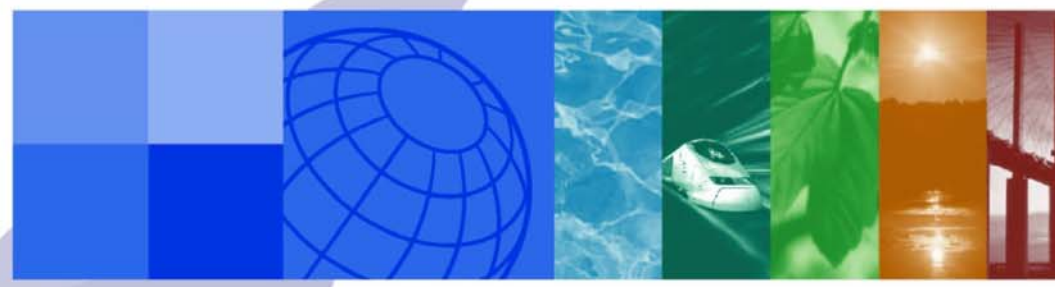
Halcrow Group Limited

Fort William Active Travel Audit

Final Summary Report

July 2010



HITRANS

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Contents Amendment Record

This report has been issued and amended as follows:

Issue	Revision	Description	Date	Approved by
01	-	Draft Summary Report	20/07/09	CK/JP
02	-	Final Summary Report	14/07/10	CK
03	-	Plans moved to Appendix	05/08/11	JP

Halcrow

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Halcrow Group Ltd was commissioned by HITRANS, the Highlands and Islands Regional Transportation Partnership to:

- Develop a methodology to audit existing active travel infrastructure
- Provide baseline information on existing infrastructure provision for active travel
- Recommend priorities for future investment

1.1.2 The overall aim is to assess where best to apply available funding in order to increase the potential for active travel and ideally to see an increase in the numbers of people choosing to walk or cycle.

1.1.3 In particular, the key purpose of the audits is to identify:

"A practical network of high quality routes suitable for cycling within each settlement that provides convenient and safe access to all major destinations"

and

"A network of routes for pedestrians focused upon railway stations, bus stations, ferry terminals, major employment areas, local shopping areas, leisure/recreation centres, hospitals and main trip generators."

1.1.4 This document summarises the main findings of the methodology as applied to the Fort William area.

2 Active Travel Methodology

2.1 What is the methodology?

2.1.1 Halcrow has developed a methodology to assess existing and proposed active travel infrastructure. This methodology is based on the following key parameters:

- A desktop study including demographics, travel to work patterns, public transport information and traffic accident data
- Analysis of main trip generators/attractors
- Consultation with the Local Authority and other interested parties
- On site audits
- Application of a 'prioritisation filter'

2.1.2 The prioritisation filter is an analysis tool to identify those corridors where there is the greatest potential for modal shift. The filter encompasses information from the desktop study such as demographic data, trip generators and attractors, planning proposals and the results of stakeholder consultation. The filter also assesses the 'implementability' of a route compared to its potential usage.

2.1.3 On site audits for walking are carried out utilising the Transport Research Laboratory (TRL) Pedestrian Environment Review System (PERS) whilst an Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT) cycle audit is undertaken. Both systems audit the condition of existing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists to identify where proposed measures can be effectively targeted.

2.1.4 The outputs from the application of the methodology are:

- An Active Travel Prioritised Action Plan
- An Active Travel Master Plan

2.1.5 The prioritised action plan identifies areas and schemes where there is the greatest potential to achieve modal shift or where there is the greatest need for infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. The master plan is a core network for pedestrians and cyclists that provide direct, convenient, safe, attractive and coherent links between journey origins and journey attractors. The proposals contained within the prioritised action plan and master plan will require further investigation and feasibility work.

2.1.6 Consultation plays an integral role in the identification of routes for walking and cycling and also helps to pinpoint, at a very local level, the barriers to active travel. In the Fort William area the following individuals and organisations were consulted:

- The Highland Council: Access Officer, Roads Department,
- Planning Department, School Travel Officer, Public Transport Officer
- Sustrans
- Lochaber Action on Disability
- Local bike shops
- West Highland Wheelers
- Paths for All
- Association of Lochaber Community Councils
- Fort William Community Council

- Inverlochy and Torlundy Community Council
- Great Glen Way Route Manager

3 Walking and Cycling in the Fort William Area

3.1 Overview of current conditions for active travel

3.1.1 The total population in the study area (which comprises of Corpach, Caol, Banavie, Inverlochy and Fort William) is 10,459. Compared to the rest of the Highland area, there are fewer people aged over 65 (15.3%) and more people below the age of 19 (25%) living in the Fort William here. Tables 3-1 and 3-2 below show comparisons of how people travel to work and study in the Fort William area compared to the region and the whole

Table 3-1: Comparison of mode of transport for journeys to work and study – Regional and National comparison

Mode of transport	Fort William area	Highlands	Scotland
% taking Bus	18.8	13	16.5
% Car and passenger	54	56	53
% Cycle	4.1	3	1.3
% Walk	20.4	24	23

(Data supplied by SCROL and Lochaber Local Plan)

Table 3-2: Comparison of mode of transport for journeys to work and study – Fort William Study Area

Mode of transport	Caol	Corpach	Banavie	Fort William North	Fort William South
% taking Bus	15	13	9	9	13
% Car	23	26	38	22	27
% Passenger	10	8	9	8	8
% Cycle	3	4	7	3	1
% Walk	11	7	8	17	16

(Data supplied by SCROL)

3.1.2 Compared to the national picture, bus use across the Highlands is relatively low, but in the Fort William area, it is slightly higher than the national average. Travel to work and study on foot in the area is higher than the regional average and there is a positive result for cycling with levels twice that in the Highlands and over three times more than the Scottish average. Travel by car is on par with the Scottish average, but much higher than the average for the Highlands.

3.1.3 When the Census results for the individual areas within Fort William are studied, there are some obvious trends:

- Banavie has the highest levels of car use and bicycle use
- The highest levels of walking are in Fort William
- The lowest levels of cycling are in the hilliest parts of the study area and the furthest from Fort William town centre
- Caol has the highest levels of bus use

3.1.4 Census data has also been used to provide a snapshot of the distances travelled to work and study in the Fort William area and are shown below in Figures 3-1 to 3-5.

Figure 3-1: Caol -Distance travelled to work

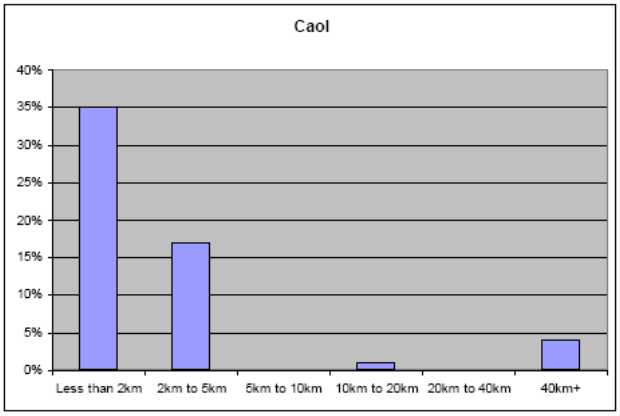


Figure 3-2: Corpach – Distance travelled to work

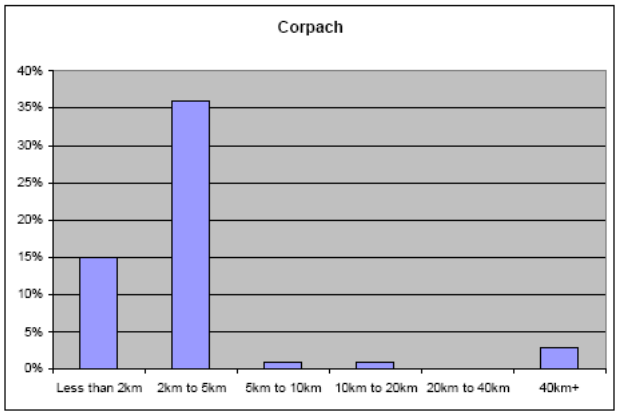


Figure 3-3: Banavie – Distance travelled to work

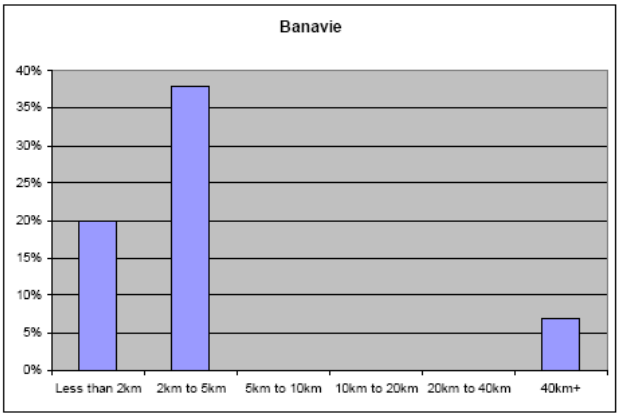


Figure 3-4: Fort William North – Distance travelled to work

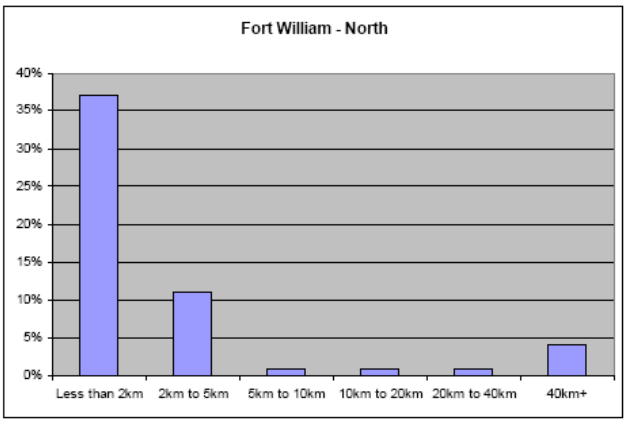
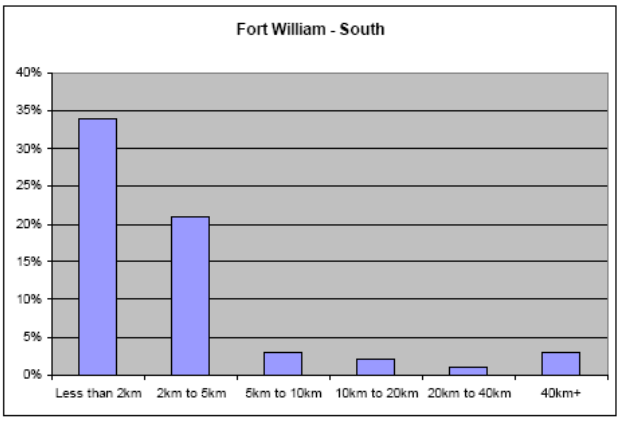


Figure 3-5: Fort William South – Distance travelled to work



3.1.5 In Caol, and Fort William, the majority of journeys to work or study are less than 2km and in Corpach and Banavie, most journeys are less than 5km. Overall, 33% of journeys are less than 2km (which is the equivalent of a 6 minute bike ride) and 51% of all journeys are less than 5km (which is the equivalent of a 16 minute bike ride). As can be seen in the graphs above, most journeys are short, local and could potentially be made on foot or on bike.

3.2 Study area

3.2.1 The study area can be loosely categorised into two parts: firstly, the hilly town of Fort William, which is built onto the side of a hill and secondly, the flat, flood plains to the north incorporating Inverlochy and Caol linking to Corpach and Banavie. Although there are adequate pedestrian facilities in Fort William, the steep gradients of the roads does not lend itself particularly well to walking and cycling. Despite the topography, the town has the highest levels of walking in the study area. In the residential areas of Upper Achintore and Plantation, high above the town centre, there are a number of stepped pedestrian routes that serve as useful shortcuts. The steps are all lit with handrails, but have steep risers. Many of the narrow streets in the steepest part of the town have been made one way to aid vehicular flow. Unfortunately, the one way systems result in longer and more arduous journeys for cyclists which make cycling a less attractive option. Similarly, pedestrians are also disadvantaged in the older parts of Fort William as the footways are often very narrow or non-existent.

Figure 3-6: Typical narrow footway in older parts of Fort William

Figure 3-7: Heavy traffic on A82 in Fort William

Figure 3-8: Poor quality footway provision on A82

Figure 3-9: Cyclists are prohibited at all times in the pedestrianised area

Figure 3-10: a number of streets in the old part of town benefit from traffic calming

Figure 3-11: Physical restrictions on Belford Road/A82 will make providing for cyclists and pedestrians problematic

3.2.2 The town centre is pedestrianised, has attractive seating areas and has subway access under the A82 to connect with the train station, bus station, supermarket, the Nevis Centre and other facilities. The ramped access in the subway is relatively steep for wheelchair and pushchair users and although lit, the subway itself is dark and unattractive.

Figure 3-12: The pedestrianised town centre is busy and vibrant

Figure 3-13: The underpass to the town is unattractive

3.2.3 Pedestrian facilities in the outlying areas of Corpach, Caol, Banavie and Inverlochy are adequate and the relatively low traffic volumes in these areas mean there is good permeability. The only exception is the A830 in Corpach – the observed high levels of HGVs can be intimidating when crossing the road in the vicinity of the local shops. Although the land is flat from Fort William to Caol and Corpach, the settlement of Corpach itself is built on the side of a hill.

3.2.4 The A82 trunk road through Fort William causes a number of problems for both pedestrians and cyclists, especially through the busiest section between the A830 and the roundabout adjacent to the railway station and supermarket. Data from Transport Scotland shows that between 15,000 and 18,000 vehicles a day use this stretch of road. Pedestrians have the advantage of footways and a number of controlled and uncontrolled crossings, however, cyclists must share the carriageway with general traffic. There is a wide footway adjacent to the dualled section of the A82, with traffic volumes dropping to approximately 10,000 vehicles per day on this section

Figure 3-14: Cyclists are a common sight cycling on the footway on the A82

Figure 3-15: The footway and carriageway along the waterfront are underutilised

3.2.5 There are two long distance paths that end in Fort William:

- The Great Glen Way
- The West Highland Way

3.2.6 Both routes currently end adjacent to the A82: the Great Glen Way at the Old Fort and the West Highland Way at the junction of Belford Road although at the time of writing a statue was being erected in the west end of the High Street to where the West Highland Way was being re-routed to. Both routes are well used and in 2006 over 24,000 people were recorded using the Great Glen Way and approximately 50,000 people a year walk the West Highland Way.

3.2.7 The section of the Great Glen Way from Fort William to Corpach Locks is also well used by local people as a flat walking and cycling route to the town centre. The section of traffic free route from Caol to Corpach has recently been resurfaced, the on-road sections through Caol and Inverlochy are a combination of quiet residential roads, traffic calmed roads and on-road advisory cycle lanes. The section of route through Black Park is well used as it also provides access to Inverlochy Castle and the Torlundy Cycle Route. The wooden 'Soldier's Bridge' across the River Lochy is a narrow bridge with a passing place where cyclists are instructed to dismount. There is a very steep access ramp on the Inverlochy side.Existing provision for cycling

3.3 Existing provision for cycling

3.3.1 Although there are few facilities for cyclists in Fort William it is an important centre for many leisure related cycling activities. The Nevis Range ski area at Aonach Mor offers a wide range of cycling facilities from family friendly trails to what is widely regarded as one of the best downhill mountain bike routes in the world. The sport is well promoted as part of the Fort William's branding as 'The Outdoor Capital of the UK' and there are two busy bike shops in the town – one on the High Street and one in Inverlochy, which also operates a 'Commuter Club' to promote utility cycling. The local cycling club, 'The West Highland Wheelers' participate in road and mountain biking.

3.3.2 Cycling is prohibited in the pedestrianised area but the ban is largelyeither side of the A830 from Lochaber High School to Banavie Station are designated as shared use, but the surface is poor and the tracks obscured by vegetation in places. A high quality cycle route, funded by Transport Scotland, now provides traffic free access from Inverlochy Castle to Torlundy, a distance of approximately two miles, however, signing for the route from Fort William is virtually none existent and access to the start of the route at the rear of McDonalds fast food restaurant is difficult to find. Sections of this route adjacent to the trunk road need to be included within a regular maintenance regime to remove the accumulation of debris. Long distance touring cyclists are also a common sight in Fort William, many of whom use the A82. It is anticipated that their numbers will continue to rise as the development of the National Cycle Network continues, especially Route 78 from Campbeltown to Oban, Fort William and Inverness. A number of sections are now open; however, the proposals for the route in the Fort William area are still in the feasibility stage. A 'lone' footway/cycle track sign at the old fort appears to designate this area as a shared use facility, but there are no other signs or road markings to show the extent of the designation.

3.4 Existing cycle parking

3.4.1 There is good quality cycle parking in the town centre at key locations as well as at Lochaber Leisure Centre, the train station and the main supermarket. Lockers are also available at the train station, however, there is no information available on how to gain access to them. There are excellent cycle parking facilities at the Health Centre: Sheffield type stands for short stay and lockers for all day use, however, despite these facilities, bicycles were observed locked to drainpipes.

Figure 3-16: Cycle parking in Claggan

Figure 3-17: High quality cycle track to Torlundy

Figure 3-18: Long and short stay cycle parking at the rail station

Figure 3-19: Poor designation of footway/cycle track at the old fort

Figure 3-20: Well used cycle parking in the town centre

Figure 3-21: Cycle parking at the health centre

3.4.2 The existing walking and cycling facilities are shown in Figure A-1 in Appendix A.

3.5 Traffic flow and accident data

3.5.1 As discussed earlier, the A82 trunk road through Fort William carries considerable traffic, especially in the centre of the town. According to the Draft Highland Council Local Transport Strategy, traffic on the A82 near to the swimming pool has increased by 5% since 2003, however in the south of the town, traffic flows are considerably less. This indicates that much of the traffic causing congestion in the town is generated locally.

3.5.2 The Road Safety Plan for Highland has adopted National Targets for accident reduction and is on course to meet the 2010 targets. The Scottish Government has set out road safety targets in their latest Road Safety Framework to 2020 as follows:

- Reduce adult deaths by 40% and reduce the number of serious injuries by 55%
- Reduce child deaths by 50% and reduce the number of serious injuries by 65%

3.5.3 Pedestrian and cyclist accident data for 2006 to 2009 was obtained from The Highland Council. During this period there were no pedestrian deaths, but there was one cyclist who died. A total of six pedestrian accidents were recorded, two of which suffered severe injuries and a total of six other cyclist accidents, one of which was severe. All other accidents are recorded as slight.

3.5.4 The majority of pedestrian accidents have happened on local residential roads in Caol and Lundavra. Two pedestrians have been in accidents on the A82: one pedestrian was hit by a car crossing at the pedestrian crossing near to the Camusnagaul ferry pier, the other on North Road.

3.5.5 In contrast, all but one of the cyclist accidents have occurred on the A82 and A830. Four accidents took place on the A82 on the narrow section between Belford Hospital and Carrs Corner Industrial Estate and two were on the A830

3.5.6 More detailed accident data is required to determine the cause of these accidents and the ages of those involved, but it appears that cyclists are particularly at risk on the A82. There were no reported accidents between pedestrians and cyclists.

3.6 Public transport

3.6.1 The outlying areas of Corpach, Banavie, and Caol are well served by the local bus service which is branded as ‘Fort Link’. During peak times buses are every fifteen minutes, hourly in the evenings, with the cost of a single fare to Caol priced at £1.05. Local buses also serve the health centre next to the High School, but not before 9am. Feedback from Lochaber Action on Disability reveals that there is a lack of confidence for disabled people using local buses as they report that not all buses are accessible.

3.6.2 Most people alighting from local buses in Fort William use the bus stop on the A82 at the top of the High Street. As shown below in Figure 3-24, the area around the bus stop is very narrow and could be improved to be made more attractive and functional. The main bus stop for passengers leaving Fort William on local bus services is on Middle Street. This bus stop is well used and is accessed via a traffic free path from The Parade with a controlled crossing point.

3.6.3 Fort William is also accessible by train services from Mallaig and south of Scotland and from various national destinations by intercity coach services which depart from the bus staion on Macfarlane Way near the train station. The ScotRail Caledonian Sleeper service to London Euston is available from Fort William.

3.6.4 Although the bus and train station are only a short distance from the town centre, the presence of the A82 is a considerable physical and psychological barrier between them.

3.6.5 Cycle carriage on trains is available (6 bikes on 2 cars) which is particularly important when promoting sustainable transport for key events such as the world mountain bike championships at Aonach Mor.

3.6.6 Folding and boxed bicycles can also be carried on long distance buses provided they are suitably covered.

3.6.7 Table 3-3 below is a summary of the current bus service in the study area and Figure 3-25 at the end of the chapter shows where The Highland Council consider that services may need to be extended with regards to new developments in the area.

3.6.8 The main recommendations in relation to public transport are:

- Ensure new developments provide first rate bus stops and shelters at the main entrances
- Bus routes to new developments should be as direct as possible from the existing bus network
- New developments need to make significant contributions to the existing bus network especially where there will be any sizeable trip generators
- Improve existing bus stop facilities especially on Middle Street and main stop into Fort William on the A62

Figure 3-22: Local buses picking up passengers on Middle Street

Figure 3-23: Crossing point from town centre to bus stop on Middle Street

Figure 3-24: Inadequate bus stop provision for services into Fort William

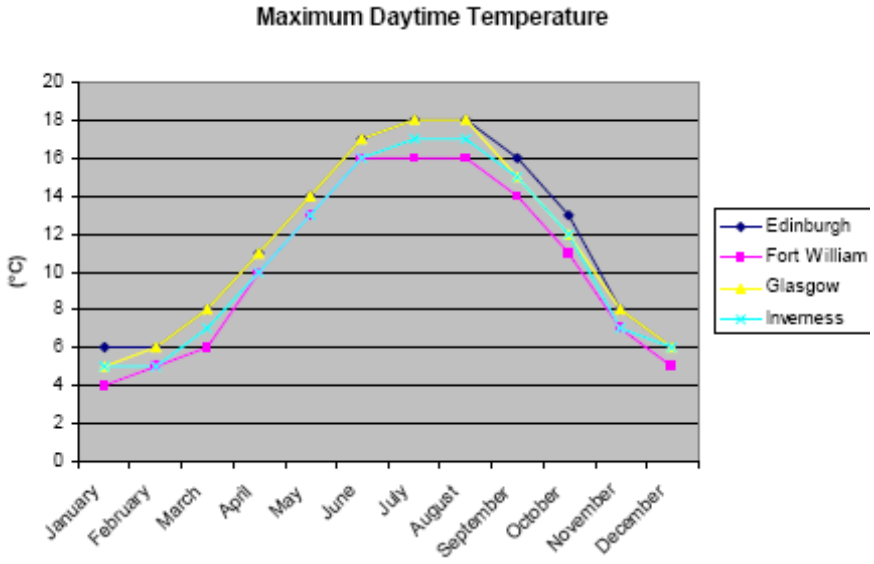
Table 3-3: Bus services in the Fort William Study Area

				Weekday		Saturday		Sunday		
Route	**From**	**To**	**Via**	**Daytime**	**Evening**	**Daytime**	**Evening**	**Daytime**	**Evening**	**Note**
Stagecoach 45A	Corpach	Upper Achintore/ lantation	Fort William town centre	5	5	8	5	-	-	Midweek evening service serves Health Centre. Serves Iverlochy and Claggan.
Stagecoach 45	Corpach	Upper Achintore/ Plantation	Fort William town centre	20	3	13	3	9	6	Midweek daytime service serves Health Centre. Servis Inverlochy and Claggan.
Stagecoach 46	Corpach	Upper Achintore/ Plantation	Fort William town centre	20	2	14	2	2	-	Midweek service serves Health Centre. Serves Inverlochy and Claggan.
Stagecoach 41	Fort William	Spean Bridge	Caol, Health Centre and Glen Nevis Youth Hostel	8	2	6	2	7	2	2 services a day to Caol during the week, 1 on Saturday and 4 on Sunday. Serves Health Centre everyday except Sunday.
Stagecoach 44	Fort William	Kinlochleven	Ballachulish	12	4	10	3	2	1	Serves Camanachd Crescent (excepting Sunday) and properties on A82 south of Fort William.

3.6.9 Weather

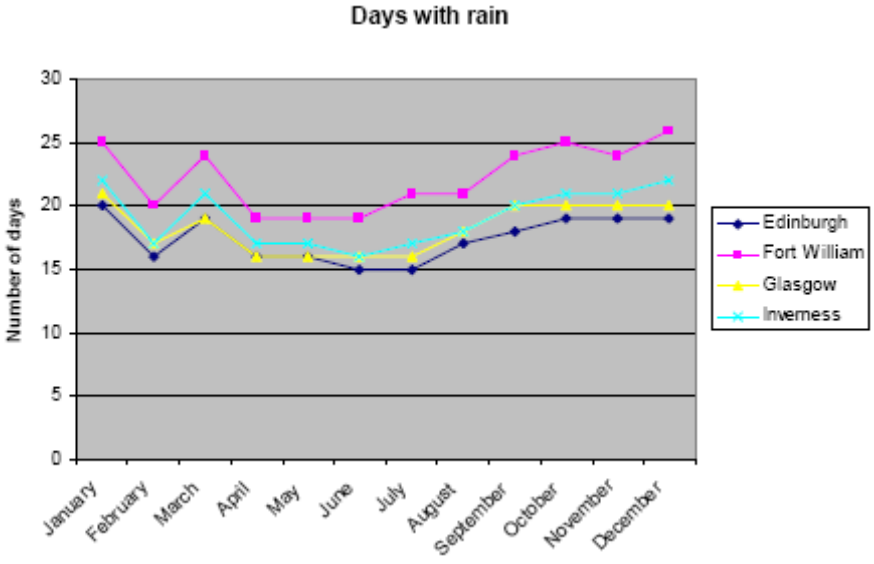
3.6.10 Fort William is often described as one of the wettest places in Scotland and data from the Met Office confirms this. Tables 3-4 through 3-6 below show that Fort William is considerably wetter than Glasgow, Edinburgh and Inverness, has the most days of rain and is also colder. Consistently wet and cold weather can be a deterrent to walking and cycling, however, existing levels of walking and cycling in the area are relatively high for an area with this relative high level of rainfall.

Table 3-4: Comparison of average maximum day temperature (2008)



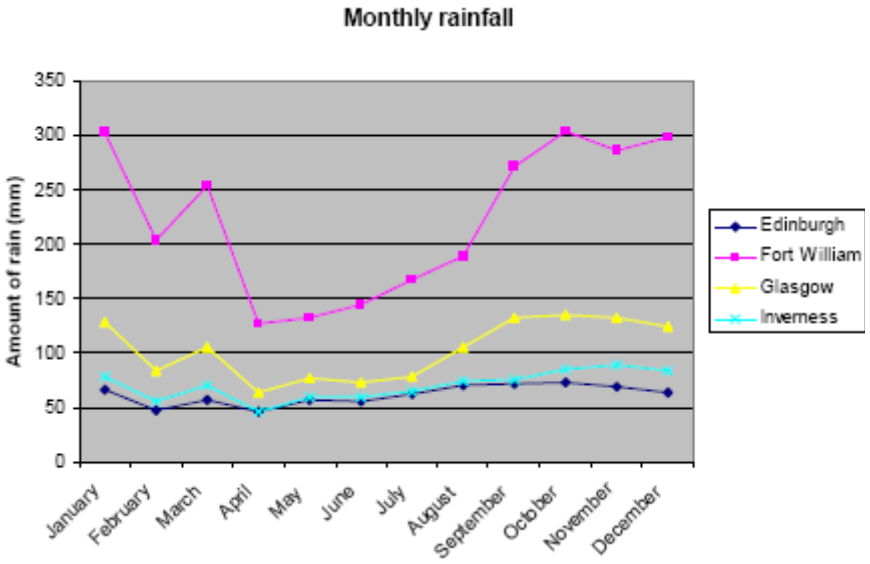
Source: The Met Office (2008)

Table 3-5: Comparison of average number of days with rain



Source: The Met Office (2008)

Table 3-6: Comparison of Average monthly rainfall



Source: The Met Office (2008)

3.7 Fort William mountain bike championships

3.7.1 In 2001 the Forestry Commision and the Nevis Range ski resort began building facilities for mountain biking in the Fort William area. What began initially as a single track trail has now expanded into a downhill trail, a 4X trail and a cross country course. The combination of terrain and trail quality has now made Fort William into one of the best mountain biking venues in the world. In 2002 the world cycling body used Fort William for a Downhill and 4X World Cup and added a Cross Country World cup in 2003 and in 2007, the Mountain Bike and Trials World Championships were held in Fort William the first time the event had been held in the UK since the competition began in 1990.

3.7.2 Following the event in 2007 HITRANS commissioned a report to evaluate 'the effectiveness of the information provided about transport for the event and to further action to promote sustainable transport options for future events'1. This was particularly important as the event attracted over 40,000 people over the six days. The evaluation consisted of an online survey to 1000 tourism operators. The results estimate that although the majority of people travelled to the Lochaber area by car, there was an increase in sustainable modes to access the championships. The traffic management plan for the event contained an Event Travel Plan to encourage people to travel to the competition sustainably. This was predominantly a information portal providing details to ticket holders, hoteliers and the general public on the facilities such as the shuttle bus, walking and cycling route, cycle parking and the nine park and ride sites. The report suggests that most people found information about travel to the event via an email newsletter and the world cup website.

[1] Sustainable Transport Report, Fort William World Mountain Bike Championships 2007, Vipre, 15/01/2008

3.7.3 Survey results from the event show how successful the alternative transport options were. On the final busiest day of the competition, over 11,000 people attended. Of these:

- 9239 used the shuttle buses
- 600 used the free cycle parking
- 800 travelled by car

And encouragingly it is estimated that there were at least four people in each car. Respondents would have liked more accurate and more readily available information about shuttle bus times and more information about the new walking cycling route and free cycle parking

3.7.4 The main recommendations from the report were to:

- Continue to use websites and emails to promote sustainable transport
- Provide more information locally through the Tourist Information Centre and posters
- Promote the event with transport providers such as ScotRail and coach companies with the possibility of integrated ticketing
- Better signing of car parks and the cycle route
- Use 'Information Ambassadors' in key locations to aid the public,
- Provide more shuttle buses during peak event times
- Promote sustainability to the area year round

3.8 The Highland Council policy documents

3.8.1 The Lochaber Local Plan (Deposit Draft 2008) outlines the following developments within the study area:

- Waterfront development including extensive land reclamation
- 300 new homes in Caol/Lochyside
- Potential relocation of hospital and police headquaters
- New homes in Upper Achintore with possible new primary school
- Potential new housing off Lundavra Road
- Possible kayak club adjacent to Inverlochy Castle
- Potential new housing in Banavie
- Possible expansion at Torlundy
- Developments at former mill at Corpach
- Development on Blar Mor
- Improvements to existing High School

3.8.2 In addition, a proposed new link road to Coal is included in the Local Plan and land is being reserved to safeguard its alignment. Targeted road improvements on the A82 are identified within Transport Scotland's 'Stategic Transport Projects Review' from 2012 – 2022 and are likely to include work to the south of Fort William.

3.8.3 A review of primary school provision is currently underway by The Highland Council, the results of which may have an impact on school travel if any schools are closed or relocated.

3.8.4 After serious flooding in 2005, Scott Wilson Scotland Ltd carried out a feasibility study to develop proposals to reduce the risk of flooding in the area. The feasibility study has been completed and a Draft Flood Prevention Order is being pursued to enable construction works to prevent future flooding in the area.

3.8.5 Of the nine objectives within the draft Local Transport Strategy for the Highlands 2009-2012 (LTS), five have a direct impact on the encouragement and increase of walking and cycling:

- Social Inclusion: Facilitate travel to enable economic/social involvement and improve access/travel choices to essential services for those without access to a private car
- Environment: Manage/reduce the impacts of transport on the natural and built environment
- Health: Increase levels of cycling and walking to promote health improvement and modal shift
- Personal Safety: Address issues of perceived safety and personal security particularly where they are a barrier to walking, cycling and public transport
- Traffic Reduction: Where appropriate consider targets for reducing traffic, although noting the variation in conditions and requirements between rural and urban areas

3.8.6 In addition, the LTS also incorporates local outcome 10.1 of The Highland Council's Single Outcome Agreement to increase the number of children walking and cycling to school.

3.8.7 A study to improve the relationship between the west end of the High Street and the pedestrianised area in Fort William is currently being progressed by The Highland Council.

3.9 Fort William Waterfront Master Plan

3.9.1 A report outlining the design proposals for 'Enhancing Fort William's Waterfront[2]' was published in August 2009 although in April 2010 it has been confirmed that the developer is withdrawing its plans due to current global economic situation. The report was commissioned by The Highland Council and sets out a design framework that will '*promote the physical and economic enhancement of Fort William's wider waterfront*.' There are two master plans within the document, an Optimum Masterplan Proposal and a Secondary Masterplan. The Optimum plan is based on funding through a joint venture whilst the Secondary plan shows the opportunities without joint venture funding.

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[2] Enhancing Fort William's Waterfront, Design Proposals, The Highland Council, W.A. Fairhurst and Partners, WSD Scotland Ltd, August 2009

3.9.2 Both masterplans have been developed using the same design principles which are:

- Establishing visual links
- Improving pedestrian priority
- Increasing connectivity and continuity of development
- Adaptability (of buildings and public space)

3.9.3 The current proposals do not provide sufficient detail of pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, however the report highlights a number of key issues:

- Key sites such as existing green spaces and the waterfront are currently 'cut off' from the town centre
- Pedestrian links are compromised due to the dominance of the A82
- Making walking and cycling more attractive can encourage reduced use of cars for short journeys
- Fort William is dominated by car parking
- Middle Street could be improved to encourage more street activity
- The train station and West End roundabout are key gateways where the visual quality of the areas could be improved.

3.9.4 For each master plan, the report sets out in general terms how these problems would be addressed. Much of the report relates to the built form and its visual appearance, but there is a strong emphasis on how access needs to be improved for pedestrians and cyclists, including improved at grade crossings on the A82, especially from the train station to the High Street. The report states: '*The masterplan seeks to establish high quality pedestrian and cycle routes by strengthening existing pedestrian links from the town centre to the waterfront, as well as providing alternative routes and removing unnecessary traffic from local roads. The proposals make negotiating existing routes safer and more pleasant for non vehicle users. Ultimately, by making walking and cycling a safer and more pleasant experience, residents and visitors will be more likely to refrain from using their cars for short journeys*.'

3.9.5 The proposals for both master plans are very positive with regards to active travel and if executed well, will have the potential to transform Fort William and radically improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, but there is no sufficient detail at this stage to determine if the proposals will give priority to pedestrians and reduce the dominance of the A82. Although the report acknowledges the visual dominance of parked cars and seeks to reduce this by limited on street parking and redesigning parking areas there is a proposal to increase the overall level of parking provision in the town through the Optimum masterplan with the creation of an underground 800 space car park. There is a considerable amount of new development, both residential and commercial within the Optimum masterplan which could be designed to favour the used of walking and cycling over car journeys through the provision of high quality walking and cycling routes that have distinct time and physical advantages over using a car and convenient and secure cycle parking. Both master plans also fail to record/recognise the existing traffic free route from Wades Road to the fast food restaurant and the under capacity dual carriageway along the waterfront is maintained.

3.10 Current issues

3.10.1 The audit process identified a number of key issues that act as a disincentive for active travel:

1) A82

- The volume of traffic between the Belford Hospital and North
- Road means that it is unsuitable for on road cycle facilities

- Speed limits in some parts of the town are more than 40mph

2) Hilly terrain

- The steepness of roads in the residential areas of Fort William will be a deterrent to increasing walking and cycling in the area

3) Lack of cycle facilities

- It is difficult to promote cycling where there are few dedicated cycling facilities, including deficiencies in cycle parking

4) Wet weather

- The relatively wet weather in the area will be a major hurdle in the promotion of walking and cycling

5) Unattractive gateway between public transport and town centre

- The subway under the A82 is unattractive
- Cycling is not permitted in the subway
- Steep access ramps
- Ill defined pedestrian/cycle route from subway to supermarket
- No access by bicycle from town centre to railway station

3.11 SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis of Active Travel in the Fort William area

Strengths	Weaknesses
Flat terrain to Banavie, Corpach and Caol from Fort William Area is known nationally and internationally for mountain biking Large numbers of visitors specifically come to thearea for recreational walking and cycling Attractive, pedestrianised town centre with good quality cycle parking High quality cycle route to Torlundy/Aonach Mor Relatively high levels of walking and cycling to work Good quality bike shops Good network of pedestrian footways Fort William Waterfront Master Plan recognises importance of creating high quality pedestrian and cyclist environment	Steep terrain in Fort William Relatively wet weather Poor quality cycle parking at a number of main trip generators outside of town centre No signing of cycle routes Poor orientation from bus station/railway stationto town centre Poor connectivity from end of Great Glen Way totown centre Volume and speed of traffic on A82
Opportunities	**Threats**
Development of long distance cycle route from Oban to Fort William Build on tradition of recreational walking and Cycling Improve existing Great Glen Way to encourage more utility trips A number of large scale residential and commercial developments are in progress and could make a positive contribution to active travel infrastructure Existing network of cycle enthusiasts to helppromote cycling	Lack of provision for pedestrians and cyclists innew developments Potentially wetter and more unpredictable weather as a result of climate change Lack of funding and drive to improve/ build active travel infrastructure

4 Potential Fort William Area Active Travel Network

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The active travel audit identified potential walking and cycling routes that could link residential areas to the main trip generators and attractors to form a strategic network for the area. The main trip generators are:

- The Belford Hospital
- Railway and Bus Station with adjacent supermarket
- Fort William Town Centre
- Health Centre/Lochaber High School
- Lochaber Leisure Centre
- Torlundy/Nevis Range
- Great Glen Way
- West Highland Way
- Ben Nevis Industrial Estate
- Residential and industrial areas in Corpach
- Caol
- Banavie
- Blar Mhor and Ben Nevis Industrial Estates
- British Alcan
- Lochaber College

4.1.2 The study has developed a set of long term objectives for encouraging walking and cycling as follows:

Objective 1: Develop a high quality spine route for walking and cycling through the Fort William area

Objective 2: Create an Active Travel Task Force to spearhead the development of walking and cycling routes and secure funding from as many sources as possible

Objective 3: Work with local businesses to improve trip end facilities to encourage commuter walking and cycling

Objective 4: Improve pedestrian and cycle links between retail area/public transport interchange and town centre

4.1.3 The focus of the network is the existing routes in the flatter parts of the study area, namely the route out to Caol, Corpach and Banavie via Inverlochy. There are no proposals in the Strategic Transport Review to relieve the congestion in the town so the transfer of short local journeys currently made by car, to walking and cycling could have a very beneficial effect in terms of reduced congestion, reduced CO2 emissions, reduced oise pollution as well as the many health benefits associated with being physically active. As shown in Chapter 2, the majority of journeys to work in the area are less than 5km – an ideal distance for cycling.

4.1.4 Clearly, the relatively wet weather will be a difficult hurdle to overcome when promoting walking and cycling, but despite this, existing levels of cycling are over three times the national average and twice the average for the Highlands. The provision of good quality trip end facilities will be need to be a major element of a walking and cycling strategy. Businesses will need to be encouraged to supply,covered bicycle storage areas, drying areas for wet clothes as well as showering and changing facilities.

4.2 Active Travel Network

4.2.1 The following corridors have been identified as having the potential to provide the most direct and coherent network of routes to the destinations listed in 4.1.1. The routes are:

- Fort William Spine Route
- Torlundy Spur
- Caol Links
- Outer Orbital Route
- College Link
- Town Centre Links (pedestrian only)
- Puggy Line Link

4.2.2 A full description of the routes with suggested improvements subject to consultation, feasibility and design are included in Appendix 1 of this report. The action plan in the following sections identifies the key priorities in the development of the aforementioned routes along with ‘softer’ initiatives to encourage action travel in the area. Figure A-3 in Appendix A shows the extent of the potential Active Travel Network in relation to the Local Plan.

5 Prioritised Action Plan

5.1 The Priorities

5.1.1 This prioritised Active Travel Plan sets out the key measures needed to encourage walking and cycling in the Fort William area. As well as incorporating parts of the strategic walking and cycling network, it also includes promotion and 'soft' measures which form part of a package of works which have been used successfully in those towns and cities where there has been an increase in sustainable modes.

5.1.2 The following measures are the key priorities for encouraging active travel in and around Fort William:

Priority 1: Route Signing Strategy

Priority 2: Establish Fort William Active Travel Action Group

Priority 3: Fort William Spine Route

Priority 4: Caol Links

Priority 5: College Link

Priority 6: Outer Orbital Route

5.1.3 Each of these individual priorities are summarised below and form part of the wider Fort William Area Active Travel Network outlined in chapter 4.

5.2 Priority 1 Recommendation: Route Signing Strategy

5.2.1 The shared use walking and cycling route to Torlundy implemented by Transport Scotland is an excellent route that provides a traffic free route to the Nevis Range from Fort William. Unfortunately, without local knowledge, the route is very difficult to find, although there is destination signing at Victoria Bridge and Torlundy. Similarly, although the route of the Great Glen Way connects Banavie, Caol and Corpach to Fort William and is well signed using the Great Glen Way branding, there is no destination or distance signing for pedestrians and cyclists in the local area.

5.2.2 Providing destination signing with distances is not only an obvious tool to aid wayfinding, but is also a way to promote and publicise walking and cycling routes. It should not be taken for granted that local people 'know' where routes go or what routes are available. If people don't normally walk or cycle they are less likely to know that it is possible to access local areas without using main roads. Destination signing is relatively inexpensive and is a 'quick win' in terms of developing a local walking and cycling network.

5.2.3 The recommendations are summarised below in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1: Priority 1 Recommendations Summary Table – Route Signing Strategy
Description
• Provide signing to Corpach, Banavie, Caol and Torlundy from Fort William
Issues for consideration
• Route signing could incorporate branding for the Great Glen Way

Figure 5.1: Uncoordinated destination signing in Fort William

Figure 5.2: Destination signing on cycle route is incomplete

5.3 Priority 2 Recommendation: Establish Fort William Active Travel Action Group

5.3.1 Fort William is in the fortunate position of already having a positive identity with regards to outdoors activities, especially cycling. Many people who visit or live in the area, do so specifically to take advantage of the facilities for recreational walking and cycling, so much so that Fort William has been able to brand itself as the 'Outdoor Capital of the UK'. The outstanding reputation of Fort William as a world class centre for mountain biking has brought with it many individuals who are active in promoting cycling, not only for leisure but also for transport as shown by the promotional activities carried out by local bicycle shops and the Fort William Wheelers. The website www.ridefortwilliam.co.uk is an example of how groups in the area have taken the initiative to work together to promote cycling. It is proposed that these existing partnerships are strengthened, expanded and formalised to enable a wider range of promotional and route building activities to take place.

5.3.2 The existing groups and individuals would be advised to create a constituted partnership to promote active travel which can then take ownership of a long term strategic approach to develop walking and cycling in the area. One of the priorities for action for the group should be the development of trip end facilities at major employers in the area and main trip generators and attractors. The group could work with Cycling Scotland to promote the Cycle Friendly Employers Award which can incentivise businesses to improve storage

and changing facilities for people who walk and cycle (especially in wet weather) but also help develop an understanding of the fiscal benefits of having a fitter workforce with less onus on carbon heavy transport.

5.3.3 An independent group also has the added advantage of being able to access funding from a range of sources unavailable to the Local Authority. For example, community groups are currently eligible to apply for a number of grants such as: Awards for All, Climate Challenge Fund, Scotland Rural Development Fund, the Community Cycling Innovation Fund and Landfill Communities Funding.

5.3.4 In addition, if such a group were established, it could be considered as a statutory consultee with regards to planning applications to ensure the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are considered from the outset in any new developments. There are several large scale proposals in the pipeline that have the potential to incorporate significant improvements for pedestrians and cyclists: new housing at Caol which could help to improve the existing route to Blar Mhor Industrial Estate and the waterfront development which could significantly improve connectivity to the town centre. The group can help elevate the profile of vulnerable road users within these developments and ensure the proposed infrastructure is of sufficient quality to encourage modal shift.

5.3.5 Another function of the group could be to work with Transport Scotland to improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists on the A82 in Fort William (see Priority 5 Recommendation.) The recommendations are summarised below in Table 5-2.

Table 5-2: Priority 2 Recommendations Summary Table – Fort William Active Travel Action

Group
Description
Create a multi-agency partnership to promote walking and cycling and access funding • Consider making the group a consultee with regards to planning applications
Issues for consideration
Businesses may be hindered from providing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists by budget constraints Training may be required to help the group make informed decisions with regards to planning applications

5.4 Priority 3 Recommendations: Fort William Spine Route

5.4.1 The main priority for the development of walking and cycling in the Fort William area should be the improvement of the existing route of the Great Glen Way from Corpach to Fort William town centre. A large part of the route is already in place and is already well used both by long distance walkers and local people and as the route is largely flat and has a number of traffic free sections, it has the potential to be a high quality, well used route. The improvements required are focussed on specific locations outlined below in Table 5-3 and in Appendix A.

Table 5-3: Priority 3 Recommendations Summary Table – Fort William Spine Route
Description
Improve the quality of the existing route of the Great Glen Way from Corpach to Fort William
Issues for consideration
Support for any proposals from the Great Glen Way Route Manager is imperative • Needs of local community and Great Glen Way users must be balanced • Signing of the existing route is vital
Recommended Intervention (subject to feasibility and design)
Corpach Consider improving the quality of the route surface along the southern side of the canal from Station Road to the existing traffic free route to Caol, especially from Station Road to the locks.
Caol Consider supplementing the existing traffic calmed Erracht Drive/Glenmallie Road with a 20mph speed limit Provide flush dropped crossings with tactile paving on Erracht Drive/Glenmallie Road and access to shopping centre *Note: during the audit a new traffic free path along Erract Drive was being constructed. The path was approximately 1.2m wide which may cause conflict between pedestrians and cyclists in the future.* Consider the removal of the centre line on Lochyside Road[3] Resurface section of carriageway where there are advisory cycle lanes and re-line Diag 1004 showing extent of cycle lanes Provide flush dropped crossings with tactile paving at side roads on Lochyside Road Improve bus stop facilities at Lochyside Primary School where people currently alight onto carriageway

[3] See Appendix B for case studies on centre line removal

Soldier's Bridge and Black Park

Investigate the potential to provide a new, wider bridge to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists and access ramps suitable for wheelchair users

Improve drainage on carriageway through Black Park

Inverlochy

Consider the implementation of a 20mph zone on Wades Road and Lochiel Road and improve condition of carriageway

Consider junction improvements at Wades Road/Montrose Avenue to aid cyclist and pedestrian movements with improved footway provision to local shops

Provide flush dropped crossings with tactile paving at side roads on Wades Road and Lochiel Road

Camanachd Crescent

Investigate options for providing for cyclists on Camanachd Crescent from 20mph zone to Macfarlane Way

Undertake preliminary design of a shared use footway/cycle track on Macfarlane Way from Camanachd Crescent between bus and train stations to existing underpass to town centre, utilising existing footways where feasible

A82 Underpass

Improve lighting and aesthetics of underpass

Investigate options for improving gradients of ramps for wheelchair users including the provision of an at grade crossing

Pedestrianised High Street

Consider removal of cyclist restrictions outside peak hours (10am to 4pm) to aid commuter cyclists following consultation and possible trial

High Street (West)

Improve pedestrian and cyclist linkages between the pedestrianised zone and High Street

Consider the provision of facilities to encourage cycling such as on road cycle lanes

Achintore Road

Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at the roundabout at Achintore Road/High Street

Investigate options for providing for cyclists on Achintore Road and the roundabout to access High Street

Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at all side roads

5.5 Priority 4 Recommendation: Caol Links

5.5.1 After the creation of a high quality spine route, connecting links in the Caol area should then be created. The potential links in Caol would create a network of routes linking to Blar Mhor Industrial Estate, Lochaber High School, Banavie train station and the local shops, primary school, and library. Caol is relatively flat and is bordered to the north and south by existing cycle routes and has good links to recreational cycling on the canal.

5.5.2 The implementation of the links in Caol is based on improving a number of existing routes, specifically the access barriers on Moor Road, connectivity between Blar Mnor Road and Torlundy Road and investigating ways to make Kilmallie Road more attractive to cyclists.

5.5.3 The most ambitious proposal would be to upgrade the existing route from Moor Road and Castle Drive to Blar Mhor Insustrial Estate. This route is important as it has the potential to become a mostly traffic free route from Caol to the high school. There are currently proposals to build houses in this area and the improvements could be delivered as part of planning gain, or if this is not possible, the line of the route preserved for implementation in the future.

5.5.4 The recommendations are summarised below in Table 5-4 and in Appendix A

Table 5-4: Priority 4 Recommendations Summary Table – Caol Links
Description
• Create a network of routes in the Caol area to link to local services and the existing active travel routes
Issues for consideration
Kilmallie Road is a bus route • Local Plan has outlined a new road in the area • There are proposals to build 300 new homes in the area south of the railway line
Recommended Intervention (subject to feasibility and design)
Consider the provision of a signed route from A830 to Kilmallie Road via Torlundy Road/Blar Mhor Road/MacKay Crescent and Ardgour Road, improving the no through section at Torlundy Road for Cyclists
Investigate options for improving Kilmallie Road for cyclists
Improve pedestrian and cyclist access to local shops at Glenloy Street
Improve the access barriers on Moor Road to allow access to cyclists/pushchairs/wheelchair users whilst preventing through traffic
Work with developers to ensure the route from Moor Road/Castle Drive is either implemented or preserved

5.6 Priority 5 Recommendation: College Link

5.6.1 Lochaber College is part of the University of Highlands and Islands, one of five campus's in Lochaber serving a total of over 1000 students. Access to the college without a car is via an informal route through the supermarket car park to Carmichael Way. An underwater training centre is also located on the same campus as well as the Fort William and Ballachulish Registration Office. Access for cyclists is via the busy roundabout which is the main vehicle access to the supermarket. A number of signs for the Great Glen Way are also erected directing people across the supermarket car park, a rather ignominious route for a high profile tourist attraction.

5.6.2 Potentially, this is a very difficult link to implement as any improvements to pedestrian and cyclist routes to Carmichael Way will need to be negotiated with a number of landowners, especially the supermarket. The supermarket car park is well used and it is unlikely the owners will support proposals that involve the loss of car parking spaces. However, there is still a need to investigate and pursue a safe walking and cycling route to the services in Carmichael Way.

5.6.3 In addition there is access to a traffic free walking and cycling route which currently ends behind the fast food restaurant. An improved walking and cycling route to the college would also improve connectivity to this section of route.

5.6.4 The recommendations are summarised below in Table 5-5 and in Appendix A.

Table 5-5: Priority 5 Recommendations Summary Table – College Link
Description
• Investigate the provision of a walking and cycling route from the bus station/train station/Fort William Spine Route to Carmichael Way
Issues for consideration
• Any new route would be dependant on co-operation with landowners in the area • Pedestrian and cyclist crossing points required at roundabout • New route could also form part of the Great Glen Way
Recommended Intervention (subject to feasibility and design)
Work with all interested parties to determine solutions for an improved route from bus station/train station to Carmichael Way
Improve crossing points on roundabout with consideration for cyclists
Consider provision of shared use footway/cycle tracks on Carmichael Way
Improve access to the existing traffic free route and improve sections of track that have deteriorated

5.7 Priority 6 Recommendation: Outer Orbital Route

5.7.1 5.7.1 The Outer Orbital Route (OOR) is essentially the route of the A830 and A82 in the study area which links Corpach, Banavie, the high school and health centre, British Alcan, the swimming pool/leisure centre and Belford Hospital. The route from Lochaber High School to Banavie Station already has shared use footways on both sides of the main road, although they are in need of some routine maintenance such as sweeping and cutting back of vegetation. The A830 and A82 are trunk roads and are the responsibility of Transport Scotland, hence any proposals that affect these roads would need to be developed in close consultation with Transport Scotland and approved by them.

5.7.2 Solutions to improve safety and journey attractiveness in the built up area of Fort William where there is a 30mph limit will be more difficult to find. Based on design guidance, pedestrians and cyclists should be segregated from general traffic here as there are more than 10,000 vehicles a day, however, there are limited opportunities for providing traffic free routes such as widening footways.

5.7.3 A summary of the potential recommendations are shown below in Table 5-5 and Appendix 1, however, any proposals will need to be developed with Transport Scotland and they should be engaged at the earliest opportunity prior to any work on developing proposals.

Table 5-6: Priority 6 Recommendations Summary Table – Outer Orbital Route (OOR)

Description
• Work with Transport Scotland to develop safe walking and cycling routes on the A830 and A82
Issues for consideration
Traffic volumes on Belford Road and North Road suggest that segregated facilities arenecessary • Maintenance regimes for existing and new infrastructure need to be in place
Recommended Intervention (subject to feasibility and design)
Corpach and Banavie Investigate the potential to use existing footway on the northern side of the A830 as a shared use footway and cycle track with localised widenings and crossing points at Corpach shops and Banavie Primary School
Existing cycle tracks on A830 Provide regular maintenance to sweep tracks and cut back vegetation Consider provision of improved cycle track crossing at entrance to Blar Mhor Industrial Estate
Lochaber High School/health centre Extend the existing shared use footway/cycle track from the junction of the health centre and high school to the A82 and improve the crossing facilities at the junction
A82 (A830 to Inverlochy junction) Investigate potential to provide a shared use footway on the eastern side of the carriageway with crossing point at British Alcan
Inverlochy junction Improve junction for pedestrians and cyclists
A82 (Inverlochy junction to High Street) Investigate ways of improving the safety and journey experience of pedestrians and cyclists maintaining access to leisure centre and Belford Hospital

6 Conclusions

6.1.1 The terrain and relatively wet weather in the study area will make the challenge of increasing walking and cycling more difficult. Despite this, there are already relatively high levels of active travel for journeys to work and in addition, there is support from the community in improving the infrastructure in the town to make walking and cycling safer and more attractive.

6.1.2 There are two key priorities identified within this report: the first is to amalgamate existing groups and individuals into a formal group who are able to vigorously drive forward an active travel strategy for the area, including writing funding bids. There is a great deal of funding available to community groups, especially for projects that encourage walking and cycling as the potential outcomes target a considerable number of cross cutting themes such as health, environment, carbon reduction and social exclusion.

6.1.3 The second priority relates to the existing infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists, much of which is of good quality and well used. The top priority is to carry out a comprehensive signing scheme on the Fort William spine route and route out to Torlundy and the second is to target and improve a number of sections on the route. Much of the spine route is part of the Great Glen Way and the signing and improvements must support the long term aims and objectives of this important tourist attraction which is of great importance to the local economy in the Highlands.

6.1.4 In addition, as the proposals for the Fort William Masterplan develop, it is imperative that the needs of pedestrians and cyclists are considered from the outset to ensure its objectives are realised and the over dominance of vehicle traffic in the town is addressed.

Appendix A: Fort William Area Active Travel Network – Mapping and Potential Improvements

0 500m 1km 2km

N

Figure A-1: Existing Walking and Cycling Facilities in Fort William

Key:

- Part time 20mph zone
- Shared use footway/cycle track
- Path suitable for walking and cycling
- On road advisory cycle lanes
- Traffic calmed
- Zebra crossing
- Controlled pedestrian crossing
- Great Glen Way rough path with access barriers
- Toucan crossing
- Advisory 20mph zone
- West Highland Way
- Great Glen Way
- Pedestrianised

N

0 500m 1km 2km

Figure A-2: Bus routes in Fort William

Key:

- Local Bus Route, Fort Link (45, 45A, 46)
- Local Bus Route, Fort Link (45, 45A)
- Local Bus Route, Fort Link (45A)
- Route 44 to Ballachulish
- Route 41 to Glen Nevis, Youth Hostel/Falls
- Route 919 to Inverness
- New Developments Requiring Bus Provision

Mixed Use

Housing

Mixed Use

Housing

Housing

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0 500m 1km 2km

N

Figure A-3 Fort William Potential Active Travel Plan Network (Indicative)

Key:

- Fort William Spine Route
- Outer Orbital Route
- Caol Links
- Torlundy Spur
- College Link
- Town Centre Links (pedestrian only)
- Puggy Line

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

Local Plan key:

- Action Area
- Affordable Housing
- Business
- Community
- Housing
- Industry
- Long-Term/Expansion
- Mixed Use/Special Uses
- Open Space/Amenity
- Town/Village Centre
- Settlement Development Area

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Route 1 – Fort William Spine Route

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
1a	Corpach Locks	Station Road	Ramp to traffic free section	Consider improving the quality of the existing route by providing a sealed surface
1b	Erract Drive/Erracht Terrace	Traffic free path	Glenmallie Road	Consider supplementing existing traffic calming with a 20mph speed limit Provide flush dropped crossings with tactile paving at all side roads and access to shopping centre
1c	Glenmallie Road	Erracht Terrace	Kilmallie Road	Consider supplementing existing traffic calming with a 20mph speed limit Provide flush dropped crossings with tactile paving at all side roads
1d	Lochyside Road	Glenmallie Road	A830	Consider the removal of the centre line (see Appendix 2) Improve the surface of the carriageway within the advisory cycle lanes and reinstate cycle lanes (Diag 1004) Provide flush dropped crossings with tactile paving at all side roads Improve bus stop facilities at Lochyside Primary School to prevent people alighting into carriageway
1e	Soldier's Bridge/Black Park	Lochyside Road	Black Park	Consider the possibility of providing a new, wider bridge to accommodate pedestrians and cyclists with access ramps suitable for wheelchair users Improve drainage on carriageway through Black Park
1f	Lochiel Road	Black Park	Montrose Avenue	Consider the implementation of a 20mph zone Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at all side roads Improve road surface for cyclists

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
1g	Junction at Montrose Avenue	Lochiel Road	Wades Road	Investigate ways to aid cyclists and pedestrians at this junction including improved footway provision to local shops
1h	Wades Road	Montrose Road	Camanachd Crescent	Consider the implementation of a 20mph zone Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at all side roads
1i	Camanachd Crescent	Start of 20mph zone	Macfarlane Way	Investigate options for providing for cyclists
1j	Macfarlane Way	Camanachd Crescent	A82 underpass	Investigate potential to provide a shared use footway/cycle track between bus station and train station to the underpass utilising existing footways where feasible
1k	Underpass	Train station	High Street	Improve lighting and appearance of subway to make it more attractive Investigate options for improving gradients of ramps for wheelchair users including the provision of an at grade crossing
1l	High Street	A82 underpass	Gordon Square	Consider the removal of cyclist restrictions outside peak hours (10am to 4pm) to aid commuters and consider a trial
1m	High Street	Gordon Square	Lundavra Road	Improve pedestrian and cyclist linkages between the pedestrianised zone and High Street Provide facilities to encourage cycling such as on road cycle lanes
1n	Achintore Road	High Street	Seafield Gardens	Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at the roundabout at Achintore Road/High Street Investigate options for providing for cyclists on Achintore Road and the roundabout to access High Street Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at all side roads
1o	All			Ensure route is signed for pedestrians and cyclists in both directions

Figure A-4: Route 1: Fort William Spine Route (Indicative)

Key:

Fort William Spine Route

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

0 500m 1km 2km

N

1a

1b

1c

1d

1e

1f

1g

1h

1i

1j

1k

1l

1m

1n

1o

Path along waterfront has recently been resurfaced and is well used by local people.

1a. Route from Corpach Locks to existing track has stone to dust surfacing and is relatively good quality, but gravel forecourt from Station Road to Locks is difficult to cycle on.

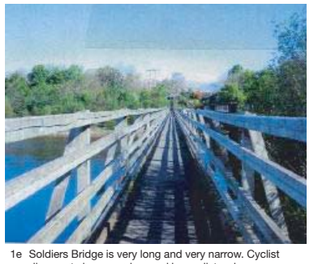
1b. The installation of flush dropped kerbs would improve access to local shops from the spine route/Great Glen Way.

A new footway is under construction in Caol, although it is not of sufficient width to allow shared use between pedestrians and cyclists. This area has flooded in the past and is under a Flood Prevention Order.

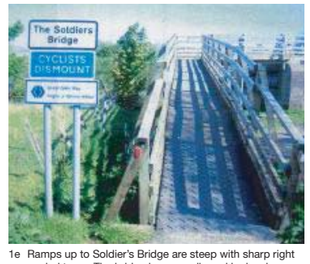
1b/c Residential area may benefit from a 20mph zone depending on existing speed limit.

1d Bus drivers tend not to use layby to allow passengers to alight. Area could be redesigned to provide safer bus stop provision.

1d Other Local Authorities have been able to achieve reductions in speed by removing centre lines. See Appendix 2 for more information.



1e Soldiers Bridge is very long and very narrow. Cyclist dismount signs are observed by cyclists when pedestrians are present.



1e Ramps up to Soldier's Bridge are steep with sharp right angled turns. The bridge is very well used by local people.

1n Cyclists must share the carriageway with general traffic on Achintore Road. The existing path in Fort William Gardens could be an option for a shared use footway/cycle track, but there is a pinch point that would require expensive engineering works to provide a new section of route.

1m The roundabout at the end of the High Street is a difficult place to cross as a pedestrian. The roundabout is particularly forbidding for cyclists. More direct links are needed from Achintore Road to High Street.

1l Many authorities have carried out successful pilots allowing cyclists to cyle through pedestrianised areas outside peak hours.

1k Lochaber Action on Disability reported that the existing ramps from the subway are very steep. An at grade crossing would be the most attractive option for pedestrians and cyclists.

1j A one way system operates through the bus station. A pedestrian/cycle track could be built where existing footway is, utilising the unused railway land that would lead directly to the underpass to the town centre.

1e A section of road through Black Park is often wet. Improved drainage would help to make the route more attractive.

1f/h Cyclists are subjected to a bumpy ride on Lochiel Road. This road and Wades Road could potentially become a 20mph zone to reinforce presence of pedestrians and cyclists.

1i Cyclists would benefit from facilities on section of Camanachd Crecent near Nevis Centre. Investigations of speed and volume of traffic will help determine potential solutions.

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Route 2 – Torlundy Spur

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
2a	Carriageway at Old Inverlochy Castle			Improve condition of carriageway in this area
2b	Cycle track from Old Inverlochy Castle to Torlundy			Ensure regular maintenance regime to sweep cycle track Provide destination signing in both directions

Route 3 – Caol Links

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
3a	Ardgour Road/Mackay Crescemt/Blar Mhor Road/Torlundy Road	A830	Kilmallie Road	Provide a signed route with improvements to road closure at Blar Mhor Road to provide a continuous route Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at all side roads
3b	Kilmallie Road	A830	Lochyside Road	Investigate options for making route safer and more attractive for cyclists Provide flush dropped crossings and tactile paving at all side roads
3c	Glenloy Street	Kilmallie Road	Shopping centre	Improve pedestrian and cyclist facilities and access to shopping centre
3d	Moor Road	Torlundy Road	Broom Drive	Improve access barriers to allow easier access for cyclists/pushchairs/wheelchair users
3e	Traffic free route from Moor Road/Castle Drive to A830			Work with developers to ensure this route is either implemented or corridor is preserved for future implementation

0 500m 1km 2km

N

Figure A-5: Route 2: Torlundy Spur

Key:

Torlundy Spur

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

2a The carriageway adjacent to the house at Inverlochy Castle can be particularly hazardous for cyclists, especially in the dark.

2b Regular sweeping of the new cycle track is needed.

2c The designated route through the works club car park works well and is clear of parked cars.

2d The cycle track is a popular recreational route.

Figure A-6: Route 3: Caol Links

Key:

Caol Links

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

0 500m 1km 2km

N

3a

3b

3c

3d

3e

3a The road closure at Blar Road / Torlundy Road needs to be improved to create a more "wheel" friendly short cut.

3b There is a well defined desire line on the section of Kilmallie Road that runs parallel to the canal. This could be formalised into a traffic free route for pedestrians and cyclists.

3b Investigation to determine traffic speed and volume is needed to determine the type of solution suitable for encouraging cycling on Kilmallie Road.

Route 4 – Outer Orbital Route (Recommendations requires discussion and approval with Transport Scotland)

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
4a	A830	Path to Corpach Nature Trails	Neptune's Staircase	Consider the provision of a shared use footway/cycle track on the north side of the carriageway with access to Corpach shops and Banavie Primary School
4b	A830	Neptune's Staircase	Lochaber High School	Implement regular maintenance regime to sweep footway/cycle track and cut back vegetation Provide improved cycle track crossing at entrance to Blar Mhor Industrial Estate
4c	A830	Junction providing access to health centre/high school	Junction with A82	Extend the existing shared use footway/cycle tracks and improve crossing facilities at both junctions
4d	A82	A830	Inverlochy junction	Investigate the potential to provide a shared use footway on the eastern side of the carriageway a crossing facility to access British Alcan
4e	Inverlochy Junction			Improve provision for pedestrians and cyclists at junction
4f	A82	Inverlochy junction	High Street	Investigate ways of improving safety and journey experience of pedestrians and cyclists maintaining access to leisure centre and Belford Hospital Provide flush dropped crossings with tactile paving at all side roads

Figure A-7: Route 4: Outer Orbital Route

0 500m 1km 2km

N

Key:

Outer Orbital Route

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

4a

4b

4c

4d

4e

4f

4a The northern side of the A830 from Corpach to Banavie lends itself to widening and conversion to footway/cycle track. The majority of housing is on the side of the road. A good quality crossing point will be needed to access the local shops, Banavie Primary School and the Fort William Spine Route via Station Road.

4b The junction for Blar Mhor Industrial Estate on the A830 is very wide and leaves pedestrians and cyclists very exposed. One solution could be the introduction of "Elephants footprints" to highlight the presence of the cycle route.

4b The existing cycle tracks on the A830 from Banavie Station to the junction of Lochaber High School would benefit from regular maintenance.

4c The existing shared use facilities on the A830 should be extended to the A82 with improved crossing facilities at the junction to the high school and health centre. The tracks should connect with the cycle route to Torlundy.

4d A cycle track on the western side of the A82 would also serve the retail park.

4d Cyclists often observed cycling on the footway here.

4d British Alcan employs nearly 200 people. A cycle track on the A82 should also include a crossing facility to access the factory.

4f There is limited room on the A82 to Belford Road for segregated walking and cycling facilities. Further investigation is needed to provide a solution acceptable for all modes.

Route 5 – College Link

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
5a	Route from bus/train station to Carmichael Way			Work with landowners to determine a solution for providing a designated walking and cycling route
5b	Roundabout at Carmichael Way			Improve crossing facilities at roundabout with consideration for cyclists
5c	Carmichael Way	Roundabout	End of road	Consider the provision of shared use footway/cycle tracks
5d	Access point to traffic free path to rear of fast food restaurant			Improve gateway and access to route and repair section of damaged track

Route 6 – Town Centre Links (pedestrian only)

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
6a	Steps to the rear of Macrae's Lane			Ensure steps are well lit, regularly maintained and vegetation is cut back. Consider the provision of CCTV to reduce feeling of isolation and discourage anti-social behaviour.
6b	Steps to the rear of Monzie Square			
6c	Steps on Cameron Lane			

Route 7 – Puggy Line Link

Ref	Street	Start	End	Intervention (All subject to feasibility and design)
7a	Puggy Line	Wades Road	Earl of Inverness Road	Improve gateway to path to promote its use. Cut back vegetation.
7b	Puggy Line	Earl of Inverness Road	Ben Nevis Road	Clear vegetation and investigate proposals to provide a formal footway/cycle track on old track bed. Consider reinstating bridge to Ben Nevis Drive over A82

0 500m 1km 2km

N

Figure A-8: Route 5: College Link

Key:

College Link (Indicative)

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

5a An informal route is currently signed through the super market car park to the Old Fort/Great Glen way. This is also the quickest route to the college from the bus/train station. A formalised route would improve pedestrian and cyclist safety through the busy car park.

5b There are dropped crossings on the arms of the roundabout, however pedestrians and cyclists must cross three lanes of traffic.

5c The footways at the roundabout and to Carmichael Way could be widened and converted to shared use.

5d The gateway to the traffic free route behind the fast food restaurant is ill defined and the surfacing could be improved.

5a

5b

5c

5d

AN GEARASDAN/
FORT WILLIAM

Halcrow

0 500m 1km 2km

N

Figure A-9: Route 6: Town Centre Links (pedestrian only)

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

6a Handrail provision is good for each set of steps.

6b Parts of these well used steps to the town centre are not overlooked and may benefit from installation of CCTV.

6c The steps provide a good short cut to the town centre. However there is evidence of drinking and urination.

0 500m 1km 2km

N

Figure A-10: Route 7: Puggy Lane Link

Key:

Puggy Line Link

NOTE: Potential routes shown are indicative and are subject to change as a result of consultation, feasibility and design.

7a This section of the Puggy Line from Wades Road to Macdonald Road has been surfaced is well used by local people. There is no lighting.

7b This section of the Puggy Line is unsurfaced and over grown but is still used as a short cut to the A82.

7b The bridge over the railway is still in place.

7b A new bridge from the Puggy Line over the A82 could connect to Ben Nevis Drive and provide a traffic free link to the Industrial Estate, Business Park and football ground as well as the small residential community of Claggan.

7b An informal access has been created from Tulloch Place to the Puggy Line.

7a

7b

Appendix B: Examples of Case Studies Relating to Removal of Centre Lines

NEW LAYOUT ON FELIXSTOWE ROAD, MARTLESHAM, SUFFOLK

Background

Felixstowe Road is part of the old main road between Woodbridge and Felixstowe, now bypassed by the A12. It is a C class road (subject to a 30 mph speed limit) linking the communities of old and new Martlesham. It is the only direct route for pedestrians and cyclists, but is also used by many motorists as the 'back route' into Martlesham. The road is subject to a 30 mph speed limit and carries some 4500 vpd, including over 150 cyclists.

Problem

There has been a substantial growth in traffic on the Felixstowe Road in recent years due to a number of factors, and it is perceived by drivers as a 'short cut', particularly at peak times. This made conditions increasingly difficult for local people, especially pedestrians and cyclists for whom this is an essential route. There was no footway and the road was poorly lit. Cyclists were deterred by experiences of being 'squeezed' by traffic passing too close and too fast. Although there were no serious injury accidents there were many anecdotal accounts of near misses that fuelled concern about safety. Calls for improvements to the road became a 'local issue' which was taken up by the Parish Council. The PC made requests for a footway and other improvements. With the development of the National Cycle Network through the area it became clear that Felixstowe Road was an essential link in National Cycle Route 1 and therefore any improvement to the road also needed to include 'cycle-friendly' measures.

Main objectives: (See expanded section at end of document)

- To improve safety and encourage more cycling and walking.
- To enhance its status as a quiet, minor road for local people.
- To encourage through traffic to use the A12 bypass.
- To reduce average traffic speed (to gain compliance with speed limit).

Funding

Construction of the scheme was made possible by Tesco Stores, who provided £75,000 of funding for the new footway along the road. Sustrans provided £40,000 for the cost of the shared-use paths adjacent to the junction with Anson Road and the marking of cycle lanes. Suffolk County Council (SCC) covered the remaining cost of resurfacing part of the road and the gateway treatments and signs, etc. from the LTP budget, of approx. £20,000.

Description of scheme

SCC originally investigated the possibility of providing a shared use footway/cycleway to keep both pedestrians and cyclists off the carriageway, but to make the facility safe for shared use would have required a path of at least 3m wide. This would have meant taking road space and narrowing the carriageway to an extent where two large vehicles would have been unable to pass. The chosen layout therefore includes cycle lanes on the carriageway that can be used by vehicles when clear, to enable drivers to pass safely at any point along the road. The final scheme, installed in July 2005, has a 6.5m carriageway width, split between two 1.5m cycle lanes and a single 3.5m central traffic lane. On one short section it narrows to just below 6m width, with 1.3m cycle lanes and a 3.2m central lane.

The layout chosen recognises that some large vehicles and buses need to use the road and at peak times traffic flows can be heavy. A separate footway for pedestrians has been constructed and advisory cycle lanes marked on each side of the carriageway to cater for cyclists, leaving a single central lane for vehicles.

The cycle lanes are 'advisory', which means that vehicles may over-run them when the lanes are clear of cyclists, to pass oncoming traffic when necessary. The purpose of the cycle lanes is to define the space that cyclists need on the road and to raise the motorists' awareness of the presence of cyclists and the requirement to keep clear and not overtake too closely.

Safety

Some individuals have raised concerns about the safety of the new layout. It might be helpful to consider the operation of the network of minor roads throughout the county. Felixstowe Road is part of approximately 3000 miles of 'C' and 'U' class roads in Suffolk and in many places these roads include sections of single carriageway where vehicles have to pull in and wait for oncoming traffic to pass. These roads generally have a low accident record because the majority of drivers behave in an appropriate manner to the conditions and visibility on the road. The single carriageway on Felixstowe Road has the advantage that vehicles can pass at any point along the road. If cyclists are present on the road ahead of them then drivers should slow down and wait behind the cyclists until the road is clear of oncoming traffic and it is safe to overtake. In the past many cyclists were intimidated by drivers trying to overtake them at the same time as avoiding oncoming traffic. This led to dangerous situations when the cyclists (and pedestrians) were squeezed against the edge of the road.

From the feedback received so far and from the experience of SCC design staff using the road by bicycle themselves, it is apparent that the new layout has achieved an improvement in driver behaviour when cyclists are present on the road. Pedestrians, who previously had to walk along the edge of the road, are now able to use the new footway. There has been an increase in these sustainable forms of travel since the scheme was installed.

This type of road layout has been used successfully in various locations around the examples include Cotmer Road, Lowestoft, Great Oakley, Essex (NCN 1). Faversham, Kent (NCN 4), Bristol Road, Scunthorpe and numerous examples from the continent where this layout is becoming increasingly common on many minor roads.

A stage three Safety Audit has been carried out and small amendments have been implemented to meet various minor points raised in the report.

There is always a period of adjustment as drivers become accustomed to using a new layout and during this time the operation of the road will continue to be closely monitored and traffic counts carried out. However, there have not been any incidents since the scheme was installed.

Monitoring

Monitoring has been carried out at regular intervals on Felixstowe Road since before this scheme was constructed. This has shown a steady rise in traffic levels as drivers diverted onto this road to avoid the A12 roundabout, very low pedestrian levels (as then no footway) and a static level of cyclists (mostly the more experienced cycling commuters).

Since installation of the new layout monitoring has been carried out on three occasions (in September, October '05 & March, April, June '06). This has shown a substantial reduction in overall vehicle flows, down by approximately 1100 vehicles per day.

There has been positive feedback from cyclists and pedestrians using the route. Cycle numbers were static over the winter but have recently shown an increase of 6.5% from April to June last year, as the more 'tentative' cyclists are gradually encouraged back by the improved facilities. (See also 'Objectives of the Scheme 1.' at the end of this document).

Pedestrian numbers have increased by 12% during the same period. It should not be overlooked that while Felixstowe Road is seen as a cycle scheme, in fact the majority of the money was spent on the new footway, not the cycle lanes.

Support and opposition

A number of e-mails from cyclists have been received confirming that they find the new layout an improvement. We have also received a small number of objections which fall roughly into two groups: Firstly the cyclists who complain we have not done enough to improve their safety and request more radical measures such as closing the road to vehicular traffic. This type of measure was investigated but lacked wider support and would inconvenience many essential service providers. Secondly, the motorists who object to the presence of the cycle lane markings on the carriageway, which they feel are unsafe. It may be that the real problem here is that these individuals are accustomed to driving at higher speed, based on the assumption that there is always space to pass oncoming vehicles at any point, with little awareness of the possible presence or safety of cyclists. These complainants are therefore (unwittingly) acknowledging the effectiveness of the scheme in encouraging them to slow down and anticipate the presence of cyclists on the road ahead. Another common objection by motorists was the perceived unaware of the external

sources of the majority of funding.

One anomaly is that even opponents of the scheme have welcomed the provision of the new footway as a 'good thing', even though pedestrian use is currently still very low and the footway consumed the vast majority of the funds. The marking of the cycle lanes is really the only contentious aspect of the scheme, although this appears to have had the maximum benefit to users for the minimum cost of two white lines.

Objectives of the scheme and results to date:

1) Encourage more cycling and walking on this route by improving the facilities for those modes.

Result: The 12-hour count in October '05 recorded 183 cyclists using the road. This represents a 22% increase, compared to the count from July 2003. This is a very good result, given that countywide cycling growth is static. The growth of cycling makes a significant contribution to reduction of CO2 emissions and congestion.

2) Increase driver awareness that this is a primary cycle route (part of National Cycle Route 1) and encourage drivers to behave more carefully when overtaking cyclists, (compared to the previous situation - which was frequently intimidating for cyclists).

Result: A higher percentage of drivers are waiting behind cyclists when oncoming traffic is present, before overtaking. The majority of cyclists that have commented on the new layout are pleased and feel it has made a significant improvement. (Although it is acknowledged that no road layout can stop the small minority of speeding or aggressive drivers).

3) Encourage more through traffic to use the A12 bypass. (To reduce the large increase in traffic on Felixstowe Road over the last 5 years).

Result: Vehicle numbers on this road increased steadily for several years but after the scheme was installed they fell by approx. 1100 vehicles per day. Total vehicle flows on the road (at approx. 4,500 vpd) are now at the lowest recorded level since before the year 2000. However, it is accepted that the road can still be busy, especially at peak times when there are queues to join the A12. Ultimately the solution to this problem will come if more people choose to travel sustainably. The encouragement of walking and cycling on Felixstowe Road is a step in the right direction.

4) Reduce average traffic speeds (at least to gain compliance with the speed limit).

Result: The monitoring data is not showing any significant change in average speed levels, which are currently at 32.5 mph (average mean combined flows). However, when traffic levels reduce, average speed often increases, so maintaining the same average may in fact signify a modest improvement. Various visual speed reduction measures have been employed, such as gateway structures, patches of buff surfacing combined with 30 mph roundels and 'SLOW' markings. This reinforces the message to drivers to comply with the speed limit and proceed with care on the road. It has not been possible to use vertical speed reduction measures such as speed humps or cushions because street lighting levels are currently insufficient and because the road is a bus route.

Enforcement
The local Police beat officer has agreed to visit the road regularly to check on driver behaviour and use a mobile speed gun if necessary