

Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body

Board Meeting

Paper F

Date **2nd October 2024**

Title of report: **Cycling Strategy Update**

Purpose of report: **Information on recent progress on Western Gateway's Strategic Cycling Strategy**

Recommendations:

The members of the Board are recommended to:

- I. Review updated draft cycle network plan and prioritisation.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Western Gateway Cycling strategy was developed by Sustrans and AtkinsRealis, initially in 2022.
- 1.2 The resulting strategy was not considered acceptable to all Sub-national Transport Body (STB) members, due to:
 - Geographical distribution – too clustered around Bristol, urban areas and areas of existing network
 - Lack of confidence that all schemes have been received and assessed
 - Lack of confidence that the scoring mechanism and outputs identify regional priorities, rather than strongly local priorities.
- 1.3 Additional work undertaken in Spring and Summer 2023 did not fully resolve those issues. In September 2023, the Board agreed to commit additional funding to undertake a more comprehensive review of the strategy and reviewed progress towards a new assessment system in July 2024.
- 1.4 The work agreed to be undertaken included measures to better align the Cycling Strategy with the new Strategic Transport Plan (STP) by:
 1. Updating background data
 2. Removing scorings for destinations that are fundamentally local in nature; add destinations from STP identified as regionally significant

3. Reviewing network structure in light of 1 and 2 and rationalising routes to focus on those that are regionally significant.
4. Output: updated draft network
5. Re-prioritising the network including:
 - a. Updating destinations analysis to include Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) areas (currently excluded)
 - b. Analysing 'regionally significant destinations' from STP/Strategic Investment Plan (SIP)
 - c. Analysing 'national / international gateways' from STP/SIP
 - d. Adding a new thematic sift for 'significant new development sites' (from STP) to highlight routes where a potential funding / delivery mechanism (through developer contributions) may exist.
 - e. Updating how cross-boundary routes are considered – replacing scoring with a sift mechanism to highlight those routes where WGSTB may have a greater role in delivery. (Note: routes crossing only boundaries of UAs within West of England MCA are not noted. Routes crossing the STB external boundary are noted).

1.5 This assessment work has now been completed and the initial results (regional network plan and prioritisation) are presented below. A written report will follow for the November Board.

2. Western Gateway cycle network

2.1 A region-wide cycle network has now been developed based on connecting:

- a) Settlements accommodating the top 60% of the regional population (equating to approx. £10k residents or more)
- b) Smaller settlements to larger settlements
- c) Regionally significant destinations (as defined and agreed in the STP)
- d) National and international gateways (as defined and agreed in the STP)
- e) Significant rural tourism areas (as defined and agreed for the SIP assessment)
- f) Existing and aspirational routes (as supplied by partners)
- g) Train stations

2.2 The output of this network planning can be seen in the map below.

*Note: It is important to note that the route alignments in this map **are indicative only**. The exact alignments will be determined as part of more detailed individual scheme development.*

Strategic Cycle Network



key regional destinations

- Employment
- Hospital
- Leisure
- Shopping
- Stadium
- University

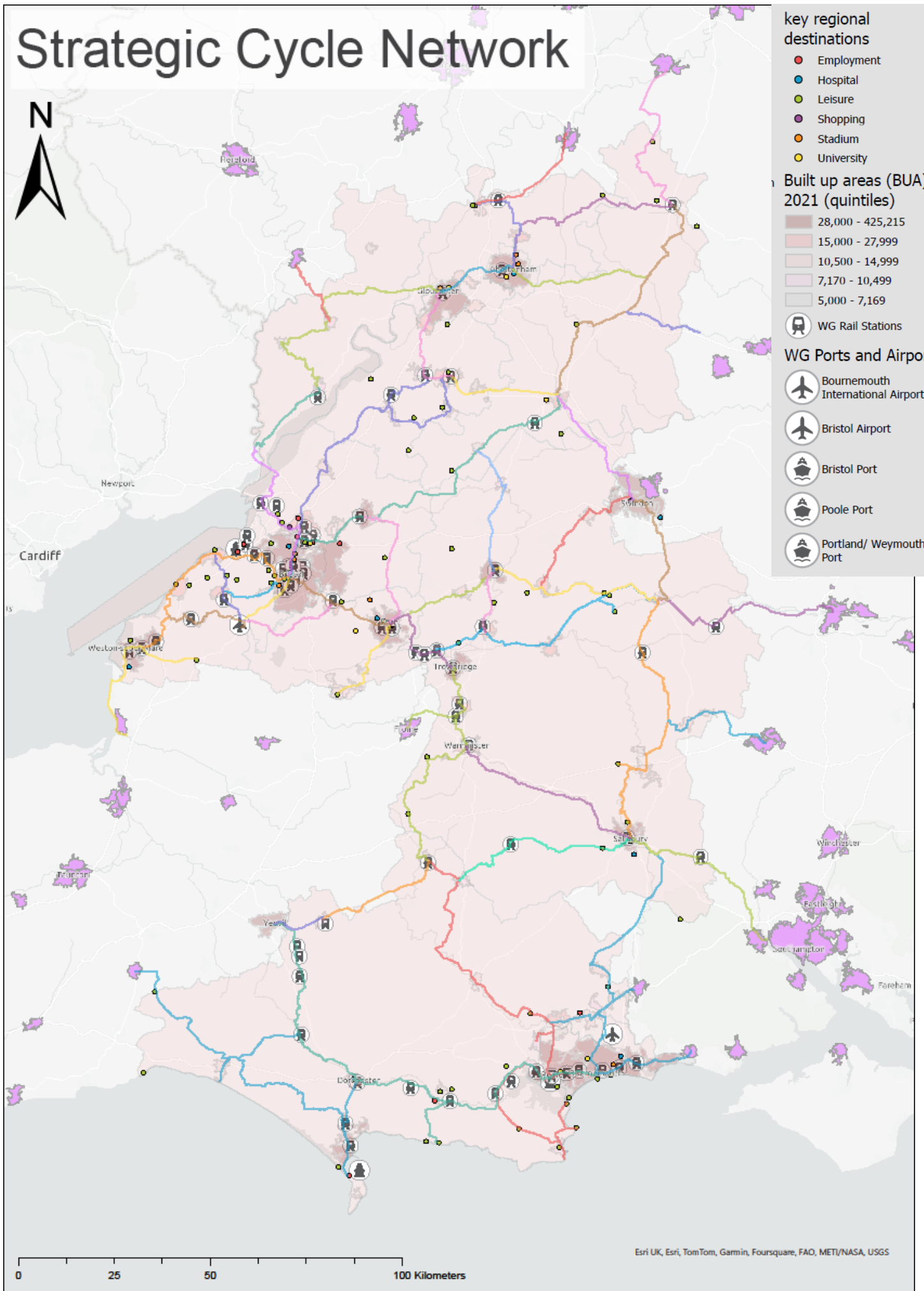
Built up areas (BUA) 2021 (quintiles)

- 28,000 - 425,215
- 15,000 - 27,999
- 10,500 - 14,999
- 7,170 - 10,499
- 5,000 - 7,169

WG Rail Stations

WG Ports and Airports

- ✈ Bournemouth International Airport
- ✈ Bristol Airport
- ⚓ Bristol Port
- ⚓ Poole Port
- ⚓ Portland/ Weymouth Port

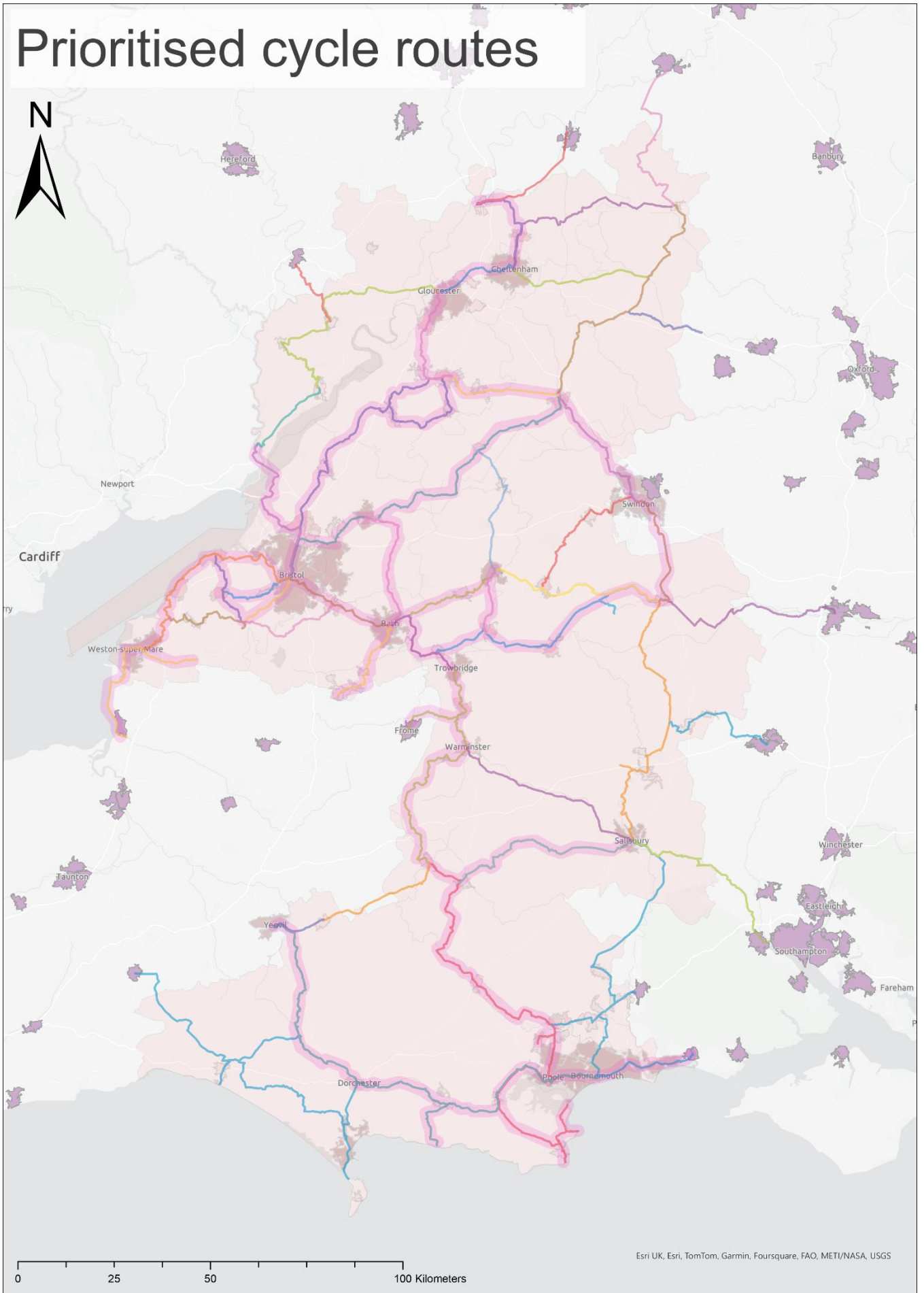


3. Route prioritisation

- 3.1 The overall route network has then been broken down into 50 individual routes/route sections of between 15-70km, starting and finishing at significant origins and destinations. Where possible, these have been aligned with existing route proposals, although the exact alignments are to be determined during more detailed scheme development.
- 3.2 Each route/route section has then been scored according to its proximity to receptors that are likely to generate demand/usage at a regional level. These include:
- resident population
 - workplace population
 - key destinations
 - tourism areas
 - transport gateways e.g. train stations, ports and airports
 - connectivity with other cycle routes
- 3.3 The Top 25 routes prioritised by this assessment are shown in the map overleaf and listed on the left hand side of the legend below.



Prioritised cycle routes



4. Next Steps

- 4.1 After seeking feedback from officers and members on the draft network and prioritisation, these findings will be worked up into a final report with the aim of adoption as Western Gateway's regional cycling strategy at the November Board and incorporation into our Strategic Investment Plan.
- 4.2 The final outputs will also offer the opportunity to sift routes by theme to respond to any policy or funding opportunities that arise, such as those with the greatest potential to reduce carbon (by encouraging modal shift), those that are in the vicinity of planned development (and thus can support that development while also having the opportunity to be delivered through planning contribution), those primarily in rural areas and/or those in the vicinity of the Strategic Route Network (SRN) (which could potentially benefit from designated funds from road improvements.)
- 4.3 While detailed route selection and design specifications are beyond the scope of this report (and must be determined as part of the detailed design of individual schemes), the final report will contain commentary on appropriate design standards, route quality, route selection and integration with other modes, referencing sources of information and guidance where possible.

5. Equalities Implications

- 5.1 No adverse impact on any protected groups is expected.

6. Legal Considerations

- 6.1 None identified.

7. Financial considerations

- 7.1 The cost of the additional assessment work is £17.8k. This was agreed in the financial year 2023/24 and no additional budget is required for this work.
- 7.2 If the resultant strategy and route prioritisation is deemed acceptable, budget to take forward development of business cases for specific routes may be drawn down from the Regional Centre of Excellence and Business Case Support allocation.
- 7.3 One aim of the Cycling Strategy is to provide evidenced funding advice to Department for Transport (DfT) on regional priorities for cycling and to seek to secure funding for the delivery of these schemes.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 Board members are asked to note this update and the proposed next steps.

Contact Officer

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