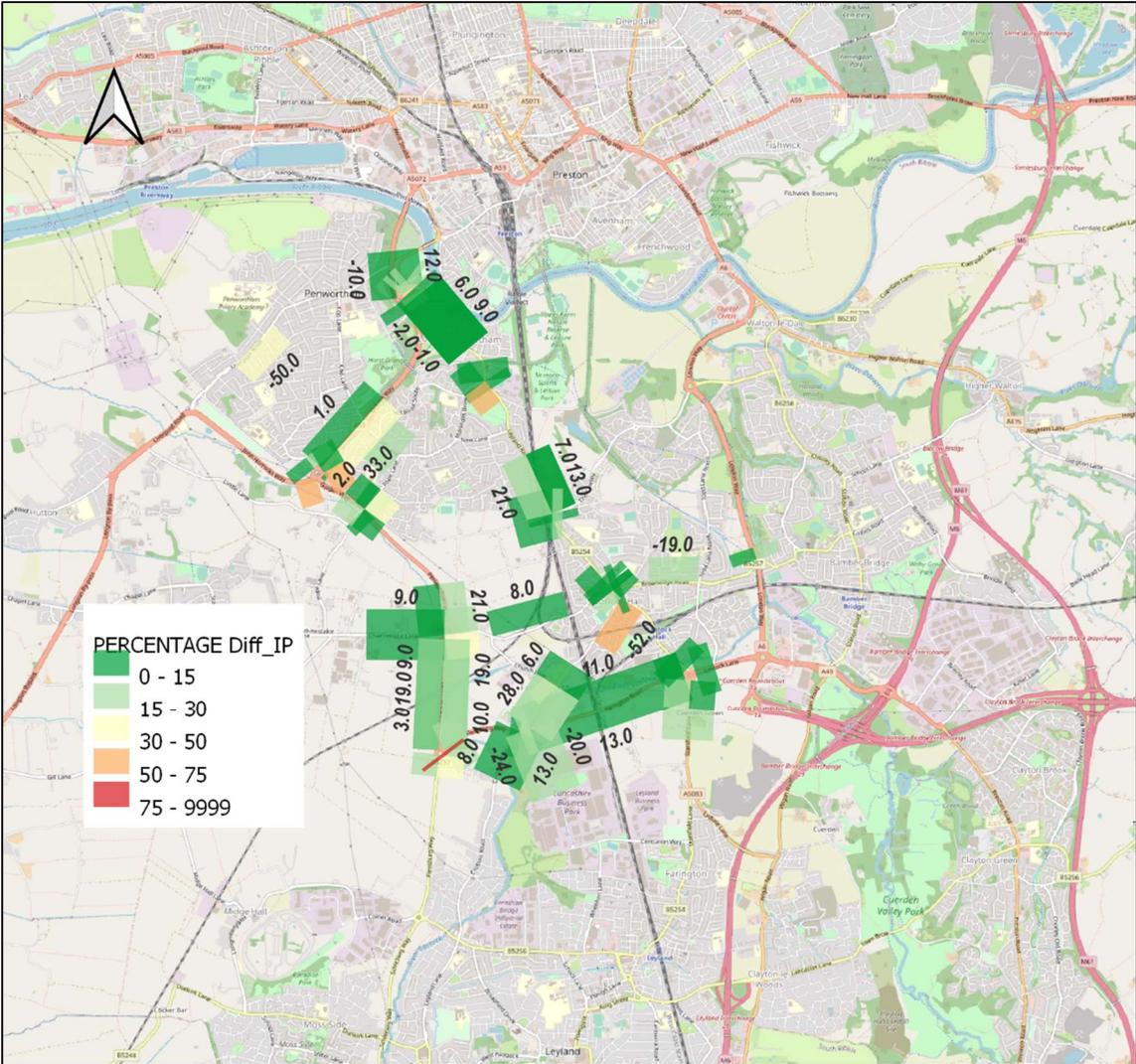
GEH STATS – IP Peak



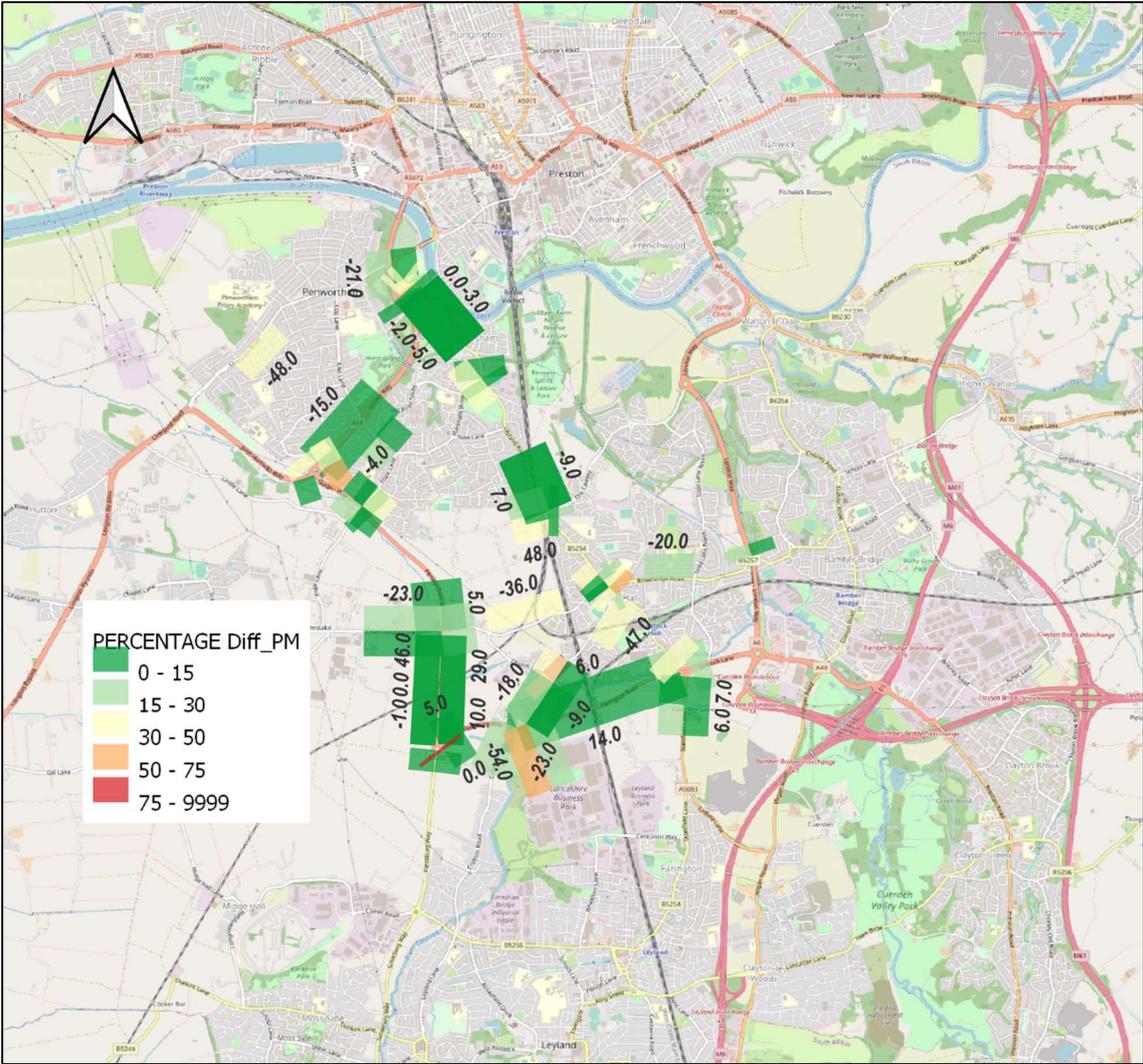
Flow Difference (%) – AM Peak



Flow Difference (%) – IP Peak



Flow Difference (%) – PM Peak



APPENDIX D

Link Level Comparison

