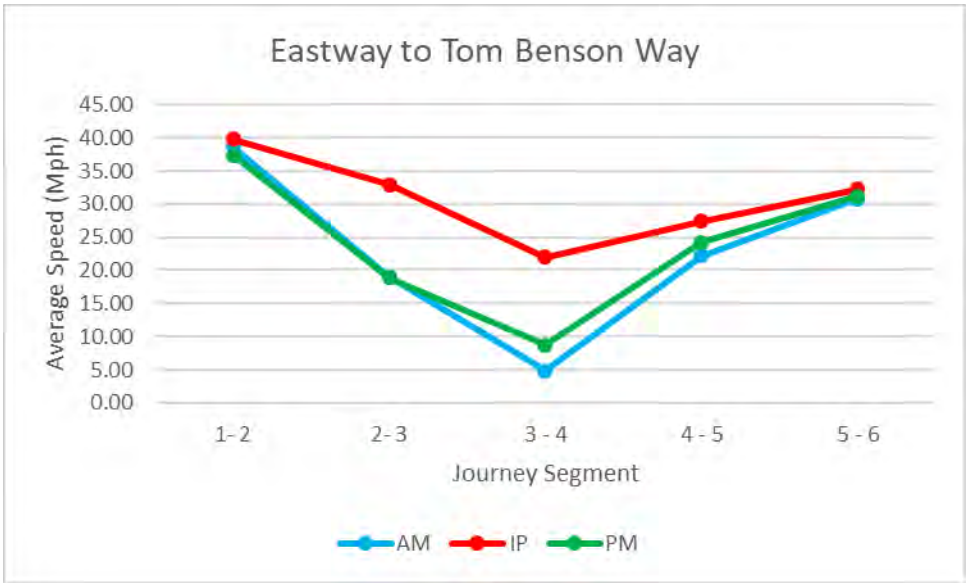

Figure 3-J: Average Speed by time period along Eastway - Tom Benson Way route

Figure 3-K highlights that congestion contributes to a decrease in average speeds during the AM and PM peak periods, when travelling south from north-south along A6. Between points 1 to 2, speeds during the AM peak period particularly suffer, with speeds averaging below 10 mph, while during the IP period speeds are in excess of 20 mph at the same stage.

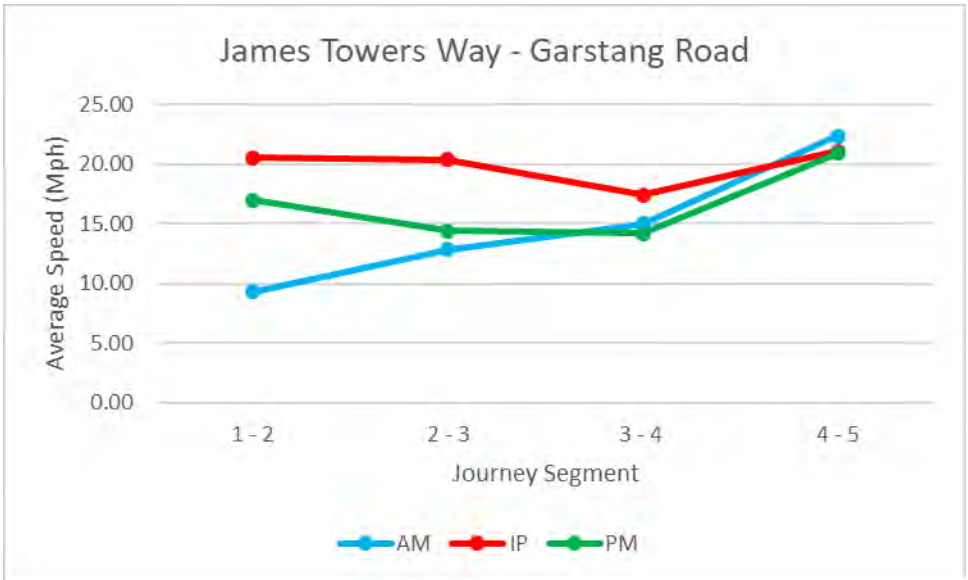

Figure 3-K: Average Speeds by time period along A6 and via M55 J1

The particularly low speeds near M55 Junction 1 as evidenced above highlights the specific need to reduce the flow in this area.

In addition, the M55 J3 approach on the A585 also has significant peak time delays. This junction is not only the primary access point for Kirkham and Wesham, but also for traffic to Warton and the Enterprise Zone.

There are 3 Ribble crossings (excluding the M6), all of which experience delay on the approaches in both peak periods. The limited river crossing capacity causes the 3 existing bridges to act as pinch points on the Preston road network.

Orbital routes around Preston also experience significant delay including the M6, sections of the A5085 in an arc around the north of Preston centre, Lightfoot Lane north of Preston and the A582 and Chain House Lane around Lostock Hall.

Accesses to/from key employment sites in and around Preston are affected by congestion resulting in significant losses to the economy and frustration for the commuters. The location of key employment sites is shown in Figure 3-L.

Other known issues and constraints on the existing highway network that limit capacity during peak hours. These include:

- "Rat running" on Lightfoot Lane between the A6 and Eastway/ Lightfoot Lane junction;
- The West Coast Mainline (WCML) railway provides a constraint to east-west movement on the B6241 Lightfoot Lane;
- Peak hour queues and delays at Tom Benson Way/ Tag Lane roundabout; and
- Semi-rural substandard roads to the west linking southwards to Blackpool Road.

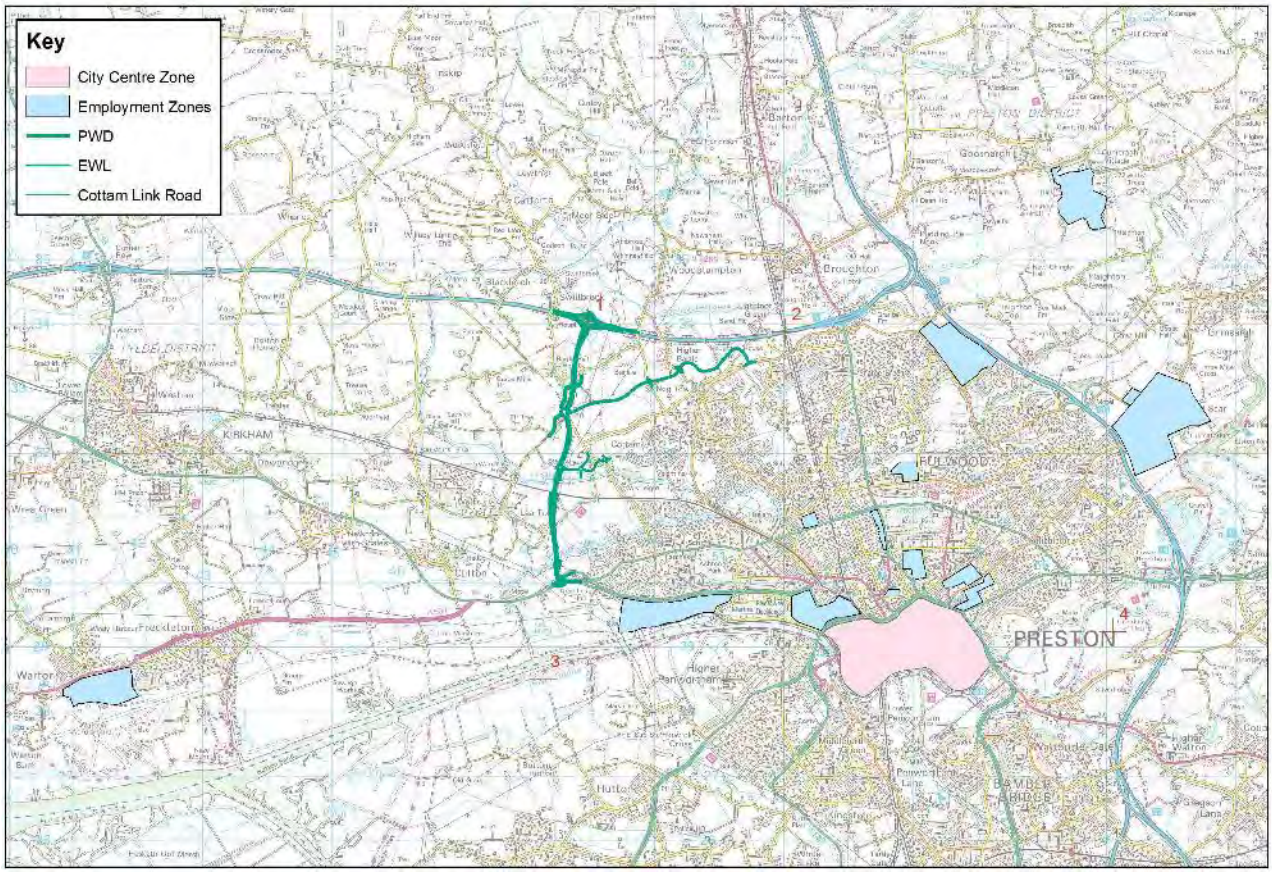

Figure 3-L: Key employment sites

Problem 1: Congestion

Congestion in the morning and evening peak periods causes lengthy travel times and poor journey time reliability for strategic east-west and north-south traffic through Preston. It is preventing ease of access to/from key employment sites, as well as causing delays and frustration for motorists.

Significant delay is present on key approaches to the strategic road network, and especially at M55 J1 and J3 in particular.

Congestion, even at current traffic levels is comprehensive, and is present on all key arterial and radial routes to/from the City.

Congestion in central Preston leads to long and unreliable journey times to/from and between Warton and Samlesbury. The route between the two sites is of particular importance to the local economy as it links the two Enterprise Zones (which together form the Lancashire Enterprise Zone).

In 2014 Jacobs undertook a study of the route linking two Enterprise Zone sites (Warton to Samlesbury Route Management Strategy, Jacobs, 2014) which concluded that the majority of the route functions are currently underperforming due to traffic congestion in key areas along the route.

The alternative route to Warton is via the M55 J3 and along the A585 and A584 which also have congestion issues as demonstrated in Figure 3-F and Figure 3-G, or via local rat-runs in the AM/PM peaks via Wrea Green. These routes however are constrained by nature of the narrow rural roads with restricted driver sight, and are not designed for high levels of traffic.

Poor access to/from Warton Enterprise Zone results in slow journey times and poor journey time reliability for employees, suppliers and customers thus constraining the potential of one of the fastest growing enterprise zones in the country.

Problem 2: Warton Enterprise Zone Accessibility

The present access to/from Warton from M55 J3 is a major constraint and issue to accessing the strategic road network from one of the Lancashire Enterprise Zone sites and one of the core centres of advanced manufacturing in the country.

As was demonstrated in Table 3-A, most public transport journeys in Preston are made by bus. For many trips bus is the only sustainable alternative to car due to limited local rail alternatives in Preston and insufficient 'public realm' to prioritise walking and cycling. But, while more than twice as many passengers use buses than trains, the bus journeys have fallen in Lancashire from 57 million in 2012 to 45.5 million in 2017[3].

Buses must share the road space with other vehicles and suffer the same delays as other road users unless there are dedicated bus lanes; of which there are presently few in Preston. This leads to long journey times and poor journey time reliability on bus services whilst the current network simply does not have enough spare capacity to allow bus priority measures to be installed. Bus operators argue that congestion levels impede their ability to operate a reliable service in the area[4].

[3] https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/lancashire-insight/transport/local-bus-and-tram-passenger-journeys/
[4] https://www.lep.co.uk/news/transport/is-lancashire-s-public-transport-up-to-the-job-1-8949377

Problem 3: Poor bus journey time reliability

Bus journeys are affected by the same delays as other road users and have long journey times and poor reliability due to congestion on certain routes as admitted by bus operators, notably on the A6 corridor, due to lack of capacity on the existing road network.

As pointed out in the CLHTM, congestion and extra traffic can have a wide range of unwelcome side effects. The most obvious are road safety and local air quality.

Analysis of accident rates in Central Lancashire has been undertaken, based on observed accident data from 2010-2016. For the key roads, a simple analysis has compared the observed accident rate with the national average expected for a road of that type. These national average rates are based on those used within COBA-LT, the industry-standard software used for the appraisal of the accident savings on major highway schemes.

The analysis showed that there are parts of the network where the accident rates are significantly (over 25%) higher than would be expected for this type of road. As can be seen in Figure 3-M the above national average accident rates are observed on A584, most of A583 between Kirkham and central Preston, A6 between M55 Junction 1 and A59, M55 between Junction 1 and M6.

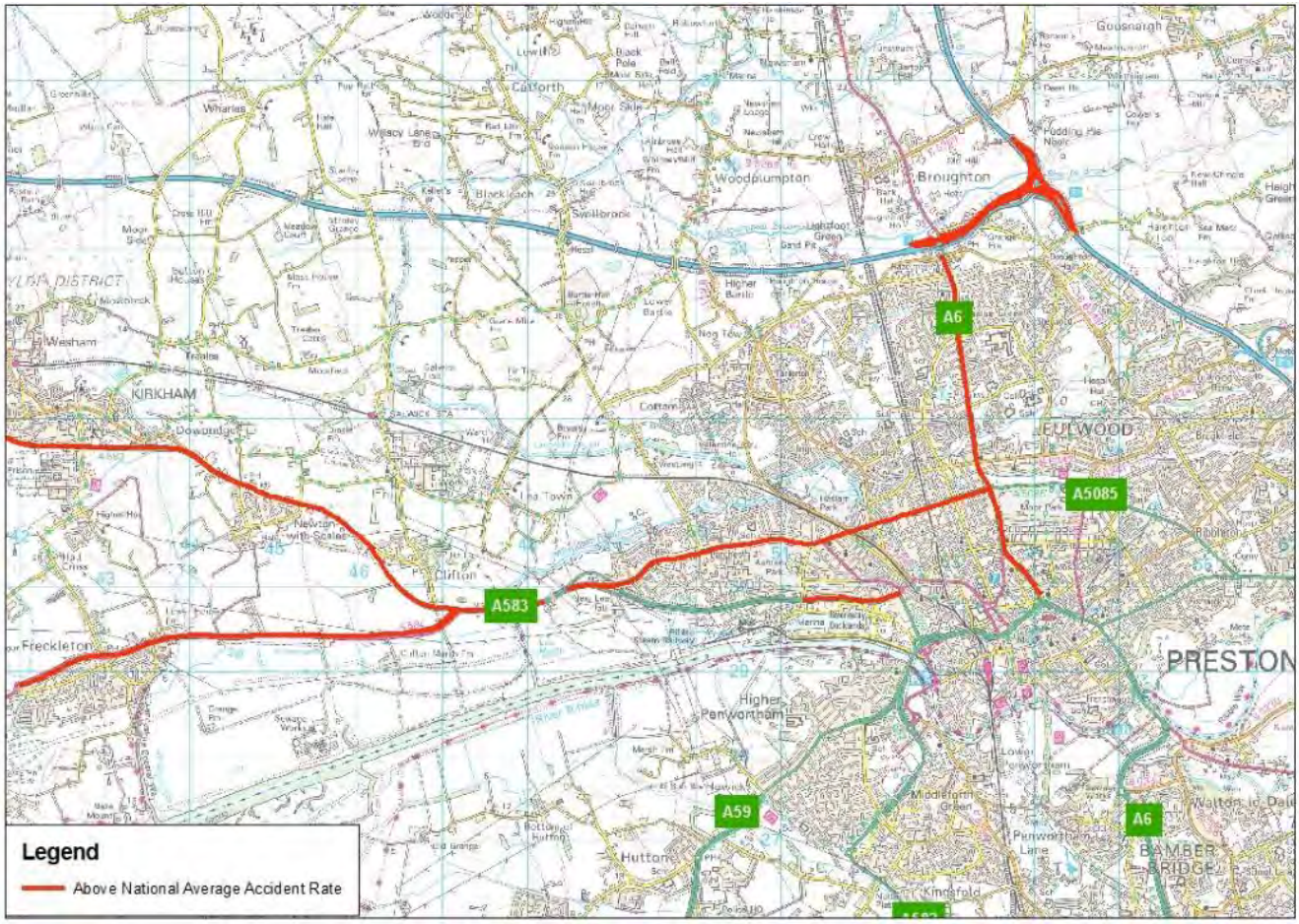

Figure 3-M: Roads with above national average accident rates

Problem 4: Accidents

The key routes in the north and west of Preston have higher than national average accident rates. High accident rates is a heavy burden to local economy as accidents have a high cost of prevention and result in unreliable journey times to all travellers.

Congestion and slow traffic is also one of the main causes of air pollution. The Local Air Quality Management process places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their areas. Where exceedances are considered likely, the local authority must then declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of the objectives.

Preston City Council currently has five AQMAs for the pollutant Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) shown in Figure 3-N.

Pertinent to the PWD route are:

- *AQMA 1 – A59 Ringway / Church Street / Percy Street;*
- *AQMA 2 – A5085 Blackpool Road / Plungington Road;*
- *AQMA 4 – New Hall Lane, near London Road; and*
- *AQMA 5 – A6 London Road between Primrose Hill and Frenchwood Avenue.*

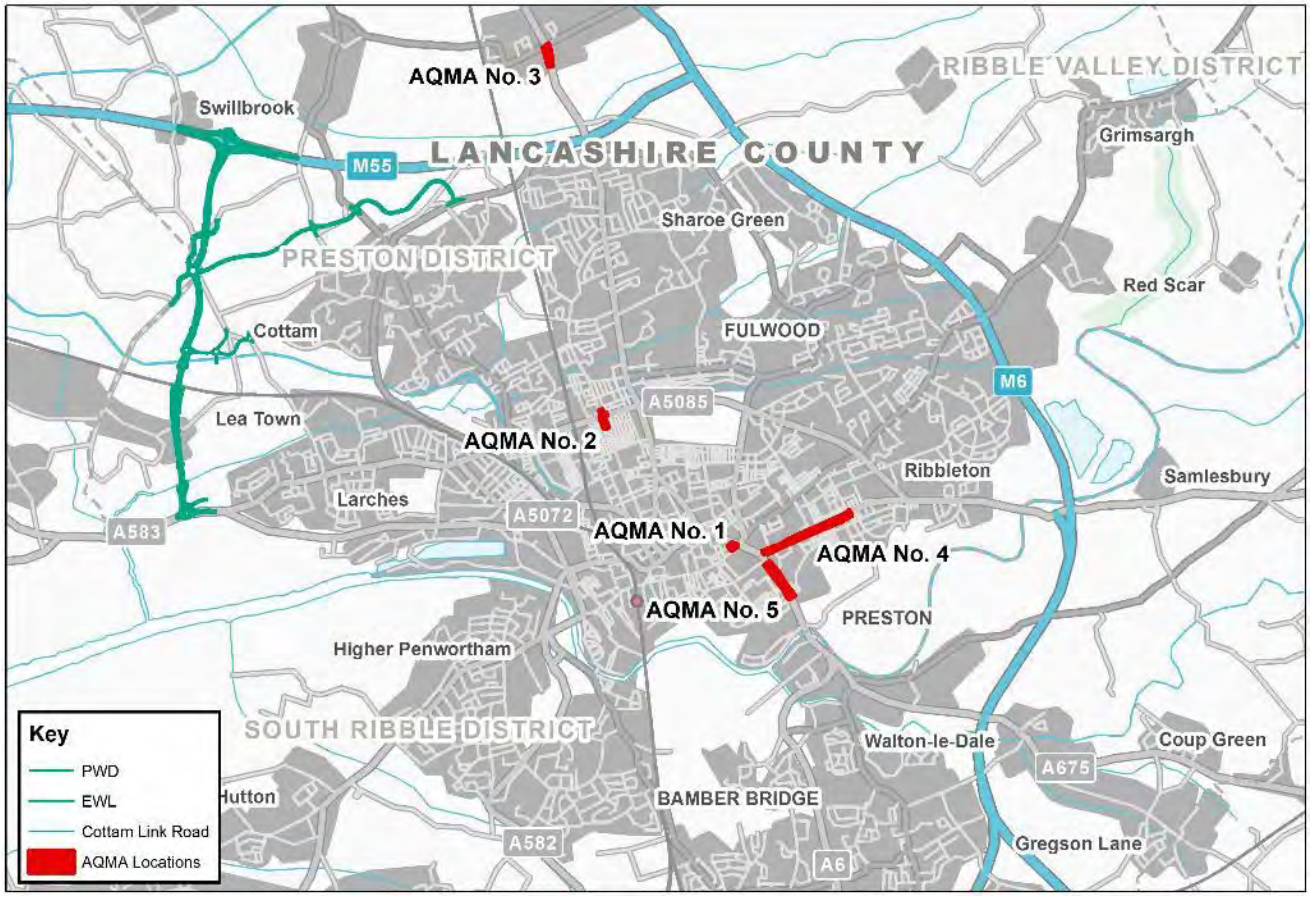

Figure 3-N: AQMA locations

The Preston City Council Air Quality Progress Report (June 2014) identified that the annual mean nitrogen dioxide objective (40 µg/m3 (micrograms per cubic metre)) is being exceeded at all PCC AQMA sites except AQMA 1 (A59 Ringway / Church Street).

Problem 5: Air pollution

Congestion in and on approach to/from central Preston causes concentrations of pollution above standards set out in national guidance and policy. Levels of nitrous oxide in particular exceed thresholds. Four Air Quality Management Areas are now in place in central Preston and forecast increases in traffic and development will prolongate issues within the AQMAs without intervention.

In summary the analysis of the current situation helped identify the following five transport-related problems in the study area:

- *Congestion*
- *Inadequate accessibility of Warton Enterprise Zone*
- *Poor bus journey time reliability*
- *Accidents*
- *Air pollution*

3.3 Understanding the Future Situation

3.3.1 Introduction

This section of the Strategic Case aims to develop an understanding of the future transport situation in and around Preston.

Policy documents have been reviewed to identify housing and business growth aspirations and potential changes to demand and transport network.

This section is set in the context of the Lancashire LEP's vision for growth, and the City Deal to transform economic growth and to deliver jobs and housing in Preston & South Ribble.

3.3.2 Future housing and business growth

The future situation is driven by the ambitious plans of Central Lancashire to achieve a once-in-a-lifetime transformation of the area, creating thousands of new jobs and homes, and adding £1bn per annum to the local and national economy; as set out in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (July 2012) and Preston Local Plan 2012-2026 (adopted 2015).

Within the Preston District, the Core Strategy identifies North West Preston as a strategic housing location to accommodate 5,000+ new homes. Other key housing sites in the area include Cottam Hall (1,100+ dwellings) and Whittingham Hospital site (650 dwellings and 9000m^2 of office / light industrial use).

Employment growth will be delivered primarily through the development of key sites at Warton and Samlesbury Enterprise Zones, East Preston, Cuerden and the city centre. These sites are a key focus for the Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal.

The Lancashire Enterprise Zone has the potential to create up to 6,000 jobs in advanced engineering and manufacturing in the long term. Figure 3-O overleaf shows the locations of the key development sites and the proposed transport infrastructure to best serve these locations.

The development proposals will generate a significant increase in travel demand onto already congested roads around Preston, and especially to the north and west of Preston given limited connectivity in this area to alternative routes, or the Strategic Road Network.

The 2037 traffic forecasts demonstrate that the addition of the North West Preston and Cottam Hall developments, without the PWD, will generate the largest flow increases into Preston on Tom Benson Way, the B5411 and to/from M55 J1, which will add to existing delays on these routes on top of the forecast background growth in traffic.

The travel demand increase will also affect the rural road network that covers much of the NW Preston area. These rural roads are not suitable for large traffic volumes and, following the national trend, can be expected to have a higher accident rate and a greater proportion of KSI (Killed or Seriously Injured) incidents.

The CLHTM model results are supported by the junction assessments undertaken as part of the North West Preston Masterplan Transport Assessment (URS, January 2014), the PWD Environmental Statement (2016) and the results of microsimulation modelling in Aimsun.

The junctions of the existing network along Lightfoot Lane between Tabley Lane and the A6 and the M55 J1 were assessed in an interim scenario for 2023 traffic levels with a proportion of the NW Preston developments committed for completion. The results of the interim scenario show that:

- *The Lightfoot Lane / Wychnor junction is forecast to operate over capacity in 2023 and requires improvement;*
- *The M55 J1 / A6 junction will operate close to capacity in 2023; and*
- *The Tom Benson Way / Tanterton Hall Road / Tag Lane roundabout will operate close to capacity in 2023.*

Problem 6: Future housing and business growth constraints

Large-scale housing developments (5000+ dwellings) are planned in North-West Preston in line with Central Lancashire Core Strategy, but cannot be granted planning consent until the capacity of the highway network has been improved.

The expansion of technology-based businesses with a high value output including the Lancashire Enterprise zone is constrained by traffic congestion and difficulty in attracting skilled labour due to the problems of commuting on congested network.

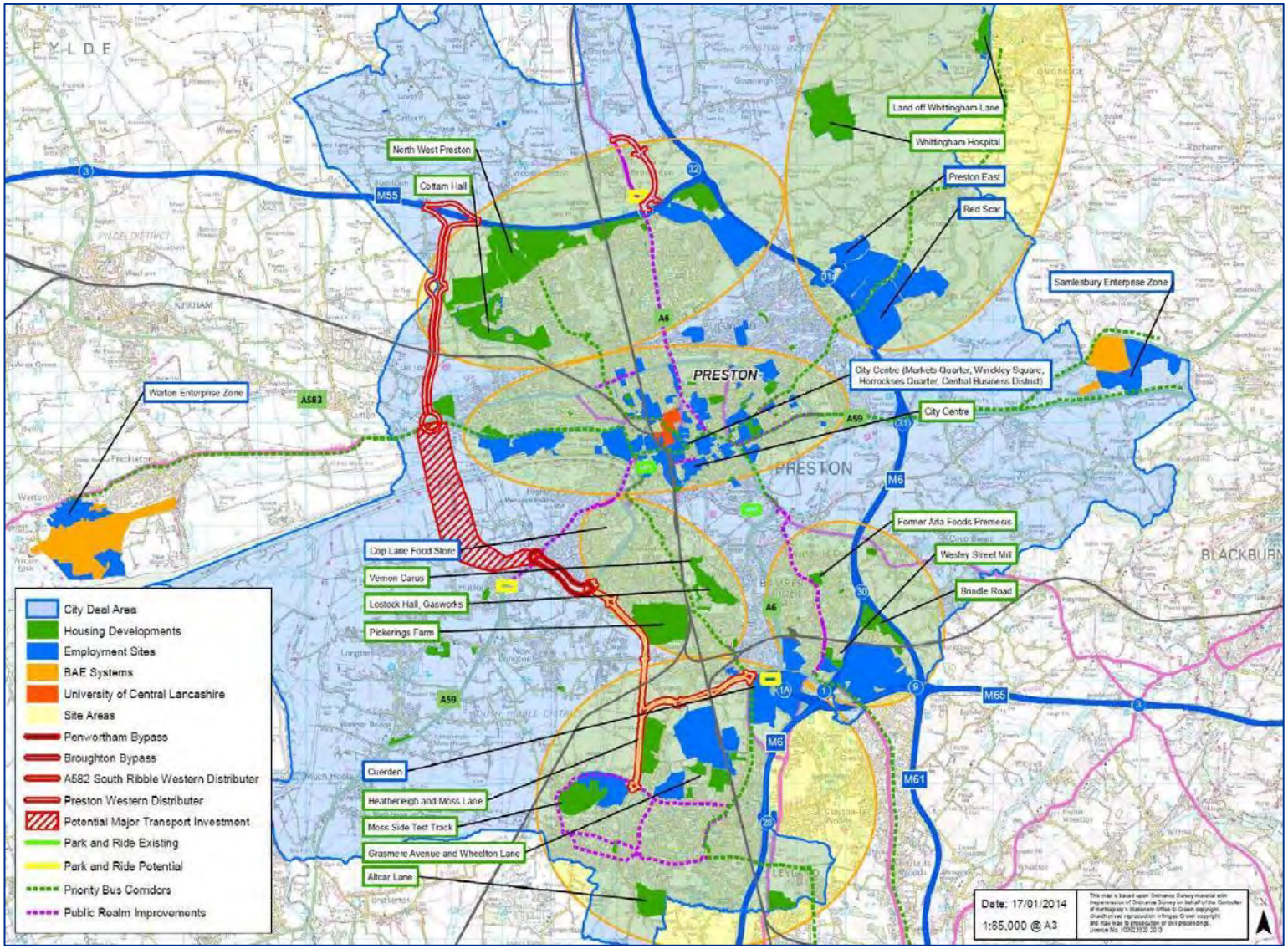

Figure 3-O: Key Development Sites

3.3.3 Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan & the City Deal

The Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan (CLHTM) was adopted in 2013. It represents the County Council's priorities for future investment in highways and transport across Central Lancashire. Creating extra capacity has been recognised as key to accommodating new development, improving the most important bus corridors and enhancing 'public realm' to encourage sustainable travel and economic growth.

The CLHTM proposed a package of transport interventions to address the needs and priorities of the local area identified in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy.

The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal (September 2013) agreement with central government has secured investment for 4 of the major road schemes in the CLHTM in order to unlock the housing and employment potential within Lancashire.

The schemes to be delivered in the period to 2026 are:

- *Preston Western Distributor;*
- *Broughton Bypass;*
- *Penwortham Bypass; and*
- *A582 South Ribble Western Distributor.*

In addition, the proposed Cottam Parkway rail station will likely be situated to the south of Cottam between the existing Salwick and Preston rail stations on the soon to be electrified Preston-Blackpool line. The CLHTM makes clear that large scale housing and employment opportunities are dependent on new highways infrastructure and that this will also facilitate significant public transport improvements. In the case of North West Preston, the majority of the 5,000+ dwellings are dependent on the PWD, without it there is no development and so no case for a Cottam rail station. Cottam Parkway is also dependent on improved highways access to the Cottam Link Road / A583 for which the PWD will provide the primary access at the western end; hence Cottam Parkway is dependent on the PWD.

It is a feature of the CLHTM that the new Parkway rail station is key to delivering sustainable travel options in North West Preston and from the start of the planning process was considered in conjunction with a highways scheme. It is imperative to realising the full benefits of both schemes that the PWD unlocks highway access to the station site.

The provision of Cottam Parkway is not a pre-requisite of the PWD. The station is being progressed by National Rail and is currently at the GRIP Stage 3 – Option selection.

Beyond 2026, there is a proposal for a new Ribble Bridge and Smart Motorway on the M6 between J29 and J32.

The schemes identified in CLHTM will enable planned new development to go ahead, achieve marked improvements for local communities and their environment and allow significant complimentary improvements to sustainable travel provisions.

As an example, a reduction of traffic in central Preston as a result of the PWD and other City Deal schemes will facilitate provision of bus lanes and public realm improvements. Whilst facilitated by the provision of the PWD these improvements are not part of the scheme.

Delivery of these schemes, however, is essential to resolving current and foreseeable problems and issues that could otherwise result in gridlock for the transport network and missed opportunities to develop the local economy as identified in Section 3.2 and 3.3 above.

3.4 Establishing the Need for Intervention

The following provides a summary of the existing and future transport problems and issues in and around Preston discussed in detail in the previous sections.

- ***Future housing and business growth constraints**. Large-scale housing developments are planned in North-West Preston in line with Central Lancashire Core Strategy, but cannot be granted planning consent until the capacity of the highway network has been improved. The expansion of technology-based businesses with a high value output including the Lancashire Enterprise zone is constrained by traffic congestion and difficulty in attracting skilled labour due to the problems of commuting;*

- ***Congestion** in the morning and evening peak periods cause poor journey time reliability and lengthy travel times for strategic east-west and north-south traffic through Preston. Significant delay is also present on key approaches to the strategic road network at M55 J1 and J3. It is causing delays and frustration for motorists alongside emissions and environmental issues;*

- ***Poor access to Warton Enterprise Zone** is a major constraint and issue to accessing the strategic road network from of the fastest growing Enterprise zones in the country;*

- ***Unreliable bus journey times**. Bus journeys have long journey times and poor reliability, notably on the A6 corridor, due to lack of capacity on the existing road network;*

- ***Accidents.** There are parts of the road network in and around Preston with accident rates higher than national average. High accident rates is a heavy burden to local economy as accidents have a high cost of prevention and result in unreliable journey times to all travellers;*

- ***Air pollution** in central Preston is exacerbated by congestion and slow traffic. Levels of nitrous oxide have exceeded thresholds. Four Air Quality Management Areas are now in place in central Preston and forecast increases in traffic and development will further increase emissions within the AQMAs.*

As demonstrated the transport network in and around Preston is already reaching a critical point in terms of both the level and comprehensiveness of congestion- being present on all key arterial and radial routes to and from the City as well as key employment locations on its edges- which leads to poor private and public transport journey time reliability, accidents, and excessive concentrations of air pollution.

The level of new development proposed in the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy would add high volumes of additional traffic onto already extremely busy roads around the north and west of Preston- evidenced from both future forecasts of traffic patterns, and Transport Assessment of core development proposals.

This is exacerbated by limited opportunities to presently access/egress the strategic road network, and that further growth is required to overcome, for effective and reliable door-to-door connectivity; for both strategic and more local movements.

Summary: The need for intervention

There are several current and future transport related problems and issues identified within Central Lancashire and in and around Preston in particular:

- *Future housing growth constraints*
- *Future business growth constraints*
- *Significant issues with congestion and delay*
- *Poor journey time reliability of public transport in peak periods*

- *Accidents*
- *Air quality*
- *Poor accessibility of Warton Enterprise Zone*

The underlying cause of the identified problems is that the transport network in Preston is already at critical point and will not be able to cope with an increase in demand for travel as a result of economic growth and new developments in the area.

Without an intervention all the identified problems will be exacerbated in the future and will be constraining investment and growth in Central Lancashire.

The widespread levels of existing delay across Preston together with the increased stress and junction performance issues created by the proposed quantum of development, particularly in North West Preston, requires a strategic intervention in order to maintain a satisfactory level of highways performance.

Based on the current evidence and approved future year plans, a strategic transport intervention is required which would be capable of supporting the following outputs and benefits:

- *5,000+ new dwellings in the North West Preston strategic housing location;*
- *Significantly improved access to the Enterprise Zone at Warton, and support future growth;*
- *Reduced congestion on radial and arterial routes to and from Preston;*
- *Facilitate the provision of a new 'parkway' railway station at Cottam on the soon to be electrified Preston to Blackpool North railway line to enhance local rail connectivity;*
- *Facilitate the provision of bus priority, environmental and public realm improvements within and on routes into Preston.*

3.5 Scheme Objectives

Based upon existing, known issues, and future growth changes, this section provides a summary of the scheme objectives. These are designed to be derived from the preceding evidence, be consistent with the DfT's Transport Appraisal Guidance (TAG), national priorities and local objectives of Lancashire County Council and those of the Lancashire Enterprise Partnership.

The objectives take account of the wider objectives and aspirations within the

Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan (CLHTM, March 2013) and Central Lancashire Core Strategy (CLCS).

They also align closely with national DfT priorities and the sub national priorities of Transport for the North including facilitating access to key employment growth locations, delivering housing, tackling congestion, improving road safety and encouraging sustainable local travel.

In addition to meeting national and local objectives, the study objectives have been derived from the evidence in Section 3.4, workshops and public consultation (Consultation Report, October 2014) to ensure the deliverability of the CLCS and to address the findings of the current situation and future situation as also presented in this Chapter. The objectives were independently presented for discussion and agreement at an Option Generation Workshop at County Hall, Preston.

The confirmed study objectives are split into two tiers.

The three **primary objectives** are critical to delivery of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and are identified within the CLHTM.

The eight **supporting objectives** relate to the identified problems from Section 3.4.

The full set of objectives is listed below:

A. Primary Objectives

1. ***Support local economic growth*** *by unlocking housing development in North West Preston;*
2. ***Improve access of the Warton Enterprise Zone*** *to strategic road network and wider labour market catchment; and*
3. ***Reduce congestion*** *and associated delays on the arterial and radial routes within the Preston urban area.*

B. Supporting Objectives

1. *Facilitate access to the proposed Cottam Parkway rail station;*
2. *Facilitate the implementation of bus priority measures;*
3. *Facilitate the provision of enhanced walking and cycling networks;*
4. *Facilitate enhancement of the public realm and local centres;*
5. *Improve road safety;*
6. *Improve air quality and reduce noise pollution;*
7. *Support further housing and employment growth potential in Central Lancashire; and*
8. *Support the future delivery of a new Ribble Crossing joining with the A582 and A59 routes west of Penwortham.*

3.6 Options Identification and Selection

3.6.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the option identification and selection process that has led to the proposed scheme. It shows that, in line with the best practice, the process adopted to arrive at the proposed scheme has been driven by the identified problems/issues and defined objectives, and has considered a broad range of alternative solutions.

An Options Assessment Report (OAR) (Jacobs, June 2017) has been produced in line with the DfT's Transport Business Case guidance and Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG). The OAR provides further details in full to supplement the business case in terms of options identification and selection. The full OAR is available in Appendix B.

In line with this guidance, the OAR was conducted in three distinct stages to ensure that due consideration was given to a wide range of alternative measures or options that could potentially achieve the objectives or a proportion of the study objectives identified above:

1. ***Option Generation:*** *The development of a long list of potential options to meet the scheme objectives listed in Section 3.5;*

2. ***Initial Sift:*** *Sifting the long list options with respect to the fit with the primary scheme objectives; and*

3. ***Secondary Sift:*** *Sifting the options with a strong fit with the primary objectives with respect to the fit with the supporting objectives.*

3.6.2 Option Generation

A wide range of highways, public and sustainable transport options were considered in the development of an initial long list of options that could potentially achieve the scheme objectives.

As this section will demonstrate there are significant challenges in the uptake of standalone non-highways solutions. This does not, however, imply that the public transport interventions are not viable as complimentary measures in tackling the identified problems.

The CLHTM concluded that a major programme of sustainable transport improvements could potentially reduce car trips by 5% at a city scale. The conclusion is based on the results of the DfT study into the effects of smarter choice travel measures in designated Sustainable Travel Towns. The study reported an overall reduction in all vehicle traffic of broadly 2%, whist within the inner areas of the towns the reductions were in the order of 6-8%. At city scale this is a higher reduction in trips than seen in the Sustainable Travel Towns but is comparable for town centre trips[5]

The 5% reduction in car trips does not compensate for National Trip End Model (NTEM) forecast car traffic growth of 6% - 9% in Preston up to 2026, thus defining the need for a strategic highways option based on accommodating not just the current levels of traffic but critically the planned levels of future traffic growth.

Table 3-E provides a list of potential public transport and smarter travel options, derived through discussion with officers, together with a commentary on their fit with the need for intervention.

Public Transport and Smarter Travel Options	Fit with the Need for Intervention
Increased frequency of existing bus services	Bus services currently experience long journey times and poor journey time reliability due to congestion, making bus travel unattractive and unlikely to generate a significant modal shift from car users.
Additional bus services linking more locations	
Park and Ride bus sites servicing A-road corridors	This option does not address the access needs of new housing in NW Preston or job growth at Warton.
Bus priority measures	The road network experiences congestion and road space is at a premium. Bus priority measures would reduce capacity for other road users and modelled results show the modal shift to bus is not high enough to compensate.
Provide real time passenger information	This option is unlikely to attract sufficient car users to address the growth in demand.
Improved parking at rail stations	Preston railway station on Fishergate in the centre of Preston already has 1000 car parking spaces and is used primarily for trips outside of Preston. Salwick station in Fylde is the first station on the Preston-Blackpool line but is a remote rural station with a limited service frequency unsuitable for the development of park and ride facilities.
Cottam Parkway new Park and Ride rail station	Access from the existing road network would be from unsuitable rural roads from Lea Road or Sidgreaves Lane. This option is complementary to any highways option that unlocks access to the Cottam Parkway Station site.
Car sharing schemes	

[5] The effects of Smarter Choice programmes in the Sustainable Travel Towns: full report (DfT, March 2010), Chapter 17: Traffic

Public Transport and Smarter Travel Options	Fit with the Need for Intervention
Encouragement of staggered starting hours and flexi-hours	The uptake is not forecast to be large enough to compensate for the increased future travel demand as noted from previous testing.
New / improved cycling routes along arterial routes to Preston	Access to the new housing developments is either on unsuitable rural roads or congested routes which discourages potential cyclists. Similarly, the relatively remote location of Warton discourages cycling trips.
Enhanced walking routes including new pedestrian crossing facilities and traffic separation	Access to Warton and the NW Preston housing developments for employment and other services is likely to involve longer distances for which walking is less suited.

Table 3-E: Sustainable Transport Options – Fit with the Need for Intervention

It is concluded that a standalone PT or smarter travel choice option, or a package of such options, would not be sufficient to meet the need for intervention and the resulting scheme objectives. The preferred option would need to be a highways solution.

However, delivery of 5,000+ new homes could provide an opportunity to encourage sustainable forms of transport. Table 3-F describes the complimentary sustainable travel options and their potential synergy with a highways solution.

Public Transport and Smarter Travel Options	Fit with a highways solution
Increased frequency of existing bus services	With additional capacity these measures will become a more attractive travel option and will complement a strategic highways option. The East-West link will include bus stops so that the majority of the new housing will lie within 400m of a stop.
Additional bus services linking more locations	
Park and Ride bus sites servicing A-road corridors	Accessible park and ride sites may have the potential to free up capacity on Preston's arterial road corridors in the peak periods.
Bus priority measures	Reduced bus travel time and improved reliability caused by this option will increase the attractiveness of bus travel within Preston.
Provide real time passenger information	Improved facilities and travel information will improve the quality of bus travel in Preston.
Improved parking at rail stations	Improved car and bicycle parking at railway stations increases the capacity for interchange between modes and improves the perceived accessibility of the rail network leading to modal shift onto rail. Stations require suitable highways access.
Cottam Parkway new Park and Ride rail station	A new rail station to the south of Cottam between the existing Salwick and Preston stations on the Preston-Blackpool line. Access to the station could be enhanced by a Cottam link to the Preston Western Distributor, making the station suitable for park and ride.
Car sharing schemes	The promotion of car sharing schemes and flexi-hours working within businesses in Preston has the potential to reduce the number of vehicles on the road network and spread the morning and evening peak demand.
Encouragement of staggered starting hours and flexi-hours	
New / improved cycling routes along arterial routes to Preston	An increase in cycling trips is an important national and local objective that promotes health through active travel and reduces the number of car journeys. A newly built highways scheme, including the East-West link will include a walking /cycle lane alongside the carriageway. The East-West link is also expected to contain bus stops and the North West Preston development is planned around a 'garden village' layout, one benefit of which is to encourage more active travel.

Public Transport and Smarter Travel Options	Fit with a highways solution
Enhanced walking routes including new pedestrian crossing facilities and traffic separation	An increase in walking trips for short distance journeys is an important national and local objective that promotes health through active travel and reduces the number of car journeys. Reduction of local congestion resulting from a highways scheme will reduce the severance impact that major roads have on local communities and so encourage more walking trips.

Table 3-F: Sustainable Transport Options – Fit with the Highway Solution

As demonstrated above, the implementation of a highway based option has the potential not just to create capacity for private vehicles but for enhanced public transport and walking and cycling measures too, through the redistribution of traffic.

Reducing congestion enables existing bus service users to benefit from reduced journey times and better reliability and potentially new bus and cycling routes to be established, including cycle tracks alongside new roads. Proposals for a new rail station (Cottam Parkway) with a strong focus on Park and Ride will also benefit from a strategic highways intervention. Therefore, public transport measures should be viewed as an outcome of future strategic highways based intervention.

Based on the above it was concluded that the preferred option would need to be a highways based solution to fully meet the outcomes of the CLHTM. This solution will be complimented and indeed provide synergy with a set of public transport and sustainable transport measures, such as development of the proposed Cottam Parkway rail station and bus corridor improvements in Preston.

Table 3-G shows the long list of highways options generated to address the needs of transport users within Preston taking account of local knowledge, consultation options and ideas (Preston City Deal Consultation Report, October 2014) and workshop outcomes.

Reference	Option Description
O-01	Motorway around the south and west of Preston between M6 J28 and M55 J2 (new junction)
O-02	SMART motorway: M6 J28-32 and M55 west of J1 to the M6
O-03	Improvements to increase road capacity between M55 J3 and Warton (A585 and Kirkham Road)
O-04	Dual carriageway Preston Western Distributor (PWD)
O-05	Northern PWD from M55 J2 (new junction) joining with Cottam Way
O-06	Southern PWD from EWL to A583 / A5085 junction
O-07	Dual carriageway PWD with a new Ribble crossing feeding into the A582 and A59
O-08	Extension of East-West Link eastwards to feed into M55 J1 (J1 to be further upgraded)
O-09	A link between M55 J2 (new junction) and Tom Benson Way (near the Lightfoot Lane roundabout)
O-10	Same as Option O-09 but with a northerly link between M55 J2 and the Broughton bypass junction
O-11	Tom Benson Way dualling and continuation to M55 J1 (J1 to be upgraded)
O-12	Lightfoot Lane and Eastway dualling (west of A6)
O-13	Strategic junctions upgrade package
O-14	Upgrade to local roads from the A5085 to M55 J2 (new junction) (Lea Road route)
O-15	Upgrade to local roads from the A584 to M55 J2 (new junction) (Lea Lane and Rosemary Lane route)
O-16	Single carriageway Preston Weston Distributor
O-17	PWD with a southern junction at A584 (replaces the A5085 / A583 junction)
Packaged Options	
O-18	Northern PWD from M55 J2 (new junction) joining with Cottam Way and M55 J3 to Warton improvements
O-19	SMART motorway: M6 J28-32 and M55 west of J1 to the M6 with junction improvements to M55 J1 and J3
O-20	Local road upgrades (Lea Road / Lane) with the dualling of Lightfoot Lane and Eastway (west of A6)

Table 3-G: Options Long List

The option ideas are plotted in Figure 3-P.

In total, 20 options representing a wide range of alternative highway options were taken forward for assessment at the initial option sifting stage.

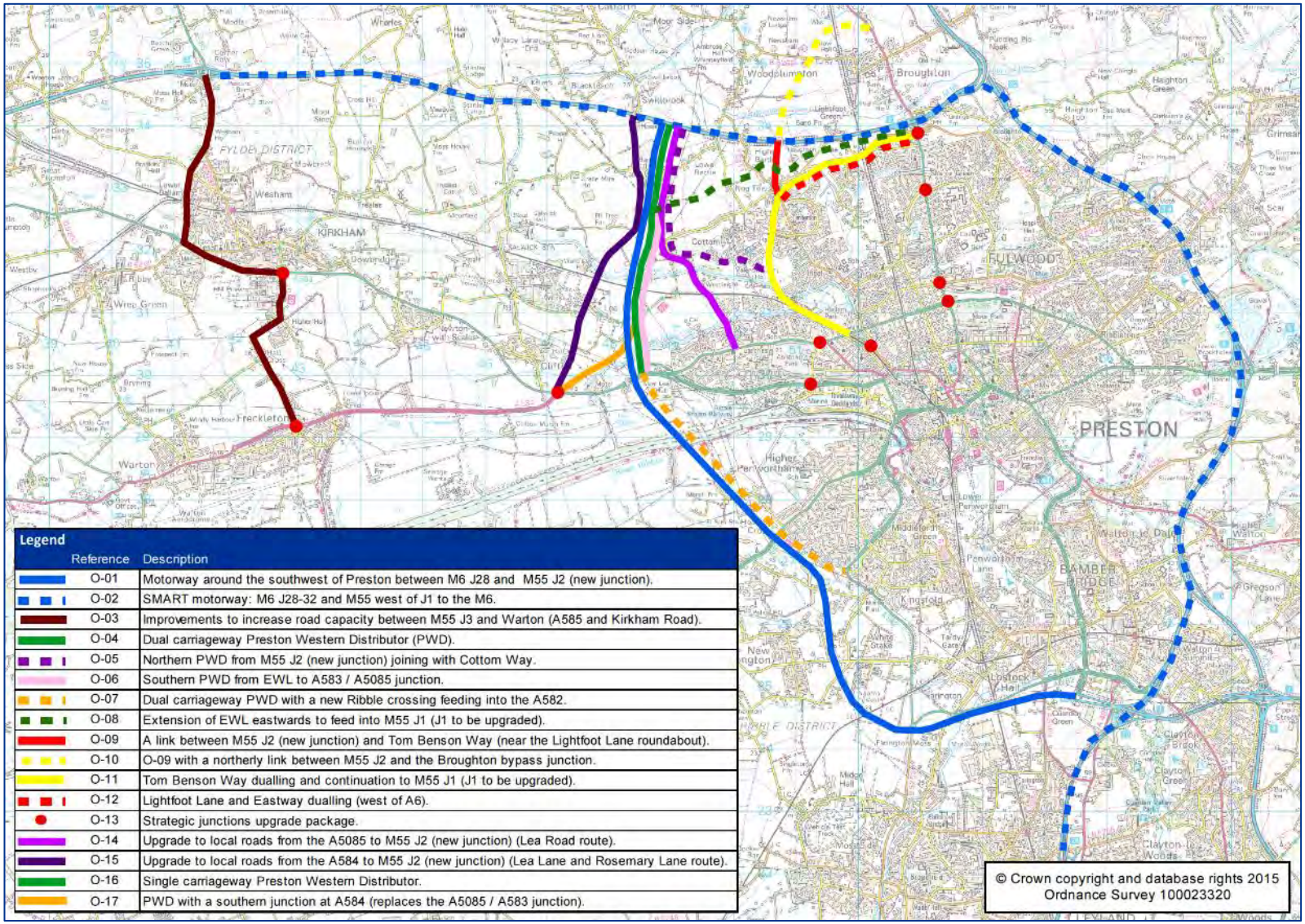

Figure 3-P: Options Routes

3.6.3 Initial Sift

Each of the 20 potential options identified for further consideration was included in the initial sifting process.

The initial sifting process is comprised of two components:

- *Assessment against primary objectives; and*
- *Feasibility / deliverability assessment.*

In accordance with the 3 primary objectives, options were scored against:

1. ***Supporting Economic Growth:*** *The mitigation of routes from the housing sites to the M55 and towards Preston and the ability to complement the East West Link road in distributing trips from the sites;*

2. ***Enhanced Access to Employment****: The provision of enhanced access to Warton Enterprise Zone to facilitate future growth (removing vehicles from Wrea Green, Kirkham Road and central Preston routes); and*

3. ***Reducing Congestion****: The ability to reduce congestion on the M55 J1 and existing arterial routes in the Preston urban area.*

This approach aligns with the strategic and management cases considered in the DfT's Early Assessment and Sifting Tool (EAST) to ensure best practice. However, it offers the scope to score multiple objectives individually compared to the single opportunity to assess objectives in EAST (termed the 'fit with other objectives'). This approach gives greater ability to differentiate between the strategic fit of options.

The full initial sift results are documented in the Preston Western Distributor Options Assessment Report (Jacobs, June 2017) and are summarised in Appendix B.

Initial Sifting Criteria
Each option must meet the following sifting criteria to be considered further:

1: Overall fit with primary objectives (Appraisal score >4)
2: Likely to be deliverable
3: Likely to be feasible

Reference	Option Description	Initial Sifting Criteria			Shortlisted for assessment against supporting objectives
		1	2	3	
O-01	Motorway around the southwest of Preston between M6 J28 and M55 J2 (new junction).	✓	x	x	x
O-02	SMART motorway: M6 J28-32 and M55 west of J1 to the M6.	x	✓	✓	x
O-03	Improvements to increase road capacity between M55 J3 and Warton (A585 and Kirkham Rd and/or Bryning Ln).	x	✓	✓	x
O-04	Dual carriageway Preston Western Distributor (PWD).	✓	✓	✓	✓
O-05	Northern PWD from M55 J2 (new junction) joining with Cottam Way.	x	✓	✓	x
O-06	Southern PWD from EWL to A583 / A5085 junction.	x	✓	✓	x
O-07	Dual carriageway PWD with a new Ribble crossing feeding into the A582.	✓	✓	✓	✓
O-08	Extension of EWL eastwards to feed into M55 J1 (J1 to be upgraded).	x	✓	✓	x
O-09	A link between M55 J2 (new junction) and Tom Benson Way (near the Lightfoot Lane roundabout).	x	✓	✓	x
O-10	O-09 with a northerly link between M55 J2 and the Broughton bypass junction.	x	✓	✓	x
O-11	Tom Benson Way dualling and continuation to M55 J1 (J1 to be upgraded).	x	✓	✓	x
O-12	Lightfoot Lane and Eastway dualling (west of A6).	x	✓	✓	x
O-13	Strategic junctions upgrade package.	x	✓	✓	x
O-14	Upgrade to local roads from the A5085 to M55 J2 (new junction) (Lea Road route).	x	✓	✓	x
O-15	Upgrade to local roads from the A584 to M55 J2 (new junction) (Lea Lane and Rosemary Lane route).	x	✓	✓	x
O-16	Single carriageway Preston Western Distributor.	✓	✓	✓	✓
O-17	PWD with a southern junction at A584 (replaces the A5085 / A583 junction).	✓	✓	✓	✓
Option Packages					
O-18	Northern PWD from M55 J2 (new junction) joining with Cottam Way and M55 J3 to Warton improvements.	✓	✓	✓	✓
O-19	SMART motorway: M6 J28-32 and M55 west of J1 to the M6 with junction improvements to M55 J1 and J3.	x	✓	✓	x
O-20	Local road upgrades (Lea Road / Lane) with the dualling of Lightfoot Lane and Eastway (west of A6).	✓	✓	✓	✓

Figure 3-Q: Sifting Criteria Summary

In summary, dividing the PWD scheme into northern or southern sections greatly limits the impact of the scheme. The overall traffic benefits will be reduced as each alternative only connects to one of the M55 or A583, therefore having a lesser impact on mitigating existing congestion. Access to either the Warton Enterprise Zone or the M55, both of which are key to the core objectives, is compromised if standalone options are considered.

The options concerning the roads in the eastern section of the NW Preston strategic housing location (Lightfoot Lane, Eastway, Tom Benson Way and a Western Broughton bypass) do not address the access needs of the Warton Enterprise Zone. They also route traffic directly onto the already congested A6 with country lanes remaining in the west.

A Western Broughton bypass route (O-10) between the A6 north of Broughton to Tom Benson Way via a new junction on the M55 requires a bridge across the West Coast Mainline. This is the major north-south rail line through Lancashire and is three tracks wide west of Broughton, meaning the necessary clearance increases the scheme capital and maintenance costs. The Western Broughton bypass route also creates a long diversion away from the direct north-south route offered by the A6 through Broughton to Preston thereby increasing the cost and environmental impact of such an option.

In total, seven options were considered to offer a significant positive contribution towards the primary objectives and of these, six had no significant deliverability or feasibility issues. The six options were taken forward to the secondary sift stage and are listed below:

- *Dual carriageway PWD;*
- *Dual carriageway PWD with a new Ribble crossing feeding into the A582 and A59;*
- *Single carriageway PWD;*

- *PWD with a southern junction at the A584 (replaces the A5085 / A583 junction);*
- *Northern PWD only from M55 J2 (new junction) joining with Cottam Way together with M55 J3 to Warton improvements; and*
- *Local road upgrades (Lea Road / Lane) with the dualling of Lightfoot Lane and Eastway (west of A6).*

3.6.4 Secondary Sift

Each of the six options remaining after the initial sift was scored according to the expected impact on the supporting objectives. Once the fit with the supporting objectives was determined, an expected scheme cost was considered for financial feasibility.

A summary of the expected impacts and score (out of 16) is given for each option and shown in Figure 3-R.

Qualitative assessment against identified objectives		Expected Cost (£m)
2	Large beneficial impact	<50
1	Beneficial impact	50-100
0	Neutral / marginal impact	100-150
-1	Adverse impact	150-250
-2	Large adverse impact	>250

Reference	Option Description	Secondary Objectives									Expected Cost (£m)
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total	
O-04	Dual carriageway Preston Western Distributor (PWD).	2	1	1	1	0	-1	2	2	8	100-150
O-07	Dual carriageway PWD with a new Ribble crossing feeding into the A582.	2	2	1	1	0	-1	2	2	9	>250
O-16	Single carriageway Preston Western Distributor.	2	1	1	1	0	-1	1	1	6	50-100
O-17	PWD with a southern junction at A584 (replaces the A5085 / A583 junction).	2	1	1	1	0	-2	2	1	6	100-150
Option Packages											
O-18	Northern PWD from M55 J2 (new junction) joining with Cottam Way and M55 J3 to Warton improvements.	1	1	1	1	0	-1	1	0	4	50-100
O-20	Local road upgrades (Lea Road / Lane) with the dualling of Lightfoot Lane and Eastway (west of A6).	1	1	1	1	0	-1	1	1	5	50-100

Figure 3-R: Assessment against Supporting Objectives

Option 0-4: Dual Carriageway PWD (Score: 8)

The dual carriageway PWD scores the second highest of the 6 schemes. It scores consistently across the 8 supporting objectives with the exception of an adverse impact to air quality and noise and a negligible impact on road safety. As a result, the PWD is progressed for further appraisal.

Option 0-7: Dual Carriageway PWD with a new Ribble Crossing feeding into the A582 (Score 9)

The highest scoring option overall is the dual carriageway PWD with a new Ribble crossing to the A582 and A59 west of Penwortham. Future construction of a bridge is expected to offer further benefits over the PWD option alone.

However, the construction of a new bridge adds significant monetary cost and build time to the base PWD option. For these reasons, the PWD with Ribble crossing option will not be progressed at this point.

Option 0-16: Single Carriageway PWD (Score: 6)

The single carriageway distributor road scores less than the dual carriageway proposals because of the limited road capacity which is likely to be a greater issue with further development. The option does not offer the future proofing of the dual carriageway option given the potential construction of a new Ribble crossing in the future.

Whilst likely to be a cheaper option than a dual carriageway, it should be noted that a single carriageway still requires much of the same infrastructure and structures to be built including the junctions and

earthworks. However, a single carriageway road does offer a lower cost alternative to the dual carriageway PWD and will be progressed for further appraisal.

Option 0-17: PWD with a southern junction at A584 (Score: 6)

The PWD with a southern junction at the A583/A584 is likely to produce very similar traffic flow and transport user benefits to the A583/A5085 junction. However, the alternative junction at the A583/A584 forces the alignment closer to Lea Town, meaning potentially worse levels of air and noise pollution for residents.

This option also provides a reduced level of future proofing due to the need for a longer Ribble crossing connection compared to the A583/A5085 junction alignment. Therefore this option will not be progressed through further appraisal.

Option 0-18: Northern PWD from M55 J2 joining with Cottam Way and M55 J3 to Warton Improvements (Score: 4)

This option combines a northern half of the PWD with M55 J3 to Warton improvements. This package limits the impact of the new M55 J2 and does not offer future potential for a Ribble crossing.

Southbound traffic from the M55 and NW Preston strategic housing location will need to route onto Cottam Way and then Tom Benson Way, thereby adding to the existing morning peak hour delays on the approach to Preston, increasing journey times and potentially extending the peak period. Therefore this option will not be progressed through further appraisal.

Option 0-20: Local Road Upgrades (Lea Road / Lane) with the dualling of Lightfoot Lane and Eastway (Score: 5)

This option combines a Lea Road or Lea Lane upgrade with the dualling of Lightfoot Lane and Eastway to the A6. However, whilst a Lea Lane route gives access to the Warton Enterprise Zone site, it will not provide access to the proposed Cottam Parkway station and vice versa.

A single carriageway solution will not provide the same support for future housing and employment growth. This package does not offer a good connection for a Ribble crossing though some scope may exist at a Lea Lane / A584 junction. This option will not be progressed through further appraisal.

3.6.5 Sifting Conclusion

Based on the above analysis, and supporting detail and evidence provided in the Options Assessment Report, the two options that were progressed for more detailed assessment as part of the business case include:

- *Dual carriageway PWD; and*
- *Single carriageway PWD.*

During the OBC it was concluded that the dual carriageway PWD offers a stronger fit with primary and supporting objectives and has a higher Value for Money than the lower cost single carriageway alternative.

Therefore, the dual carriageway PWD has been progressed to the FBC stage.

The Preston Western Distributor scheme provides a significant positive contribution to all of the scheme's primary objectives, as shown in Table 3-H.

In addition, a benefit realisation plan presented in the Management Case provides a summary how the scheme's success will be evaluated in achieving it objectives through monitoring various measures.

Reference	Objective	Alignment	Score
Primary Objective 1	Support local economic growth by unlocking housing development in North West Preston	The link road will directly support the delivery of the North West Preston Development. Of the entire 5,320 dwelling development at the NWP, 3,575 are directly dependent on the provision of PWD. The NWP development has also been estimated to indirectly support around 530 jobs in the local economy. The associated increase in local GVA is predicted to be £108 million (in 2010 prices discounted to 2010). Full details of this calculation and the assumptions used are provided in the *Economic Impacts Report* appended to this Business Case.	2
Primary Objective 2	Improve access of the Warton Enterprise Zone to strategic road network and wider labour market catchment	The link road will provide a quicker and more reliable access to Warton Enterprise Zone, allowing its continued growth and expansion, creating jobs in the area.	2
Primary Objective 3	Reduce congestion and associated delays on the arterial and radial routes within the Preston urban area	The PWD will provide an alternative route for strategic traffic wishing to pass through Preston, reducing traffic at M55 J1 and J3 as well as the parallel route along A583 and A6 corridors.	2
Supporting Objective 1	Facilitate access to the proposed Cottam Parkway rail station	The PWD will provide direct access to the proposed Cottam Parkway rail station via the construction of Cottam Link Road.	2
Supporting Objective 2	Facilitate the implementation of bus priority measures	With the construction of the PWD scheme and re-routing of traffic from Preston Urban areas (and city centre), it is expected that additional road capacity will become available on the existing roads, therefore creating the opportunity for the implementation of bus priority measures to improve bus services.	1
Supporting Objective 3	Facilitate the provision of enhanced walking and cycling networks	The provision of the new walking and cycling path along the PWD and its integration with the existing cycle routes is expected to enhance the existing walking and cycling routes within the PWD area and attract additional NMUs. The proposed route is planned to be connected to the Guild Wheel Cycle Route, which is a 21-mile route that encircles the city of Preston.	1
Supporting Objective 4	Facilitate enhancement of the public realm and local centres	Similar to bus priority measure, relief of Preston Urban areas from road traffic could potentially provide the opportunity to enhance the public realm and local centres. For instance, with the introduction of the distributor road, less traffic will need to travel through the centre of Lea Town which would increase the desirability of the village centre for non-motorised users due to reduced fear of accidents and improved environmental conditions.	1
Supporting Objective 5	Improve road safety	The dual carriageway option was scored neutral for improving the road safety during the option assessment. Detailed analysis of accident data showed that the scheme will result in significant benefits from accident reduction since traffic will shift to the modern standard dual carriageway road from the existing roads such A583 and A6 which currently have above average accident rates. Therefore, the score is changed to 2.	2

Reference	Objective	Alignment	Score
Supporting Objective 6	Improve air quality and reduce noise pollution	The scheme will result in higher level of greenhouse gases and a marginal improvement in air quality (NOx and PM10). Changes in traffic flows with the PWD in place will lead to net improvement to noise level.	-1
Supporting Objective 7	Support further housing and employment growth potential in Central Lancashire	The road capacity unlocked by the scheme will not be fully absorbed by committed and dependent developments allowing more housing and employment growth to be implemented in the future.	2
Supporting Objective 8	Support the future delivery of a new Ribble Crossing joining with the A582 and A59 routes west of Penwortham.	Connecting the M55 with the A583 via the proposed PWD will support the future delivery of the Ribble Crossing, which can potentially be connected to the PWD route via its junction on the A583. The new Ribble Crossing, if built, will fully complete a new and enhanced alternative route from west of Preston to the M6, given that Penwortham Bypass and dualling of the A582 are committed to be built in the near future.	2

Table 3-H: Contribution of Preston Western Distributor to Scheme Objectives

Summary: The Options Selection

Following the identification and appraisal of a range of measures based on the scoring against the set of primary and secondary objectives, a scheme known as Dual Carriageway PWD emerged as the Preferred Option.

A single carriageway PWD was identified as the Next Best Alternative and the 'low-cost' option.

Due to stronger fit with the scheme objectives and higher VfM the dual carriageway PWD has been progressed to the FBC stage.

3.7 Strategic Fit

3.7.1 Introduction

The strategic 'policy fit' element of the business case is required to demonstrate how the proposed transport intervention aligns with objectives and aspirations set out within local, sub-regional and national policy.

It is important to understand the economic and social policy context in which the proposals are made and how local and national policy aspirations can be supported through the delivery of well thought out improvements to the highway network.

A review has therefore been undertaken of pertinent local and national policy documents to establish the 'Strategic Fit' of the proposed scheme.

Key national, sub-national and local planning policies with a particular fit with the PWD scheme include:

National Planning Policy

- *Revised National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018)*

- *"The Department for Communities and Local Government Single Departmental Plan: 2015 to 2020" (updated March 2016)*
- *Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government single departmental plan (December 2017, updated May 2018)*
- *DfT Transport Investment Strategy (July 2017)*
- *"Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation" (Treasury,2015)*

Sub-national Planning Policy

- *Northern Transport Strategy (March 2015)- Transport for the North*

Local Planning Policy

- *Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal (September 2013)*
- *Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan (March 2014)*
- *Central Lancashire Core Strategy (July 2012)*
- *Preston Local Plan 2012-2026 (July 2015)*
- *North West Preston Masterplan (March 2017)*
- *The Local Transport Plan 2011- 2021, A Strategy for Lancashire (May 2011)*
- *Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan (March 2013)*

A summary of each of the above documents and how the PWD aligns with them is outlined below.

3.7.2 National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2018)

National themes, objectives and strategies are set out by the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF priorities and principles that are considered relevant in this baseline assessment are detailed below.

Paragraph 72 of the NPPF states:

'The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities.'

The North West Preston strategic housing location is a large extension to Preston with over 5000 new dwellings to be built in order to meet the demand for local housing. To best achieve this scale of development, the PWD is vital in order to distribute the trips of residents onto the strategic road network and to key local employment sites such as Warton Enterprise Zone and the city centre.

Paragraph 84 of the NPPF states:

'Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that

development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport).

The PWD will enable provision of a new 'parkway' rail station in the Cottam area to serve housing development in the North West Preston, which will provide a more sustainable alternative for travel to Blackpool and Preston and its national rail connections, as well as providing for new interchange on the strategic network at M55 J2. In addition, the PWD will allow bus priority measures, public realm enhancements, and improvements to prioritise and promote walking and cycling along the B5411 Tag Lane/Woodplumpton Road and A583 Riversway corridors and in Lane Ends local centre.

DCLG Single Departmental Plan: 2015 to 2020 (updated March 2016)

The DLCG departmental plan sets out the vision for communities and local government in this parliament.

"Our department has a driving focus to increase housing supply and … will enable a shift in power from central to local government, with decentralisation bringing power closer to local communities. We want cities to have more control over transport, housing, skills and healthcare …"

The Preston Western Distributor utilises local Growth Deal funding to realise the construction of more than 5,000 homes in North West Preston that otherwise would have an unacceptable detrimental impact on local travel.

The PWD is therefore a strong example of local resources and decision making used to best meet both localised and national housing needs in line with the DCLG vision and objectives.

MHCLG Single Departmental Plan: 2017 (updated May 2018)

MHCLG's housing strategy to get the housing market moving again, and to lay the foundations for a more responsive, effective and stable housing market in the future; as well as improved environmental standards.

"MHCLG will support the delivery of a million homes by the end of 2020 and half a million more by the end of 2022 and put us on track to deliver 300,000 net additional homes a year on average."

The Preston Western Distributor supports the construction of more than 5,000 homes - a nationally significant level- in North West Preston; as well as delivering a scheme that directly connects housing growth locations with key, fast-growing employment locations.

DfT Transport Investment Strategy (July 2017)

The Transport Investment Strategy vision involves "*…investing in our transport network in different ways, most fundamentally by addressing the network's core capability – its condition, capacity and connectivity – but also improving the user experience and adapting the network to safeguard our environment and health*".

The key objectives identified by the report include encouraging economic growth, reducing carbon emissions and encouraging the wider objectives of transport (such as more physical activity, improved road safety and air quality). The PWD aligns strongly with these objectives as the scheme will offer journey time savings, support sustainable transport priority measures, and improve road safety and air quality.

As previously noted, there are four AQMA's in place in Preston. While this scheme is not expected to remove any of these AQMA's, it will contribute to a reduction in pollution in these locations. This decrease in pollution can be explained by the expected reduction in traffic flow in the AQMA areas resulting from this scheme. In addition, there is not expected to be a significant impact on local air quality in the immediate vicinity of the scheme.

"Fixing the Foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation" - Treasury 2015:

This policy represents a comprehensive plan that sets the agenda for the whole of government over the parliament to reverse the UK's long-term productivity problem and secure rising living standards and a better quality of life for our citizens.

Raising productivity is the challenge of our time, and represents a key gap in UK economic performance.

The government's framework for raising productivity includes 15 key areas, built around two pillars: first, encouraging long term investment, and secondly, promoting a dynamic economy.

The PWD scheme delivers access to/from one of the most productive advanced manufacturing and fastest growing Enterprise zones in the country, reduces congestion and enhances productivity for commuters, businesses and freight, and supports and long term infrastructure base to accommodate and directly unlock growth as part of the City Deal.

3.7.3 Sub-national Planning Policy

Northern Transport Strategy - The Northern Powerhouse: One Agenda, One Economy, One North (March 2015).

A strategic proposition for transport in the North was launched in 2014 setting out the level of transformation in connectivity needed to drive economic growth and rebalance national economy. In March 2015 Transport for the North (TfN) unveiled its vision – a Northern Transport Strategy on building the Northern Powerhouse. This report outlines a strategic economic case, plans for rail, highways, freight, inter-city connectivity, integrated transport services and the future of TfN.

"That vision is for a North which has a vibrant and growing economy, acts as a magnet for inward investment, and which capitalises on the strengths of Northern cities to build a Northern Powerhouse. We need a new approach to maximise the economic potential of the North; allowing the North's talent to become more mobile; allowing companies to access the widest pool of people and skills they need to grow; and connecting businesses to each other to make them more efficient".

The PWD will improve connectivity between the two BAE systems sites at Samlesbury and Warton, reduce constrains for employees, suppliers and customers in accessing the Warton site of the Lancashire Enterprise Zone, enable the comprehensive development of the North West Preston strategic housing location which will accommodate 5,000+ new homes thereby largely contributing to the objectives set out in the Northern Transport Strategy.

Aerospace and export-led advanced manufacturing sites such as those at Warton are recognised by Transport for the North and their Independent Economic Review (IER) as key growth sectors that need to be better connected and agglomerated within the North to deliver enhanced GVA and productivity benefits to the North- as well as UK Plc.

This is substantially supported by the PWD scheme, alongside the national priority for housing delivery at over 5,000 homes in NW Preston alone.

3.7.4 Local Planning Policy

Central Lancashire Core Strategy (July 2012)

The CLCS was prepared jointly by Preston City Council, Chorley Council and South Ribble Council. It was adopted in July 2012. The document helps co-ordinate development in the area covered by the three councils. The Core Strategy policies considered relevant in this baseline assessment are detailed below.

The Core Strategy Vision for Central Lancashire highlights the need for improvements to Lancashire's transport network:

'By 2026 Central Lancashire will be recognised as a highly sought after place to live and work in the North West… It will play a leading role in Lancashire's world class economy and have sustainable economic growth based on the area's unique assets…There will be improved transport connections within Central Lancashire and to wider regional, national and international destinations'.

The following policies support the Vision for Central Lancashire, and are relevant to the baseline assessment:

- *Policy 2, SO 2: To ensure there is sufficient and appropriate infrastructure to meet future needs, funded where necessary by developer contributions.*

- *Policy 3, SO 3: To reduce the need to travel, manage car use, promote more sustainable modes of transport and improve the road network to the north and south of Preston.*

- *Policy 3, SO 4: To enable easier journeys into and out of Preston City Centre and east/west trips across South Ribble, improve movement around Chorley, as well as safeguard rural accessibility, especially for mobility impaired people.*

The PWD proposal, therefore, contributes to, and is consistent with, the Central Lancashire Core Strategy policies.

Preston Local Plan 2012-2026 (July 2015)

The Preston Local Plan 2012- 2026 was adopted in July 2015. The document refers to Policy in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (July 2012) and introduces some of the Council's new agenda for the 2012- 2026 Plan Period. Details of the policies in the Plan which are considered relevant to the PWD and EWLR scheme are noted below.

Chapter 3 explains that Preston City Council, and neighbouring local authorities, recognise:

'the existing transport network cannot accommodate the level of predicted additional traffic without considerably more congestion…[and] parts of the network in this area are already at a practical capacity during busy periods of the day'.

The plan outlines that Councils have identified that problems are concentrated along arterial routes to and from the City Centre. To help the delivery of the new 'North West Preston Strategic Location', and support problems of congestion the Plan introduces new transport infrastructure schemes.

These schemes are accompanied by the following new policy:

- Policy IN1 Western Distributor: A preferred route is safeguarded for the Preston Western Distributor Road in the location shown on the Policies Map. Planning permission will not be granted for any development that would prejudice the construction of the road.

The PWD is referenced in the Preston Local Plan 2012-2026 as a scheme required to deliver the new North West Preston Strategic Location and associated proposals.

North West Preston Masterplan (March 2017)

The North West Preston Masterplan provides a comprehensive framework to guide development proposals and a vision for the area of North West Preston (NWP). Sections in the Masterplan considered relevant to the PWD are detailed below.

The Masterplan introduces an overall vision for the new communities in NWP; the vision has evolved and has been informed by:

- *Various consultation processes since 2013 with a wide range of consultees and stakeholders that has reflected the complex recent planning and development history.*

- *The Preston Local Plan (2015) includes a specific policy for North West Preston which sets out the specific criteria for development proposals in the area.*

The Vision Statement seeks to generate:

- *A movement framework that facilitates direct movement in and out of the area for all modes of transport. The framework will take advantage of existing routes to improve current and future connections within the site and to surrounding areas.*

- *Preston Western distributor and East-West Spine route will provide a long term solution to existing traffic congestion.*

A number of strategic design principles underpin the Vision Statement at a strategic level and these are as follows:

- *To facilitate public transport access and encourage public transport use.*

- *To implement and integrate within the existing highway network the Preston Western Distributor and the East West Link.*

- *To implement the Preston Western Distributor and an East West Link to serve the new housing areas in North West Preston as well as the proposed Enterprise Zone sit at Warton.*

- *To unlock the development potential of the area thanks to the establishment of a good transport network.*

- *To integrate existing layouts and planning applications currently in process.*

The Masterplan states that:

Proposals should provide or financially support the provision of key infrastructure. One of them would be a comprehensive package of on and off site transport measures to mitigate the development's impacts on roads and encourage sustainable modes of transport.

Section 4.3 of the Masterplan states the PWD *"will provide new capacity to accommodate future growth in traffic as a result of NWP development as well as providing improved access to further housing development at Cottam Hall."*

In summary, the North West Preston Masterplan clearly emphasises the need for the PWD route and the potential benefits it could deliver.

The Local Transport Plan 2011- 2021 (LTP3), A Strategy for Lancashire (May 2011)

The Lancashire County Council put forward seven transport priorities up to 2021 as part of the Council's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3). They are demonstrated in Figure 3-S

The priorities and principles relevant to the PWD scheme are outlined below:

- *The need to support economic growth and regeneration across the county by tackling poor connectivity, congestion and poorer parts of the network which makes travel difficult;*

- *Providing access to skills and education;*

- *The fear of traffic which deters people from cycling and walking;*

- *Maintaining a safe and efficient road network.*

Figure 3-S: The Seven Transport Priorities Identified in LTP3 of Lancashire County Council

Central Lancashire Highways and Transport Masterplan (March 2013)

The Central Lancashire highways and Transport Masterplan (CLHTM) (March 2013) represents Lancashire County Council's priorities for future investment in highways and transport across central Lancashire. Below details principles from the Masterplan considered relevant to the PWD scheme.

The Masterplan leads with an 'Integrated Transport Vision', setting out a vision for highways and transport in Central Lancashire.

Based on highway modelling and both local and national forecasts of demand growth, the Integrated Transport Vision accepts that by 2026, Lancashire's existing highway network would not be able to cope, and given the scale of growth planned, along with existing levels of congestion, Lancashire has no choice but to create 'a new highway' to support new development. In turn, this will help solve specific transport-related problems.

The Masterplan also introduces the Better Roads initiative, to contribute towards the Integrated Transport Vision. This initiative discusses the:

'creation of new highway capacity to support new development and allow [Lancashire County Council] to solve specific problems.'

The Better Roads initiative focuses on four major road schemes, stating:

'The schemes will enable planned new development to go ahead, achieve marked improvements for local communities and their environment and allow significant complementary improvements to sustainable travel provision.'

This aligns with the requirements of the Local Plan to deliver such growth, and the potential benefits of the PWD, as discussed in the North West Preston Masterplan are also discussed in the CLHTM.

Under the Masterplan's Better Public Transport initiative, it is reinforced that the Masterplan:

'seeks to take full advantage of the ability to provide dedicated road space for public transport once the new distributor roads are open by creating Park and Ride sites at key locations. It specifies that the new sites will be opened only where we can ensure that journeys using the Park and Ride will be quicker and easier than driving into the city centre.'

The PWD scheme also gives Lancashire County Council the opportunity to maximise the benefits of electrification of the Manchester to Blackpool line by facilitating the provision of a new Parkway station at Cottam. This also contributes to the Better Public Transport initiative to make:

'improvements to the main railway stations [that] will complement Network Rail's committed expenditure on electrification'.

The Masterplan proposes that the new 'Parkway' rail station in the Cottam area will serve the North West Preston strategic housing location. Proposed access to the station is via the Preston Western Distributor. It will provide rail-based Park and Ride opportunities to Preston/Manchester/Liverpool and beyond to the east and to Blackpool to the west.

In summary, the CLHTM clearly emphasises the need for the PWD, and details the potential benefits that the route upgrades could deliver.

Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal (September 2013)

The Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal supports the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in its aim to reclaim Lancashire's position as a national economic leader. The City Deal sets out that a more strategic approach is required to remove existing critical infrastructure barriers, and enable sustainable housing and economic growth. The principles and priorities from the City Deal that are considered relevant to the PWD scheme are detailed below.

A key element of the City Deal is The City Deal Infrastructure Delivery Programme which is worth £434m. This programme is introduced to deliver:

'the critical infrastructure required to enable the full development of significant housing and commercial development schemes.'

This includes four major new roads, including the PWD, particularly given the additional local access to the M55 and the motorway network provided by the scheme.

It also includes the preparatory works for a New Ribble Crossing Bridge and the necessary local community infrastructure to support enhanced public transport provision and local sustainable measures.

The City Deal states:

'A new Preston Western Distributor will link the A583/A584 to the motorway network via a new junction on the M55. This road will improve access to the Warton site of the Lancashire EZ, the Springfields nuclear fuel facility at Salwick and enable the comprehensive development of the North West Preston strategic housing location which will accommodate over 4,000 new homes[6].'

Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) (March 2014)

[6] Since time of writing, the North West Preston strategic housing location will now accommodate over 5000 dwellings.

The Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) produced a Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) to set out growth ambitions across Lancashire over the next 10 years. This is to be delivered through the Lancashire Growth Deal as an integral part of achieving the SEP's stated growth ambitions.

The purpose of the SEP is to re-establish Lancashire as an 'economic powerhouse', by maximising its competitive strengths and capabilities. The framework also directs resourcing agreed in the European Structural Investment Fund (ESIF) strategy from the objectives of the SEP which are considered relevant to the PWD scheme are outlined below.

The SEP discusses the objectives and priorities for Central Lancashire, these include:

- *'maximising Lancashire's economic strength;*
- *reclaiming Lancashire's role as a national centre for advanced manufacturing;*
- *maximising the economic value of Lancashire's centres of research and innovation excellence;*
- *refocusing the local skills system;*
- *strengthening and refreshing 'Boost', the central business hub;*
- *driving forward the Enterprise Zone and City Deal;*
- *creating the right conditions for business and investor growth;*
- *developing complementary local growth accelerator strategies.'*

To help achieve these objectives and priorities, the Plan sets out Lancashire's Growth Deal: an integrated programme of interventions that the LEP believes are capable of generating the step change required. The Lancashire LEP has secured £223.9m from the Governments Growth Fund to support economic growth in the area and fund the priorities in their Growth Deal.

One of the key priorities of the Growth Deal is:

'Releasing local growth potential through identifying where spatial interventions, often transport infrastructure, are required to unlock employment, housing and economic opportunities'.

This fully aligns with the objectives of the PWD and makes it the primary infrastructure scheme in achieving LEP's economic ambitions.

3.7.5 Summary of Strategic Fit

Through carrying out the above strategic fit analysis, it is clear that the implementation of the PWD aligns with the relevant goals and strategies outlined within key national, sub-national and local policy documents.

3.8 Political Support

The PWD received the Central Government support through its inclusion in the Preston and Lancashire City Deal, which is an agreement between the Government and four local partners: LCC, LEP, Preston City Council and South Ribble Borough Council.

The **Preston, South Ribble and Lancashire City Deal** was the first of the second wave of City Deals, agreed with government, which drives forward local growth by addressing strategic transport infrastructure and development challenges to deliver new jobs and housing across the City Deal area.

The PWD is identified in the City Deal as one of the key projects which will contribute to meeting the following goals over a ten-year period:

- *More than 20,000 net new private sector jobs, including 5,000 in the Lancashire Enterprise Zone;*
- *Nearly £1 billion growth in Gross Value Added (GVA);*
- *17,420 new homes; and*
- *£2.3 billion in leveraged commercial investment.*

The scheme has strong and broad political support in LCC. It is identified in the Lancashire Strategic Economic Plan and the CLHTM as a comprehensive transport solution necessary to unlock the area's development potential.

In November 2014 Executive Scrutiny Committee of the LCC approved recommendations to the cabinet member for highways and transport to adopt and protect the routes for the PWD scheme.

A full planning application was submitted in 2016, with planning permission granted in November 2018.

A number of key political figures in Lancashire have demonstrated their support for the scheme including:

Lancashire County Council Leader, Geoff Driver (February 2018):

"This scheme will create three new roads on the western side of Preston, from the M55 towards Blackpool Road and Riversway. This will benefit residents and businesses not just in the local area, but across Preston, South Ribble, large parts of the Fylde coast, and further afield."

"A new M55 junction will reduce congestion by creating more capacity on the network, in particular at Broughton roundabout at Junction 1 of the M55 and on the local roads around it."

"It will also improve access on the west side of Preston, so that people don't need to use narrow country lanes"

County Councillor Keith Iddon, Lancashire County Council, Cabinet member for Highways and Transport (October 2017):

"We want to help people get around while reducing congestion in parts of the road network."

"This planned new road is an important part of improving people's journeys, which will also bring new people into the area, link to new housing developments and deliver new economic growth."

"We've just opened the Broughton Bypass and we recently had approval for the Penwortham Bypass."

"We've now got approval for the Preston Western Distributor, which makes this a very positive time with major changes taking place on the road network across Preston and South Ribble."

"It's clear that the area is changing and growing, which means that we also need to improve the road network to accommodate increasing numbers of vehicles in the future, while also helping to promote growth and create new jobs."

Cllr John Fillis, Cabinet Member for Economic Development, Environment & Planning for Lancashire County Council (May 2016):

"A new motorway junction will improve travel times for people coming to and from the city, while also relieving congestion on other parts of the road network. Through City Deal we're unlocking the potential of the area, bringing new jobs and new homes for people."

"We're already seeing major changes across the area through our City Deal, such as the Broughton Bypass and expansion of the A582, as well as improvements to town and city centres. This will bring new people into the area and deliver new economic growth."

Summary: The Political Support

Thanks to its strategic importance and estimated impact on the local growth the PWD has received a strong national, sub-regional and local political support and is identified as the key project in the City Deal, the Strategic Economic Plan, the CLHTM, Lancashire Local Transport Plan, and Preston Local Plan.

3.9 Stakeholders & Consultation

Given the strategic importance of the PWD and the scale of the proposed scheme, there are a significant number of internal and external stakeholders with an interest in the project.

Key stakeholders include:

- *Department for Transport – the PWD is a DfT portfolio scheme;*
- *Highways England – the PWD scheme includes Junction 2 on M55, with funding also provided by Highways England towards scheme delivery;*
- *Lancashire County Council- as Scheme Promoter;*
- *Lancashire Local Enterprise Partnership;*
- *Preston City Council;*
- *South Ribble Council; and*
- *Fylde Council.*

As part of the statutory process for planning applications, the proposed PWD route underwent a consultation process with key stakeholder groups and members of the public between 30th May and 13th July 2014.

A second round of consultation was held between 4th January and 12th February 2016 in advance of submitting the planning application of the preferred route.

In addition to engaging with stakeholder groups, the council organised consultation events in the local area that allowed members of the public to view and comment on the plans.

Further to these events, the application was advertised by press and site notices, and neighbouring residents informed by letter.

A plan of the proposed route line and a questionnaire were the focus of the consultation, with a series of four sessions held over the first two weeks of June 2014.

Approximately 8000 letters were sent out in each round of consultation to residents and other occupiers in the area closest to the scheme to ask their views. Briefings were held with several landowners, relevant Councillors, MPs, District Councils, Parish Councils and local residents' groups.

The list of Stakeholders who responded at either or both rounds of consultation included:

- *Highways England;*
- *Network Rail;*
- *National Grid;*
- *English Heritage;*
- *Natural England;*
- *Environment Agency;*
- *Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside;*
- *Historic England;*
- *Fylde Borough Council;*
- *Preston City Council;*
- *Lea and Cottam Parish Council;*
- *Electricity North West;*
- *United Utilities;*
- *Canal & Rivers Trust;*
- *Preston Liberal Democrats;*
- *The Ramblers Association;*
- *Ashbridge School Ltd;*
- *St Mary's Catholic Roman Primary School; and*
- *PWC Chartered Surveyors.*

The consultation received 510 responses, of those 223 (44%) expressed support or had no issue with the proposed scheme. Many of the responses which expressed concern identified common issues.

The most frequently raised concerns included:

- *Air and noise pollution*
- *Design and alignment of the proposals*
- *Impacts on the existing local network*
- *Negative impacts on the rural environment*

In response to these concerns the scheme is implementing a number of actions. These include: observing and reporting effects within the Environmental Assessment Report, the screening of options where available, and where possible the mitigation of impacts. Further detail on the consultation events,