



Yeargate Limited

LAND NORTH OF BIRCH BUSINESS PARK

Environmental Statement Volume I Chapter 6 –
Highways, Traffic and Transport

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ABBREVIATIONS AND GLOSSARY

ABBREVIATIONS

TA	Transport Assessment
RMBC	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LHA	Local Highway Authority
ES	Environmental Statement
NG	Northern Gateway
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
HTN	Highways Technical Note
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PfE	Places for Everyone
PRoW	Public Right of Way
PIA	Personal Injury Accident Data
DfT	Department for Transport
CIHT	Chartered Institute of Highways and Transportation
LTN	Local Transport Note
EVC	Electric Vehicle Charging
TfGM	Transport for Greater Manchester
TRICS	Trip Rate Information Computer System
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
OGV	Ordinary Goods Vehicle
LGV	Light Goods Vehicle
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
AAWT	Annual Average Weekday Traffic
TEMPro	Trip End Model Presentation Program
MSOA	Middle Layer Super Output Area

NTEM	National Trip End Model
RFC	Ratio of Flow to Capacity
PCU	Passenger Car Units
IEMA	Environmental Management and Assessment

GLOSSARY

Environmental Statement (ES)	A document submitted with certain planning applications that reports the likely significant environmental effects of a proposed development and the measures to mitigate them.
Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)	The formal process used to identify, assess and evaluate the likely environmental effects of a proposed development before planning decisions are made.
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The UK Government's national planning policy document for England, setting out policies and guidance for sustainable development and planning decisions.
Places for Everyone (Pfe)	The joint development plan for Greater Manchester, setting out strategic policies for housing, employment, infrastructure and sustainable growth across the city region.
Local Transport Note (LTN)	Guidance published by the UK government providing advice and best practice on local transport planning, design and implementation.
Trip Rate Information Computer System (TRICS)	Transport planning database system used to estimate the number of trips generated by different land uses based on surveyed sites.
Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV)	A large commercial vehicle used for transporting goods, typically with a gross vehicle weight exceeding 3.5 tonnes.
Ordinary Goods Vehicle (OGV)	A traffic classification used in transport modelling and traffic counts to describe goods vehicles, commonly divided into OGV1 and OGV2 categories. OGV1 typically includes light rigid goods vehicles, two-axle trucks and smaller lorries. OGV2 typically includes heavier rigid goods vehicles, articulated lorries, multi-axle trucks and larger HGVs.
Light Goods Vehicle (LGV)	A small commercial vehicle, such as a van, typically with a gross vehicle weight of up to 3.5 tonnes.
Geographical Information Systems (GIS)	Computer-based systems used to capture, store, analyse and display geographically referenced data.

Annual Average Weekday Traffic (AAWT)	The average volume of traffic recorded on a weekday over the course of a year.
Trip End Model Presentation Programme (TEMPPro)	UK Department for Transport software used to analyse and present travel demand forecasts from the National Trip End Model.
Middle Layer Super Output Area (MSOA)	A statistical geographic area defined by the Office for National Statistics for reporting demographic and socioeconomic data.
National Trip End Model (NTEM)	The Department for Transport's national forecasting model used to estimate future travel demand and trip growth across the UK.
Ratio of Flow to Capacity (RFC)	A highway modelling measure comparing the volume of traffic flow at a junction or road link against its theoretical maximum capacity.
Passenger Car Units (PCU)	A standard traffic engineering measure used to convert different vehicle types into equivalent passenger car values for traffic analysis.
Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA)	A professional body supporting best practice in environmental management, sustainability and impact assessment.

6 HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1. This chapter reports the outcome of the assessment of likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Development upon Highways, Traffic and Transport. This chapter has been produced by AXIS P.E.D Ltd.
- 6.1.2. The assessment of Highways, Traffic and Transport has established that the following additional mitigation measures are required:
- The assessment of Highways, Traffic and Transport has established that no secondary or tertiary mitigation measures are required. Potential highway and non-motorised user infrastructure improvements associated with the wider Northern Gateway allocation have been considered as part of the wider strategic context; however, the assessment's conclusions do not depend on the delivery of those improvements.
- 6.1.3. The following residual effects have been identified:
- There is likely to be a direct, temporary, short-term minor adverse residual effect on the local highway network during the construction phase (not significant).
 - There is likely to be a direct, long-term negligible adverse residual effect on operational highway capacity at surrounding junctions (not significant).
 - There is likely to be a direct, long-term minor beneficial residual effect associated with improved accessibility by sustainable transport modes (not significant).
- 6.1.4. The following monitoring requirements have been identified:
- Monitoring of Travel Plan targets and modal shift objectives (see Framework Travel Plan accompanying the planning application);
- 6.1.5. The following environmental enhancement opportunities have been identified:
- Provision of enhanced pedestrian and cycle infrastructure;
 - Installation of electric vehicle charging facilities;
 - Improvements to public transport accessibility (under the sensitivity (bus gate) scenario);
 - Measures to encourage sustainable travel behaviour;
 - Improved connectivity to local walking and cycling networks.
- 6.1.6. The remainder of this chapter describes the assessment methodology and the baseline conditions relevant to the assessment, which have been used to reach these conclusions, as well as a summary of the likely significant effects leading to the additional mitigation measures required to avoid, prevent, reduce or, if possible, offset any likely significant adverse effects, and the likely residual effects and any required monitoring after these measures have been employed. Opportunities for environmental enhancement, where such opportunities exist, are also discussed.
- 6.1.7. This chapter (and its associated figures and appendices) is intended to be read as part of the wider ES.

6.2 CONSULTATION, SCOPE, METHODOLOGY AND SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

- 6.2.1. Table 6-1 provides a summary of the consultation activities undertaken in support of the preparation of this assessment.

Table 6-1 - Summary of consultation undertaken

Body / organisation	Individual / stat body / organisation	Meeting dates and other forms of consultation	Summary of outcome of discussions
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC).	Planning Team	7 th January 2026	Agreed that an ES should be prepared to align with the wider NG application.
Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC).	Highways Team	July and December 2025	Officers' recommendation cited no objection in principle but that a comprehensive TA should be undertaken in support of the application.

SCOPE OF THE ASSESSMENT

- 6.2.2. The scope of the Transport Assessment has been developed through an iterative assessment process, taking account of the scale and nature of the Proposed Development, the characteristics of the surrounding highway network, relevant planning and transport policy, and discussions with the relevant stakeholders where appropriate. Further details regarding the assessment methodology are provided within Chapter 5: Approach to EIA.
- 6.2.3. This section summarises the scope of the transport assessment and confirms the basis upon which the assessment elements and study parameters have been established following ongoing review of baseline conditions, traffic data and technical assessment outputs.
- 6.2.4. The assessment methodology and study scope have evolved alongside the design development of the Proposed Development and the findings of the transport modelling and technical analysis. Where appropriate, the reasons for any refinements to the assessment approach are explained within this chapter.
- 6.2.5. As the assessment has progressed, additional transport information and modelling outputs have informed the refinement of the assessment scope and level of detail where necessary.

ELEMENTS SCOPED OUT OF THE ASSESSMENT

- 6.2.6. The elements shown in Table 6-2 are not considered to give rise to likely significant effects as a result of the Proposed Development and have therefore not been considered within this assessment:

Table 6-2 - Elements scoped out of the assessment

Element scoped out	Justification
Pedestrian impacts on the wider highway network	The Proposed Development is an employment-led use generating predominantly vehicle-based trips, with pedestrian activity largely limited to internal site movements between parking areas and building entrances. No material increase in pedestrian flows is anticipated on the surrounding highway network.
Cycling impacts on the strategic or local highway network	Cycle trip generation is expected to be low given the nature of the Proposed Development (industrial/logistics use). Any cycling activity will be limited to staff travel and will be accommodated within existing and proposed site infrastructure, with no significant effects anticipated on the wider network.
Public transport network capacity impacts	The development is anticipated to generate a relatively low proportion of trips by public transport, consistent with comparable employment uses. Given the scale and distribution of forecast trips, no material impact on local bus or rail network capacity is anticipated.
Rail network or rail freight impacts	The Proposed Development does not involve any direct rail freight facilities or interface with the operational rail network. Accordingly, no rail-related transport effects arise.
Parking overspill onto the surrounding highway network	Car parking provision is to be provided fully on-site in accordance with relevant standards. As such, no overspill parking onto surrounding streets is anticipated.
Detailed junction micro-simulation beyond agreed assessment scope	Junction capacity has been assessed using agreed modelling parameters and industry-standard methodologies appropriate to the scale of development. Further micro-simulation modelling is not considered necessary to determine likely significant effects.

ELEMENTS SCOPED INTO THE ASSESSMENT

Construction Phase

- 6.2.7. The following elements is considered to have the potential to give rise to likely significant effects during the construction of the Proposed Development and has therefore been considered on a proportionate basis within this assessment:

- Construction traffic generation and associated highway impacts

6.2.8. For the purposes of a robust worst-case assessment, construction vehicle movements are assumed not to exceed those associated with the operational phase of the Proposed Development, and therefore no greater effects than those identified for the operational stage are anticipated.

Total vehicle movements at the operational phase are summarised within Table 6-3 below.

Table 6-3 - Total Operational Phase Traffic Flows

Time Period	Total Vehicle Traffic Generation			HGV Traffic Generation		
	Arrive	Depart	Total	Arrive	Depart	Total
08:00-09:00	92	64	156	6	4	10
17:00-18:00	42	79	121	2	1	3
Daily (24hr)	1056	1059	2115	52	43	95

Operational Phase

6.2.9. The following elements are considered to have the potential to give rise to likely significant effects during operation of the Proposed Development and have therefore been considered within this Transport Chapter:

- Operational trip generation associated with the Proposed Development (including HGV and staff movements);
- Trip distribution across the highway network under the 'Core' and 'Bus Gate' scenarios;
- Highway network impact assessment for the 2027 and 2032 assessment years;
- Junction capacity assessments within the TA Study Area;
- Assessment of 'Do Nothing' and 'Do Something' scenarios;
- Effects of committed development traffic in combination with the Proposed Development; and
- Impacts of background traffic growth (TEMPro) on the local and strategic highway network.

EXTENT OF THE STUDY AREA

- 6.2.10. The extent of the study area has been defined through the application of a GIS-based gravity model informed by a 45-minute drive-time catchment from the Site, population data, and Travel to Work patterns. The model has been used to establish the likely distribution of development-generated trips across the highway network based on journey time, accessibility, and established travel patterns. Two distribution scenarios have been assessed to reflect differing routing arrangements associated with Whittle Lane and the proposed bus gate across the M62 motorway.
- 6.2.11. Following assignment of the development traffic flows across the highway network, a percentage impact assessment was undertaken which identified that the extent of the study area, which identified that the effects are principally limited to the Birch Business Park access / Moss Hall Road junction.

METHOD OF BASELINE DATA COLLATION

DESK STUDY

- 6.2.12. A desk-based review of existing transport and traffic conditions within the study area has been undertaken to inform the baseline assessment and traffic modelling exercises.

Traffic Data

- 6.2.13. The baseline assessment has been informed through a combination of existing traffic data sources and newly commissioned traffic surveys. The principal sources of baseline information include:

- Department for Transport (DfT) traffic count data;
- Existing traffic and highway information available from previous assessments within the area;
- Ordnance Survey and aerial mapping data;
- National and local planning and transport policy documents;
- TEMPro traffic growth data; and
- Automatic traffic and manual classified turning count surveys undertaken at key junctions within the study area, as identified within Table 6-4 following:

Table 6-4 - Automatic and Manual Classified Turning Counts

Location	Date / Time	Count Type
2025 Data		
Moss Hall Road / Birch Business Park	01/07/2025 (07:00 to 19:00)	Manual Classified Turning Count
Moss Hall Road South of Pilsworth Road	01/07/2025 to 07/07/2025	Automatic Traffic Count
2026 Data		
Moss Hall Road (West) / Moss Hall Road (South) / Pilsworth Road	21/04/2026	Manual Classified Turning Count
Moss Hall Road (North) / Pilsworth Road / Moss Hall Road (South)	21/04/2026	Manual Classified Turning Count
Pilsworth Road (North) / Pilsworth Road (West) / Hareshill Road	21/04/2026	Manual Classified Turning Count
Queen Elizabeth II Way (East) / A6045 Manchester Road (South) / Queen Elizabeth II Way (West) / A6045 Manchester Road (North)	21/04/2026	Manual Classified Turning Count
A6045 Heywood Old Road (North) / A6045 Heywood Old Road (South) / Whittle Lane	21/04/2026	Manual Classified Turning Count

PRoW Analysis

- 6.2.14. Various Public Rights of Way (PRoW) exist within the vicinity of the site. Specifically PRoW (footpath 74) runs along the north-western boundary of the site, forming a linear corridor between Moss Hall Road and the junction of Pilsworth Road and Newhouse Road. This is a well-defined footpath providing a key pedestrian link within the local rights of way network, offering both functional connectivity and recreational value to staff and visitors. Footpath 74 connects seamlessly with the surrounding footpath network, facilitating access to nearby residential areas, green spaces, and key local destinations. Its alignment enhances permeability through the wider landscape and contributes to the area's sustainable transport infrastructure by encouraging walking and reducing reliance on motor vehicles.

SITE VISIT AND SURVEYS

- 6.2.15. For the purposes of this assessment, no site visits were undertaken. Given the high-level and strategic nature of this assessment, it is considered that a review of available desk-based information, including mapping, aerial imagery, published highway and transport data, and relevant planning and technical documentation, provides an adequate evidence base for the purposes of the assessment. Accordingly, a site visit was not considered necessary to inform the conclusions presented herein.
- 6.2.16. Traffic survey data obtained for the assessment was considered sufficient to establish robust baseline highway and traffic conditions within the study area.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

- 6.2.17. The assessment has been undertaken using a combination of quantitative traffic analysis and professional engineering judgement to identify the likely transport effects associated with the Proposed Development during both the construction and operational phases. The methodology has been informed by relevant national guidance, including the Department for Transport's (DfT) Guidance on Transport Assessment and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic. The assessment considers forecast changes in traffic flows, HGV movements, and junction operation within the identified study area.
- 6.2.18. Forecast traffic flows were assessed for the 2027 opening year and 2032 future assessment year for both the 'Core' and 'Bus Gate' scenarios. A percentage impact analysis and a junction capacity assessment was undertaken using industry-standard junction modelling software for the AM and PM peak hours under both 'Do Nothing' and 'Do Something' scenarios.
- 6.2.19. The assessment findings are presented through a combination of traffic flow diagrams, junction modelling outputs, and summary tables to provide a clear and proportionate explanation of the likely transport effects associated with the Proposed Development.

SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

- 6.2.20. The significance level attributed to each effect has been assessed based on the sensitivity/value of the affected receptor(s) and the magnitude of change arising from the Proposed Development, as well as a number of other factors that are outlined in more detail in **Chapter 5: Approach to EIA**. The sensitivity of the affected receptor is assessed on a scale of high, medium, low and

negligible, and the magnitude of change is assessed on a scale of large, medium, small, negligible and no change, as set out in **Chapter 5: Approach to EIA**.

- 6.2.21. In addition to the general EIA methodology set out in **Chapter 5: Approach to EIA**, the assessment of transport effects has also been informed by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic. In particular, consideration has been given to the percentage change in total traffic flows and HGV movements on affected highway links in order to identify locations where significant environmental effects may potentially arise. Professional engineering judgement has also been applied in considering the sensitivity of individual highway links and receptors within the study area.

EFFECT OF SIGNIFICANCE

- 6.2.22. The following terms have been used to define the significance of the effects identified and apply to both beneficial and adverse effects:

- **Major effect:** where the Proposed Development could be expected to have a substantial improvement or deterioration on receptors Users of the local highway network within the study area;
- Existing businesses located within Birch Business Park; and
- Residential and agricultural receptors in the vicinity of the affected highway links, including Broom Hill Farm (off Whittle Lane) and Higher Barn Farm (off Moss Hall Road (north)).
- **Moderate effect:** where the Proposed Development could be expected to have a noticeable improvement or deterioration on receptors;
- **Minor effect:** where the Proposed Development could be expected to result in a perceptible improvement or deterioration on receptors; and
- **Negligible:** where no discernible improvement or deterioration is expected as a result of the Proposed Development on receptors, including instances where no change is confirmed.

- 6.2.23. As set out in **Chapter 5: Approach to EIA**, effects that are classified as **moderate or above** are considered to be **significant**. Effects classified as below **moderate** are considered to be **not significant**. The assessment has been undertaken with reference to the sensitivity of receptors, the magnitude of change and relevant guidance, including the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidelines for Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic.

6.3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK, POLICY AND GUIDANCE

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

- 6.3.1. No relevant legislative documents have been directly referred to in the preparation of this chapter.

POLICY

- 6.3.2. The following planning and transport planning policy documents are relevant to this assessment:

Legislation

- The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- The Highways Act 1980.

National Policy and Guidance

- National Planning Policy Framework (2024), including paragraphs 109–112 relating to sustainable transport and paragraph 116.
- Planning Practice Guidance relating to Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements.
- Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic, which have informed the approach to the assessment methodology and significance criteria.

Regional and Local Policy

- Greater Manchester Transport Strategy (2040);
- Greater Manchester Local Transport Plan 2040 (LTP4);
- Places for Everyone (2024);
- Greater Manchester Bee Network Strategy;
- Rochdale Core Strategy (2016); and
- The Rochdale Borough Transport Strategy (2014).

6.3.3. In addition, this chapter has been prepared in accordance with the Government's National Planning Practice Guidance (**Ref. NPPG Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements section and Trip Generation proportionality guidance**).

GUIDANCE

6.3.4. The following guidance documents have been used during the preparation of this chapter:

- Institute of Environmental Assessment (now Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA's)) 'Guidelines for the Environmental Assessment of Road Traffic' (**Ref. Paragraph 2.18 and 2.19**);
- TRICS Guidance on the Application of Trip Rates;
- Relevant Local Transport Notes (LTNs) published by the Department for Transport (**Ref. LTN 1/20**); and
- Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG), Unit M1.2.

6.3.5. The assessment has also been informed by professional experience and judgement where specific guidance was not available for particular elements of the assessment.

6.4 BASELINE CONDITIONS

6.4.1. The baseline conditions relevant to the Highways, Traffic and Transport assessment comprise the existing highway network, traffic conditions, sustainable transport accessibility and road safety conditions within the study area surrounding the Proposed Development.

EXISTING HIGHWAY NETWORK AND BASELINE TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

6.4.2. The site is accessed via Moss Hall Lane and is connected to the wider local and strategic highway network. Existing traffic conditions have been informed by traffic survey data collected in July 2025 and April 2026 (see Table 6-3 earlier within this chapter), including weekday AM and PM peak hour periods. The assessment has considered existing junction operation, traffic flows and the composition of vehicles within the local highway network.

ACCESSIBILITY BY SUSTAINABLE MODES OF TRAVEL

- 6.4.3. Existing pedestrian, cycle and public transport infrastructure within the vicinity of the site has been reviewed.

Accessibility on Foot

- 6.4.4. The Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation (CIHT), formerly known as the Institution of Highways and Transportation (IHT), states in its guidance document Providing for Journeys on Foot that acceptable walking distances can vary depending on individual circumstances. However, for purposes such as commuting, travel to school, and leisure or sightseeing trips, a walking distance of up to 2 kilometres is generally regarded as a 'preferred maximum'.
- 6.4.5. In line with this guidance, an indicative 2-kilometre walking catchment centred around the Site has been reviewed. The catchment represents the approximate area that can be reached within a 24-minute walk, based on an average walking speed of 1.4 metres per second.
- 6.4.6. The areas identified include Pilsworth Road and initial sections of Queen Elizabeth Way and Moss Hall Road.

Accessibility by Cycle

- 6.4.7. Cycling is widely recognised as a practical, healthy, and sustainable alternative to car travel for journeys of up to 5 kilometres, either as a standalone mode or in combination with public transport. According to Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20, "two out of every three personal trips are less than five miles in length", a distance that is considered achievable for the majority of people by bicycle.
- 6.4.8. To assess the site's accessibility by bicycle, indicative 5-kilometre and 8-kilometre (approximately 5-mile) cycling catchments, measured from the centre of the site, were prepared using GIS software.
- 6.4.9. The identified cycling catchments encompass a number of surrounding residential areas, including Heywood, Bury, Heap Bridge, Langley, Woodside, Middleton, Siddal Moor, Broadfield and Hooley Brow among others.
- 6.4.10. Mills Hill rail station is located within an 8-kilometre radius of the site. This offers staff and visitors the opportunity to undertake multi-modal journeys, combining rail travel with cycling. Further details on rail accessibility are provided in the following section.
- 6.4.11. It is also worth noting that the topography of the local highway network around the site is predominantly flat, creating favourable conditions for cycling and enhancing the practicality of this mode of travel.
- 6.4.12. Based on the above considerations, the site is deemed to be accessible by bicycle.

Accessibility by Bus

- 6.4.13. The nearest bus stops to the site are situated more than 2km from the centre of the Site. This equates to an estimated walking time of around 25 minutes, based on an average walking speed of 1.4 metres per second. These stops provide access to local bus services, offering a realistic and convenient option for staff and visitors to travel to and from the Site via public transport.
- 6.4.14. Bus route 125 operates from the Gardeners Arms bus stops, providing regular services in both directions between Heywood and Middleton. On weekdays, services run up to once per hour, with

a similar frequency maintained on Saturdays. However, no service is currently available on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

- 6.4.15. These services offer direct public transport connections to key local destinations, including the town centres of Middleton and Heywood, enhancing the Site's integration with the wider area.
- 6.4.16. The distance of the nearest bus stops exceeds the typical acceptable walking distance to bus services identified within UK transport planning guidance and therefore cannot reasonably be considered to benefit from convenient pedestrian access to public transport.

Accessibility by Rail

- 6.4.17. The nearest railway station to the Site is Mills Hill, located approximately 6.6 kilometres to the south-east. Given the distance from the Site, walking to the station is unlikely to represent an attractive option for most users. However, the station is within a reasonable cycling distance and may provide an opportunity for some staff and visitors to undertake multi-modal journeys, combining rail travel with cycling or onward travel by other modes.
- 6.4.18. Mills Hill station provides rail connections towards Manchester and Rochdale, supporting access to the wider public transport network. However, given the distance between the station and the Site, rail is likely to form a secondary travel option rather than a primary mode of access for most users.
- 6.4.19. On this basis, the Site has potential access to rail services as part of a multi-modal journey, although the attractiveness of rail travel is likely to be influenced by the availability of onward connections, cycle parking, shift patterns, and individual journey origins.

NORTHERN GATEWAY ALLOCATION IMPROVEMENTS

- 6.4.20. The assessment also considers committed development and associated infrastructure improvements within the wider Northern Gateway allocation, including proposed highway enhancements and improvements for non-motorised users along Moss Hall Lane. These measures are included to reflect the wider planning context and potential cumulative changes to the local transport network; however, the assessment conclusions do not rely upon their delivery, given that they are not yet implemented or fully secured.
- 6.4.21. The approved highway works on Moss Hall Lane, in the vicinity of the Birch Business Park access, include carriageway widening together with the provision of improved footway and shared cycle/pedestrian facilities, alongside associated verge and landscaping enhancements.

PERSONAL INJURY ACCIDENT DATA

- 6.4.22. Personal Injury Collision (PIC) data within the study area has been reviewed to identify any existing highway safety issues relevant to the assessment. The accident analysis identified that a total of 6 incidents occurred within the general vicinity of the site between 2020 and 2024 inclusive. In summary, the accident record did not indicate any concentration of accidents or unusual patterns when compared to the wider highway network. It was considered that road safety did not cause a material concern in the context of the Proposed Development.

FUTURE BASELINE

- 6.4.23. Baseline assessments have been undertaken for future years of both 2027 (opening year) and 2032 (future year).

- 6.4.24. The opening and future year traffic flows have been estimated by applying growth factors to the 2025 and 2026 observed flows. The growth factors have been calculated from TEMPro (version 8.1) and are based on the NTEM 2022 Core Scenario for all road types in the region. Specifically, the growth factors have been calculated for TEMPro zone 'Rochdale 020' MSOA; the area in which the Site is located.
- 6.4.25. The resultant locally adjusted local growth figures used to estimate the future year traffic flows are set out in Table 6-5 following:

Table 6-5 - TEMPro Growth Factors

Year	Area – Rochdale 020		
	AM Period	PM Period	AAWT
2025 – 2026	1.0107	1.0107	1.0110
2026 – 2027	1.0124	1.0126	1.0127
2026 – 2032	1.0704	1.0711	1.0718

- 6.4.26. In addition to the above, the following committed developments located within the vicinity of the site, are anticipated to generate additional traffic within the TA study area for the 2032 assessment year.
- 6.4.27. The committed developments included within the assessment, together with the methodology adopted to derive the associated traffic flows, are set out below.
- 6.4.28. Traffic generation and distribution data for the committed developments have been obtained from the available TA and planning application information. In instances where the extent of available data did not cover the full TA study area, professional engineering judgement has been applied to distribute the residual traffic across the wider highway network in a proportionate robust manner.

Plot H4, Heywood Distribution Park (25/00566/REM)

- 6.4.29. This application relates to a proposed employment development comprising up to 52,000 sq. m. of floorspace within Use Classes E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 at Plot H4, Heywood Distribution Park.

Unit B, Birch Business Park (22/01148/FUL)

- 6.4.30. The proposals comprise the redevelopment and consolidation of existing Units B and G to form a single larger B2/B8 warehouse unit, providing a total Gross Internal Area (GIA) of 8,153.3 sq. m.

Plot 3, Heywood Distribution Park (25/00045/REM)

- 6.4.31. This application relates to an outline proposal for a 40,000 sq. m. employment warehouse development (Use Class B8) at Plot 3, Heywood Distribution Park.
- 6.4.32. Notwithstanding the above, it should be noted that the potential impact of wider background development growth within the area has also been accounted for through the application of TEMPro growth factors to observed baseline traffic flows. The principal purpose of applying TEMPro growth is to capture the cumulative effect of general traffic growth and unidentified developments across the network. Accordingly, the explicit inclusion of traffic associated with the committed developments identified above, in addition to the application of TEMPro growth factors, is considered to represent a robust and therefore appropriately conservative assessment approach.

6.4.33. The combined traffic flows associated with the committed developments identified above have been assigned across the highway network. Assessments have been undertaken for AM peak, PM peak and AAWT periods and both the ‘Core’ and ‘Bus Gate’ scenarios.

6.5 SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

6.5.1. The following sensitive receptors have been considered within the transport assessment:

- Users of the local highway network within the study area;
- Existing businesses located within Birch Business Park; and
- Residential and agricultural receptors in the vicinity of the affected highway links, including Broom Hill Farm (off Whittle Lane) and Higher Barn Farm (off Moss Hall Road (north)).

6.6 ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS, MITIGATION AND RESIDUAL EFFECTS

CONSTRUCTION PHASE

- 6.6.1. Construction phase transport effects have been considered on a proportionate basis. For the purposes of a robust worst-case assessment, construction traffic generation is assumed not to exceed that associated with the operational phase of the Proposed Development.
- 6.6.2. On this basis, construction-related traffic is not anticipated to result in effects greater than those identified for the operational assessment. Any construction vehicle movements would be temporary in nature and limited to the duration of the construction programme.
- 6.6.3. Given the comparative scale of construction and operational traffic, no likely significant construction phase transport effects are anticipated.

Table 6-6 - Summary of Construction Phase Effects

Sensitive receptor	Potential effects	Mitigation	Residual effects
Users of the local highway network (including Birch Business Park access and Moss Hall Road)	Temporary construction traffic movements. Construction traffic is not expected to exceed operational traffic levels and is therefore considered limited in scale and duration.	Embedded mitigation would be secured through a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), including measures such as construction traffic routing, delivery management, and phasing of construction activities to minimise impacts on the local highway network.	No likely significant residual effects.

OPERATIONAL PHASE

- 6.6.4. Operational phase transport effects have been considered with regard to the potential effects of development-generated traffic on the surrounding highway network. The assessment considers forecast traffic flows in the 2027 and 2032 assessment years and compares these against baseline conditions to establish the proportional change in traffic levels across the Study Area.
- 6.6.5. Forecast traffic associated with the Proposed Development has been distributed across the local highway network in accordance with existing observed traffic patterns. This approach assumes that future development-related movements will follow the same route choice distribution as existing traffic using the Study Area. The resulting assessment indicates that overall increases in total weekday traffic flows are anticipated to remain below 30% of existing baseline flows across all links within the Study Area when assessed on a 24-hour basis.

Table 6-7 - Percentage Impact Assessment – Moss Hall Road (north of Birch Business Park access)

Vehicle Type	2027 Core		2032 Core		2032 Bus	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
HGVs	24%	8%	22%	7%	22%	7%
Lights	17%	11%	16%	10%	59%	41%

- 6.6.6. Notwithstanding this general trend, the most notable proportional change in traffic flow is forecast to occur on Moss Hall Road North under the ‘bus gate’ scenario. In this location, light vehicle flows are predicted to increase by up to 59% relative to baseline conditions. This reflects the redistribution of traffic arising from network restrictions rather than a material increase in overall traffic generation across the wider network.
- 6.6.7. Despite this localised proportional increase, the overall magnitude of development traffic remains modest in the context of existing traffic flows, and no significant adverse effects on the operational capacity of the surrounding highway network are anticipated. The assessment therefore concludes that the Proposed Development would result in a generally negligible impact on the operation of the local highway network during the operational phase.

Table 6-8 - Assessment of potential effects, additional mitigation, residual effects and monitoring during operation

Sensitive receptor	Users of the local highway network within the Study Area
Potential effects	The potential effects relate to changes in traffic flows on the local highway network arising from the operation of the Proposed Development. Forecast traffic flows indicate that increases in total weekday traffic are anticipated to remain below 30% of existing baseline flows across all links within the Study Area when assessed over a 24-hour period. A higher proportional increase of up to 59% is identified on Moss Hall Road North under the ‘bus gate’ scenario; however, this reflects traffic redistribution rather than a material net increase in overall network demand. In the absence of additional mitigation, the sensitivity of this receptor is considered high, and the magnitude of change is considered low to medium. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, long-term minor adverse effect on users of the local highway network (not significant)

Additional mitigation	No additional mitigation measures are required beyond those embedded within the scheme design, including proposed highway improvements and the assumed traffic distribution strategy within the Study Area. The distribution of traffic reflects existing network conditions and operational constraints, including the bus gate arrangement
Residual effects and monitoring	The sensitivity of the receptor is high, and the magnitude of change, following embedded mitigation, is low. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, long-term negligible to minor adverse residual effect on users of the local highway network (not significant). No specific monitoring is proposed, although traffic conditions may be reviewed through any post-occupation Travel Plan monitoring framework secured by planning condition or obligation

Table 6-9 - Assessment of potential effects, additional mitigation, residual effects and monitoring during operation

Sensitive receptor	Existing businesses located within Birch Business Park
Potential effects	The potential effects relate to changes in traffic flows on access routes serving Birch Business Park arising from the operation of the Proposed Development. Forecast traffic assessments indicate that overall increases in weekday traffic remain below 30% across the Study Area, with localised variations depending on route choice and network restrictions. Given the industrial and commercial nature of Birch Business Park, the receptor is considered to have a moderate tolerance to changes in traffic conditions. The sensitivity of this receptor is considered medium, and the magnitude of change is considered low. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, long-term negligible to minor adverse effect on business users within Birch Business Park (not significant)
Additional mitigation	No additional mitigation is required beyond embedded scheme measures, including improvements to the surrounding highway network and the assumed traffic distribution strategy. The Proposed Development is not anticipated to result in material changes to access arrangements or operational capacity at Birch Business Park
Residual effects and monitoring	The sensitivity of the receptor is medium, and the magnitude of change, following embedded mitigation, is low. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, long-term negligible residual effect on existing businesses within Birch Business Park (not significant). No monitoring is proposed beyond standard development-led Travel Plan monitoring where applicable

Table 6-10 - Assessment of potential effects, additional mitigation, residual effects and monitoring during operation

Sensitive receptor	Residential and agricultural receptors in the vicinity of affected highway links, including Broom Hill Farm (off Whittle Lane) and Higher Barn Farm (off Moss Hall Road North)
Potential effects	The potential effects relate to changes in traffic flows on rural and semi-rural highway links serving residential and agricultural properties. Forecast traffic impacts indicate that increases in total weekday traffic remain below 30% across all Study Area links, with a localised increase of up to 59% on Moss Hall Road North under the 'bus gate' scenario. This scenario reflects a sensitivity test associated with the potential future implementation of the Northern Gateway highway strategy, including bus gate arrangement, and therefore represents a rerouting scenario rather than a core assessment case. The increase in flows is associated with redistribution of traffic onto Moss Hall Road North as a result of network restrictions, rather than a material increase in overall traffic generation. Given the low baseline traffic conditions and rural context, the sensitivity of these receptors is considered high, and the magnitude of change is considered low to medium. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, long-term minor adverse effect on residential and agricultural receptors (not significant)
Additional mitigation	No additional mitigation measures are required beyond embedded design measures and the assumed traffic management strategy within the Study Area. These include the bus gate arrangement and associated routeing effects, together with wider committed highway infrastructure improvements
Residual effects and monitoring	The sensitivity of the receptor is high, and the magnitude of change, following embedded mitigation, is low. Therefore, there is likely to be a direct, long-term negligible to minor adverse residual effect on residential and agricultural receptors (not significant). No specific monitoring is proposed, although general traffic conditions may be reviewed through any wider Travel Plan or post-occupation monitoring strategy secured by planning condition

ASSESSMENT AGAINST FUTURE BASELINE

- 6.6.8. The operational assessment has been undertaken against the 2027 and 2032 future baseline scenarios, which include background traffic growth, '[[p development traffic and associated infrastructure improvements. The resulting effects are reported in Table 6-6 to Table 6-8 and summarised in Table 6-9. No additional significant effects have been identified when the Proposed Development is assessed against the future baseline.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

- 6.6.9. The cumulative assessment has taken account of committed developments within the Study Area, as agreed with the Local Highway Authority. These developments have been included within the future baseline traffic forecasts, alongside TEMPro background growth. As such, the operational assessment reported above inherently considers cumulative traffic effects associated with committed development.

6.6.10. The resulting traffic flows have also been used, where appropriate, as an input to the Air Quality, Noise, and Climate Change assessments to ensure potential inter-related effects arising from traffic generation are appropriately considered within those technical disciplines. No additional significant cumulative effects are therefore identified within the Transport and Access assessment.

6.7 OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL ENHANCEMENT

- 6.7.1. The operational phase of the Proposed Development provides opportunities for environmental enhancement through the promotion of sustainable travel choices and reductions in private car dependency. These measures may include enhancements to pedestrian and cycle connectivity, improvements to public transport accessibility, and the implementation of a Travel Plan to encourage modal shift away from single occupancy vehicle trips.
- 6.7.2. In addition, the Proposed Development may contribute to wider network efficiency through the provision of improved highway infrastructure and the management of traffic distribution within the Study Area. Such measures can help to support safer and more sustainable movement patterns for all users of the local transport network.

6.8 DIFFICULTIES AND UNCERTAINTIES

- The assessment has been undertaken using standard industry guidance and established traffic modelling and trip generation methodologies, including TRICS-based trip rates and observed traffic data where available.
- No significant technical difficulties were encountered in the preparation of the assessment. However, as with all traffic forecasting exercises, there is an inherent level of uncertainty associated with future traffic growth projections, distribution assumptions, and the application of national trip rate databases to local conditions.
- These uncertainties have been mitigated through the use of conservative assumptions within the assessment methodology, including the consideration of future year traffic growth scenarios and sensitivity to network constraints such as the bus gate arrangement. The conclusions of the assessment are therefore considered robust and appropriate for the purposes of Environmental Impact Assessment.

6.9 SUMMARY

- 6.9.1. Table 6-11 provides a summary of the findings of the assessment.

Table 6-11 - Summary of Construction and Operational Phase effects

Receptor	Potential Effects	Significance of Effects Prior to Mitigation/Enhancement	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Monitoring
Construction Phase					
Users of the local highway network (including Birch	Temporary increases in construction traffic movements associated with	Minor Adverse (not significant) T / D / ST	Construction good practice measures	Minor Adverse (not significant)	Monitoring of construction traffic management measures

Receptor	Potential Effects	Significance of Effects Prior to Mitigation/Enhancement	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Monitoring
Business Park access and Moss Hall Road)	site preparation and construction activities. Effects are limited in scale and duration and confined to the construction period.			) T / D / ST	by the appointed contractor.
Operational Phase					
Users of the local highway network within the Study Area	Increased traffic flows associated with operational staff and HGV movements. Increases remain below 30% across the Study Area, with localised redistribution effects on Moss Hall Road North under the 'bus gate' scenario.	Minor Adverse (not significant) P / D / LT	No additional mitigation required beyond embedded design measures, including highway improvements, traffic distribution assumptions and wider Northern Gateway infrastructure enhancements .	Negligible to Minor Adverse (not significant) P / D / LT	Monitoring of traffic and mode share targets through the Framework Travel Plan secured by planning condition or obligation.
Existing businesses located within Birch Business Park	Changes in traffic patterns on access routes serving Birch Business Park arising from operational development traffic. No material impact on access arrangements or capacity is anticipated	Negligible to Minor Adverse (not significant) P / D / LT	No additional mitigation required beyond embedded scheme design measures and committed highway improvements within the surrounding network	Negligible Adverse (not significant) P / D / LT	Monitoring through Travel Plan measures where applicable
Residential and	Localised changes in	Minor Adverse (not significant) P / D / LT	No additional mitigation	Negligible to Minor	General traffic

Receptor	Potential Effects	Significance of Effects Prior to Mitigation/Enhancement	Additional Mitigation	Residual Effects	Monitoring
agricultural receptors (including Broom Hill Farm and Higher Barn Farm)	traffic flows on rural and semi-rural highway links, particularly under the 'bus gate' scenario where redistribution effects occur on Moss Hall Road North		required beyond embedded highway and network improvement measures and committed infrastructure upgrades	Adverse (not significant) P / D / LT	monitoring may be undertaken through Travel Plan or post-occupation review mechanisms if secured
Users of sustainable transport networks (pedestrian, cyclists and public transport users)	Improved accessibility and connectivity through enhanced pedestrian/cycle infrastructure, EV charging provision, and Travel Plan-led sustainable transport measures.	Minor Beneficial (not significant) P / D / LT	Provision of enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure, EV charging facilities, improved connectivity to local networks, and implementation of Travel Plan measures.	Minor Beneficial (not significant) P / D / LT	Monitoring of Travel Plan targets, modal shift performance and sustainable travel uptake.

Key to table:

P / T = Permanent or Temporary, D / I = Direct or Indirect, ST / MT / LT = Short Term, Medium Term or Long Term, N/A = Not Applicable

6.10 REFERENCES

- **Reference 6.1:** National Planning Practice Guidance – Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government / Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities), available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-plans-transport-assessments-and-statements>, accessed May 2026.

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