

Agenda Item	6
Report No	SR/10/23

## HIGHLAND COUNCIL

**Committee:** Isle of Skye & Raasay

**Date:** 22 May 2023

**Report Title:** Highland Quiet Routes – Pilot Project Report

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure & Environment

### 1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the Highland Quiet Routes Report to Committee for the 'Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route' and 'Raasay (Inverarish) Quiet Route.'

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-
- i. **Note** the contents of this report; and
  - ii. **Approve** the 'Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route' and 'Raasay (Inverarish) Quiet Route', including Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders reducing the speed limit on 60 mph sections of both routes to 40mph for a period of 18 months.

### 3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – The budget for Quiet Routes Pilot Project including consultation, implementation, roads furniture/signage and project monitoring is provided in full by Transport Scotland. The project is being delivered by HITRANS and supported by Highland Council.
- 3.2 **Legal** – Temporary Traffic Regulation Order required to reduce the national speed limit on sections of both routes to 40mph.
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – Quiet routes aims to provide wider access to active travel and the outdoors to benefit communities along the route.

- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – Traffic monitoring/data collection on the routes will identify travel trends to determine if there is a shift towards active travel modes and if vehicle numbers and speed is reduced to the benefit of the environment.
- 3.5 **Risk** – No implications.
- 3.6 **Gaelic** – No implications.

## 4 Background

- 4.1 Highland Quiet Routes is a pilot project to encourage safe walking, cycling and horseback activities on designated rural roads where traffic and vehicle speeds are low. The aim is to provide a low-traffic route to encourage more people to consider active travel for everyday journeys, help preserve the natural beauty of rural areas and support access to the outdoors for everyone, which is shown to support local economic development through increased tourism.

## 5 Proposed Quiet Routes

- 5.1 This paper proposes 2 Quiet Routes; the 'Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route' on the Isle of Skye and the 'Raasay (Inverarish) Quiet Route' on the Isle of Raasay:-
  - i. The 'Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route' is on the A851, a single-track road that links services between Armadale and Tormore Community Forest. The route has been assessed and speed data has confirmed that although the route is currently subject to the National Speed Limit (60mph) between settlements that the 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds recorded are low between 44.9 and 45.5 mph, see **Appendix 1**. Therefore, it is proposed that 60mph sections of the road between Armadale and Tormore Community Forest be reduced by Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to 40 mph for the duration of the pilot project. The natural layout of the road suppresses speed sufficiently to quantify this reduction and for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to be progressed. Existing 30mph speed limits within settlements on the route will be unchanged.
  - ii. The 'Raasay (Inverarish) Quiet Route' extends from Inverarish to Raasay Ferry Terminal and Pictish Stone and would provide an active travel route between the settlements Clachan and Inverarish. The aim is to provide a low-traffic route that encourages more people to consider active travel for everyday journeys. The route has been assessed and speed data has confirmed that although the route is currently subject to the National Speed Limit (60mph) between the settlements that average speeds are low between 29.8 and 47.2 mph, see **Appendix 2**. Therefore, it is proposed that 60mph sections of the road be reduced by Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to 40 mph for the duration of the pilot project. The natural layout of the road suppresses speed sufficiently to quantify this reduction and for a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order to be progressed. Existing 30mph speed limits within settlements on the route will be unchanged.

5.2 It is proposed to install the Quiet Routes at both locations by 1 July 2023 for a period of 18 months. Gateway signage, gateway repeater signs, 40mph roundels, road markings, warning signs and surface treatments are to be implemented within the scope of the project to raise awareness of active travel and benefit road safety. Detailed design for the 'Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route' and 'Raasay (Inverarish) Quiet Route' are at **Appendices 3 and 4**.

## **6 Consultation/Community Engagement**

6.1 An online engagement portal was setup to promote Quiet Route projects and obtain local feedback by way of an Active Travel Behaviour Survey. A public engagement event was also carried out at the Sleat Community Trust, Ardvasar, Sleat, Isle of Skye, IV45 8R on 25 October 2022, see **Appendix 5**.

## **7 Monitoring and Review**

7.1 Quiet Routes operate successfully in other Local Authority Areas and monitoring activity is proposed during the pilot project to quantify if there is uptake in active travel and a reduction in vehicle use and traffic speeds. Monitoring is proposed during the first 3 months of the project going live, between July and September 2023 and traffic data will be collected in September/October 2023. This will replicate where possible consultation, community engagement and traffic data collected prior to the pilot project to allow changes in travel behaviour to be measured and an assessment of the road's suitability as a permanent Quiet Route to be undertaken.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure & Environment

Date: 26 April 2023

Author: Allan Bryce, Project Officer Active Travel

**Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route – Traffic and Speed Data**

Traffic surveys were undertaken at 2 Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC 1-2) sites to determine the traffic volumes and 85th percentile speeds over a 7-day period. In addition, 2 traffic cameras (P1&P2) were used to identify non-motorised traffic modes and volumes over a 7-day period, see Figure 1. It should be noted that there is currently a mix of 30mph speed limits through settlements and sections of road that are National Speed Limit (60mph) outwith settlement boundaries. The traffic survey was conducted between 26/09/22 and 02/10/22 that is outwith the tourist season for this location. There were no events that would cause any suspected inconsistencies in the traffic data.



Figure 1 – Route extent and Counter/Camera locations

The traffic survey results for the proposed route show very low motor vehicle usage count and low 85th percentile speeds both eastbound (EB) and westbound (WB), as identified in Figures 2 and 3 respectively. ATC 1 failed to provide data for analysis, and it was decided to limit the pilot route from Armadale to Tormore Community Forest rather than extend the route to Aird of Sleat.

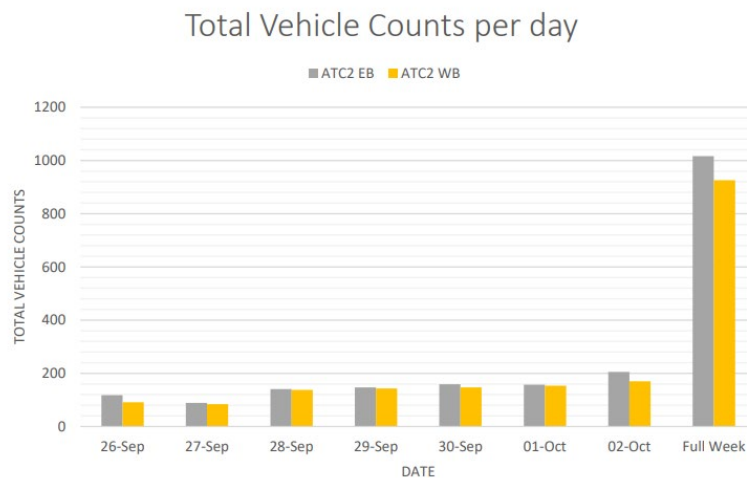


Figure 2 – Daily vehicle counts

## 85th Percentile Speeds Summary

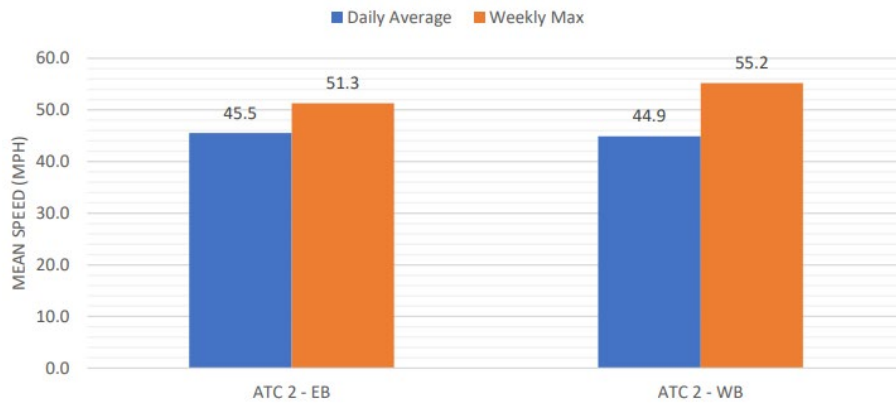


Figure 3 – 85th percentile speeds average daily / weekly maximum

Data from the non-motorised user counts gathered from the cameras P1 & P2 is given at Figures 4 and 5.

## P1 - Daily Average Non-motorised Users

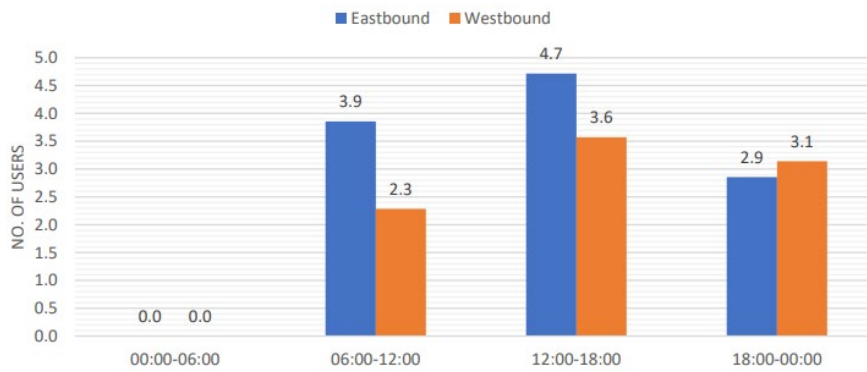


Figure 4 – Daily Average by mode

## P2 - Daily Average Non-motorised Users

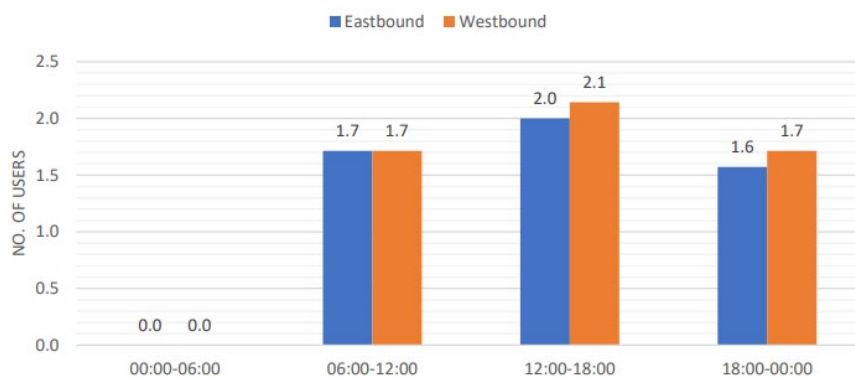


Figure 5 – Non-motorised users

### Raasay (Inverarish) Quiet Route – Traffic and Speed Data

Traffic surveys were undertaken at 3 Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC 1-3) sites to determine the traffic volumes and 85th percentile speeds over a 7-day period. In addition, 2 traffic cameras were used to identify non-motorised traffic modes and volumes over a 7-day period (P1&P2), see Figure 1. It should be noted that the speed limit on the route is 30mph within settlements and National Speed Limit (60mph) outwith. The traffic survey was conducted between 26/09/22 and 02/10/22 which is outwith the tourist season for this location. There were no events that would cause any suspected inconsistencies in the traffic data.



Figure 1 – Route extent and Counter/Camera locations

The traffic survey results for the proposed route show very low non-motor usage count eastbound (EB) and westbound (WB) at all traffic monitoring locations, given in Figure 2.

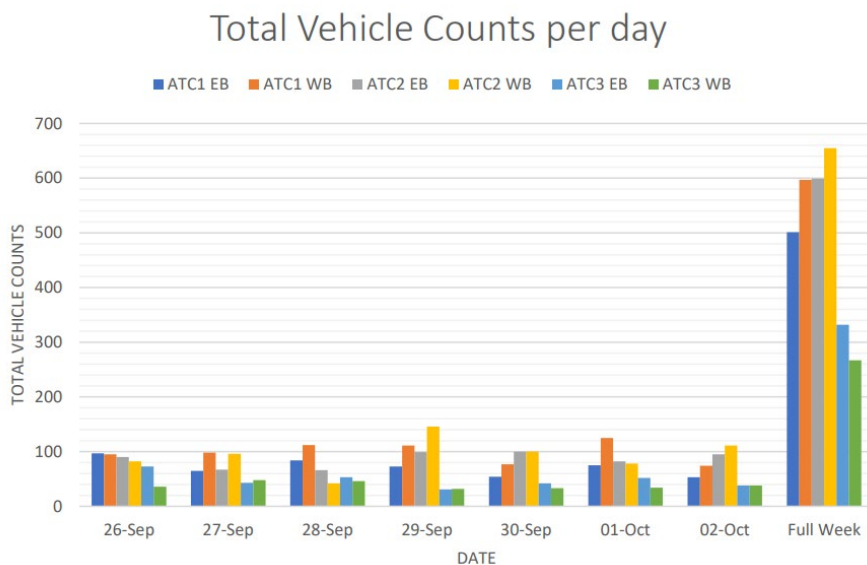


Figure 2 – Daily vehicles counts

Low 85th percentile speeds Eastbound (EB) and Westbound (WB) were recorded at all traffic monitoring locations ATC 1, ATC 2 and ATC 3, as identified in Figure 3.

### Raasay 85th Percentile Speeds Summary

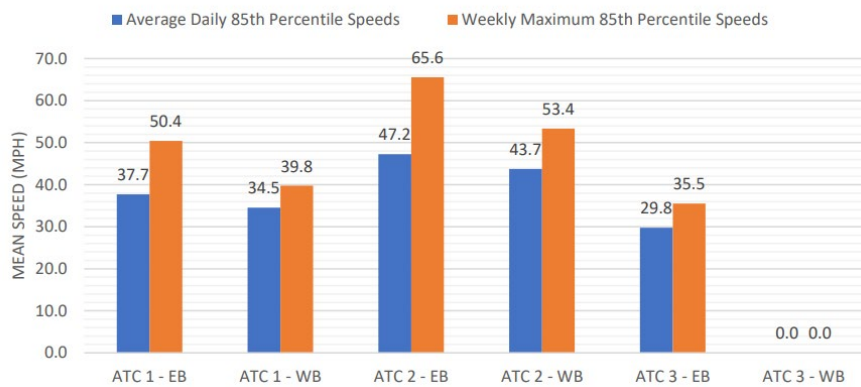


Figure 3 – 85th percentile speeds average daily / weekly maximum

Data from the non-motorised user counts gathered from camera locations P1 and P2 are given in Figures 4 and 5 respectively.

### P1 - Daily Average Non-motorised Users

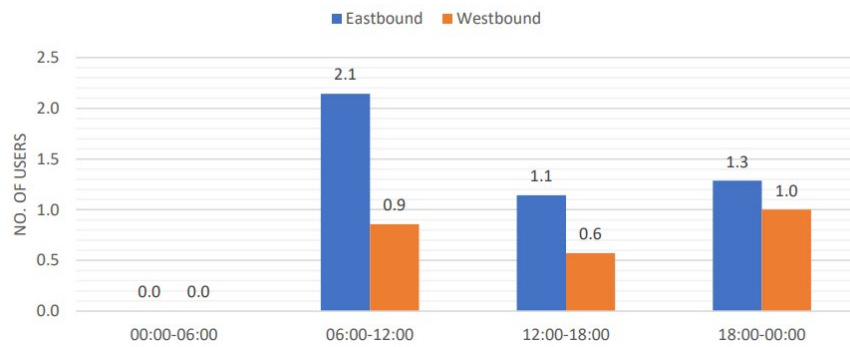


Figure 4 – Camera P1 Daily Average non-motorised users

### P2 - Daily Average Non-motorised Users

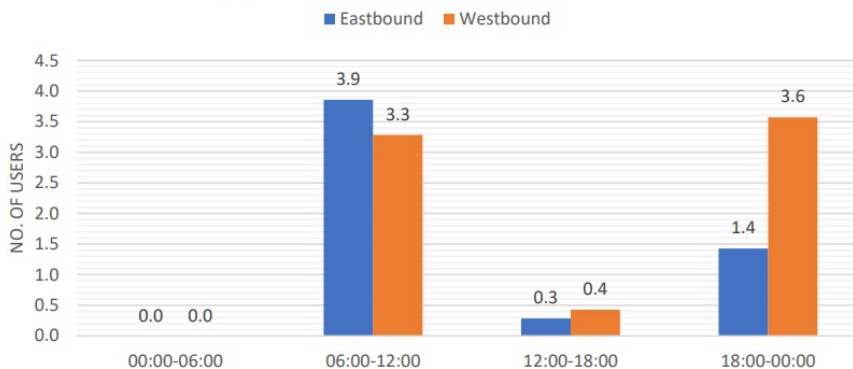


Figure 5 – Camera P2 Daily Average non-motorised users

### Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route – Proposed Design

The ‘Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route’ is on the A851, a single-track road that links services between Armadale and Tormore Community Forest, see Figure 1.

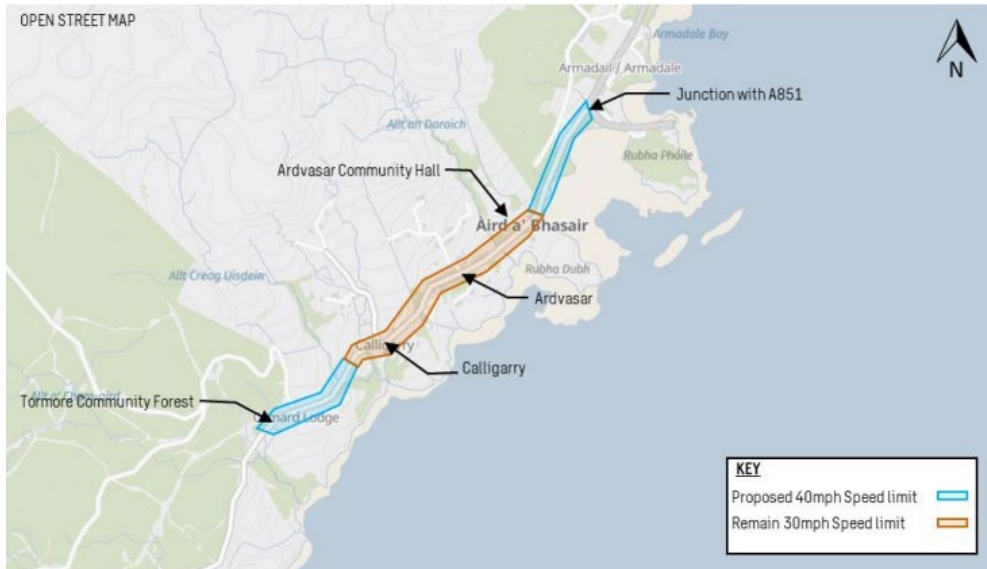


Figure 1 – Route extents

The full range of signs and road markings to be implemented across the route is shown at Figure 2.

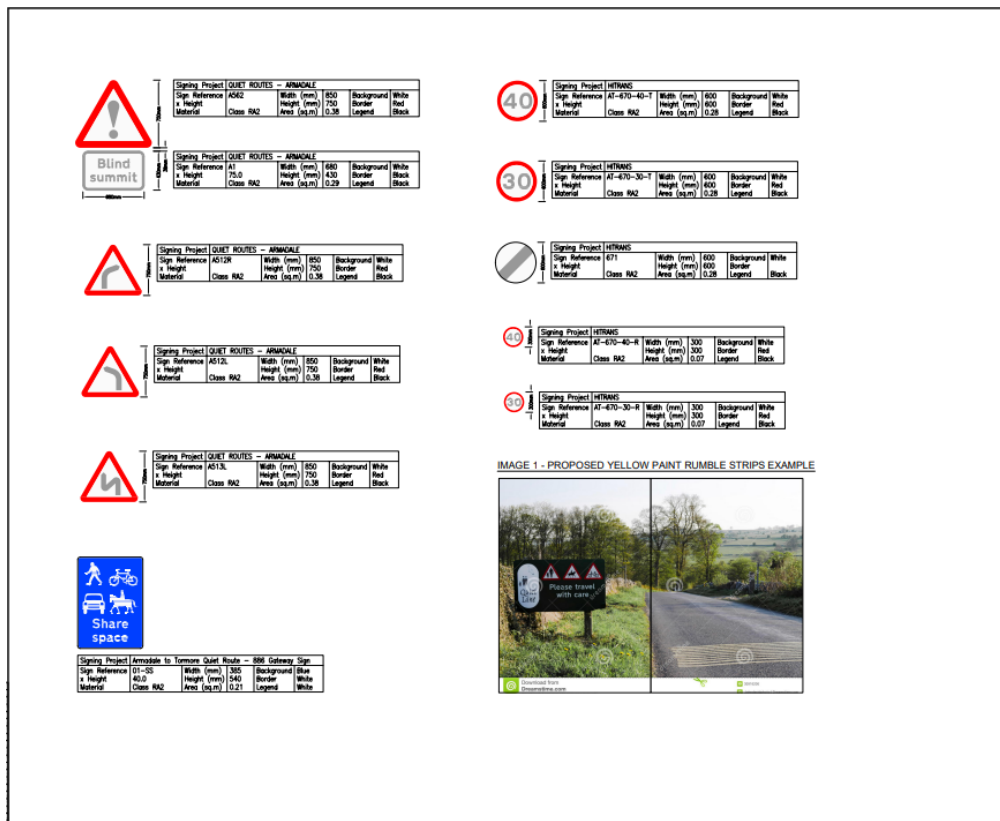


Figure 2 – Route signage and markings



Non-prescribed gateway and gateway repeater signs were approved on 4 April 2023 for Quiet Routes by Scottish Ministers, in exercise of the powers conferred upon them by sections 64 and 65 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf. The approved gateway and gateway repeater sign designs are shown at Figure 3.



Figure 3 – Approved non-prescribed gateway signage design

Detailed drawings outlining the position of gateway signs, gateway repeater signs, speed roundels, warning signs and road/surface markings have been produced for the pilot project. The drawings are split into 7 sheets that show detail of the signs and (or) road markings to be installed at specific points on the route, see Figures 4–11.

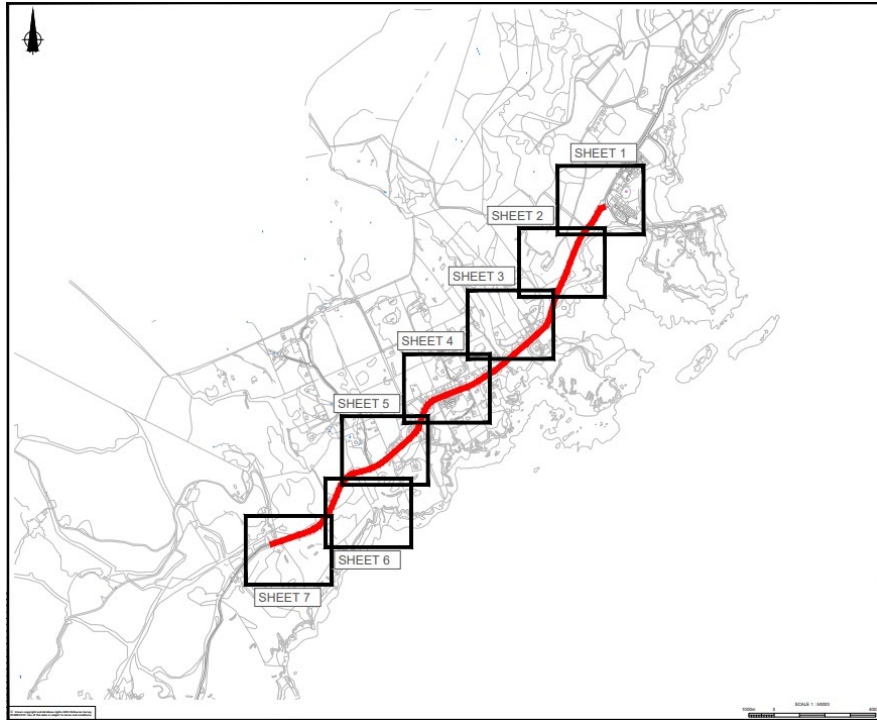


Figure 4 – Route Design Sheets 1 - 7

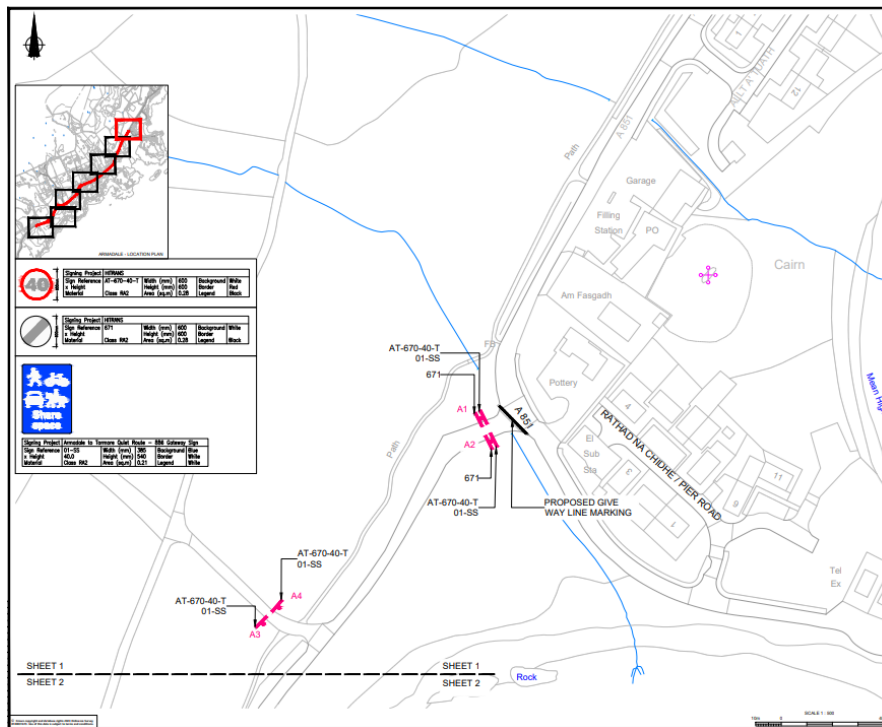


Figure 5 – Design Sheet 1 (Armadale)





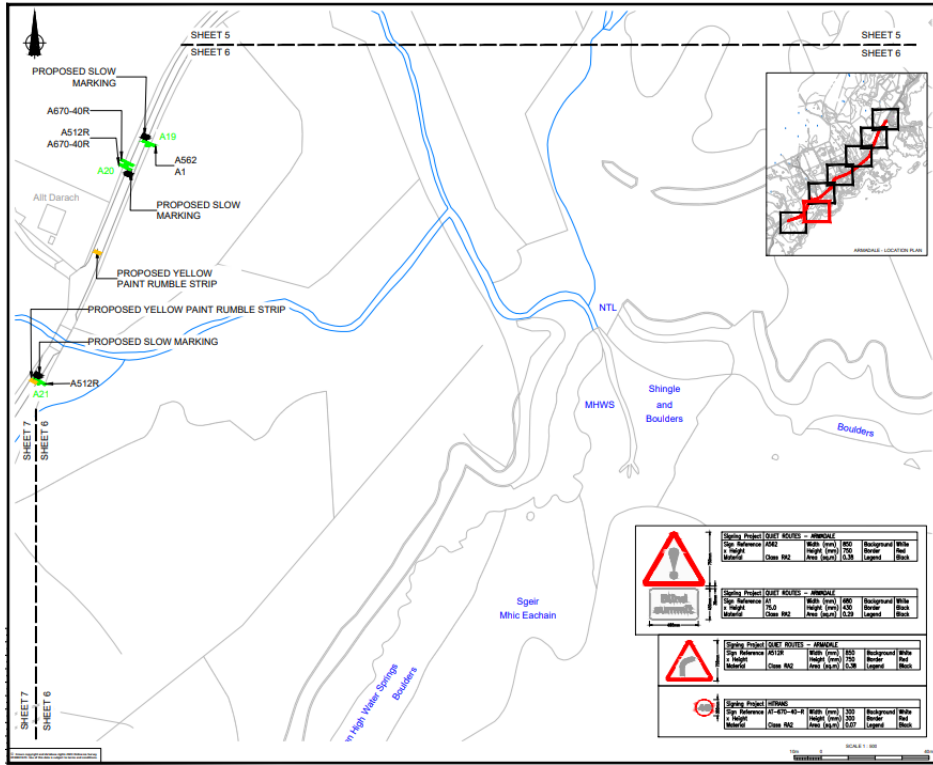


Figure 10 – Design Sheet 6

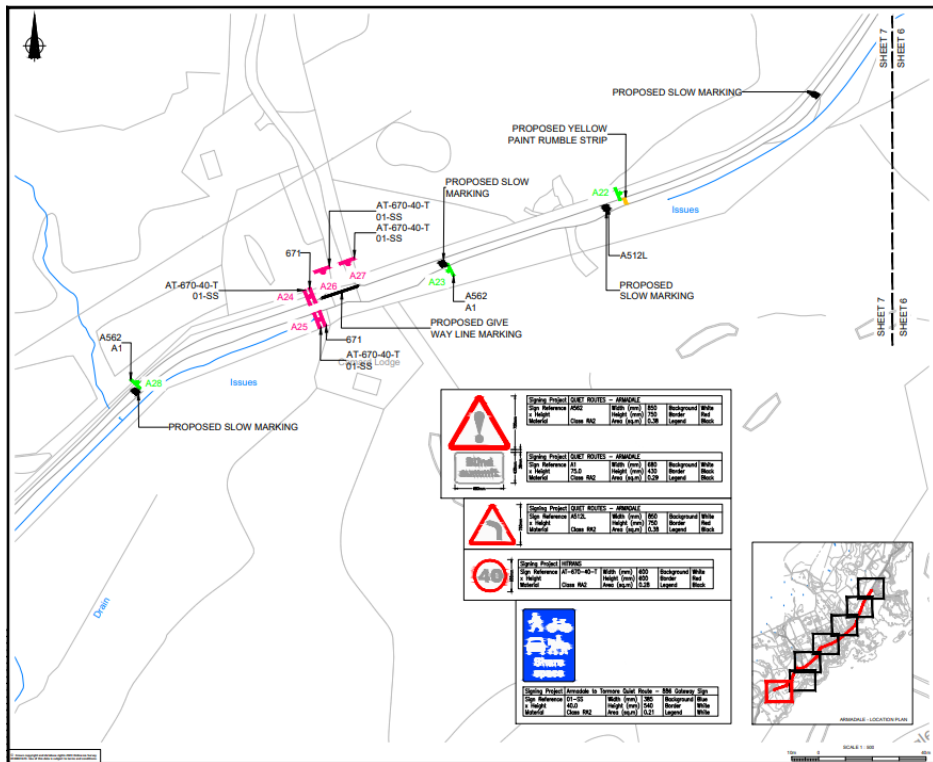


Figure 11 – Design Sheet 7 (Tormore)





Non-prescribed gateway and gateway repeater signs were approved on 4 April 2023 for Quiet Routes by Scottish Ministers, in exercise of the powers conferred upon them by sections 64 and 65 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and of all other powers enabling them in that behalf. The approved gateway and gateway repeater sign designs are shown at Figure 3.

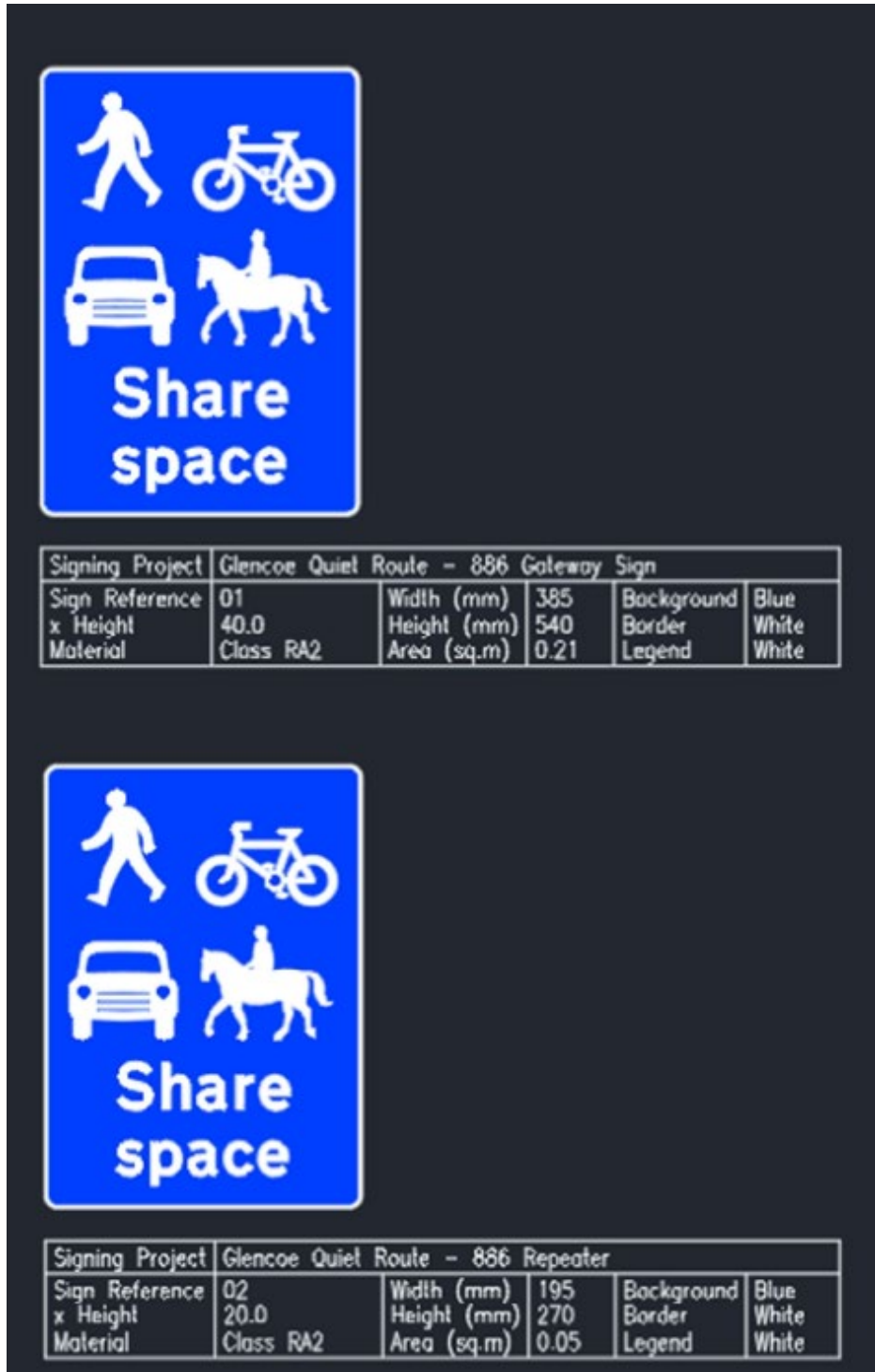


Figure 3 – Approved non-prescribed gateway signage design

Detailed drawings outlining the position of gateway signs, gateway repeater signs, speed roundels, warning signs and road/surface markings have been produced for the pilot project. The drawings are split into 3 sheets that show detail of the signs and (or) road markings to be installed at specific points on the route, see Figures 4–7.

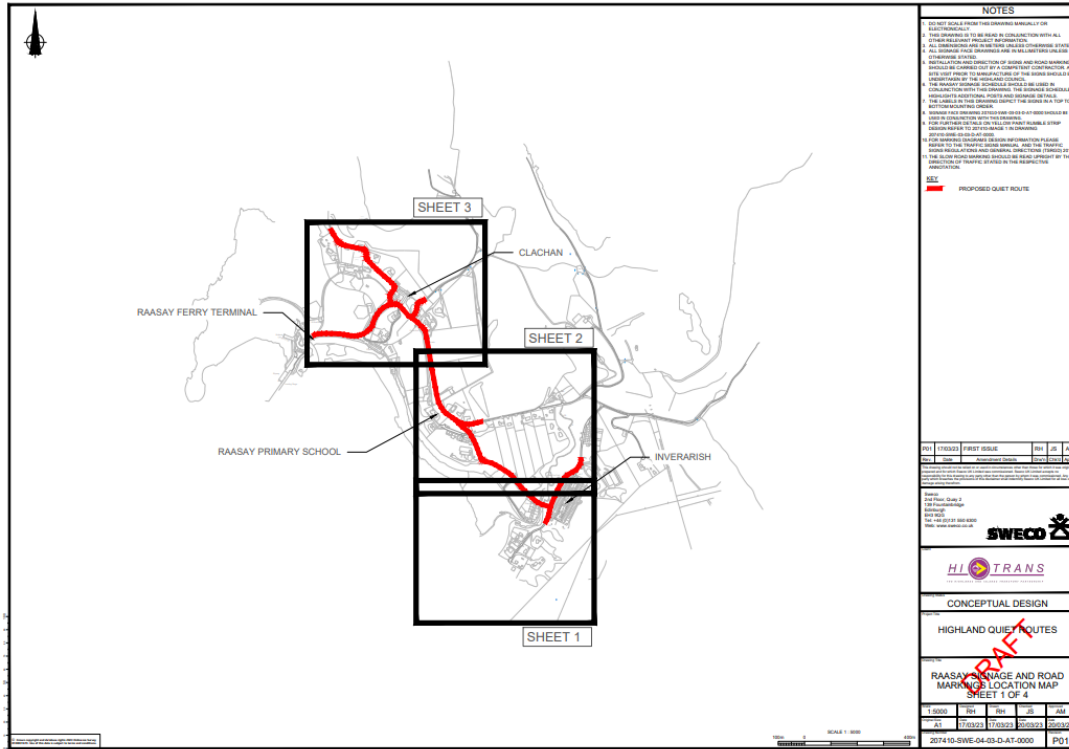


Figure 4 – Route Design Sheets 1-3

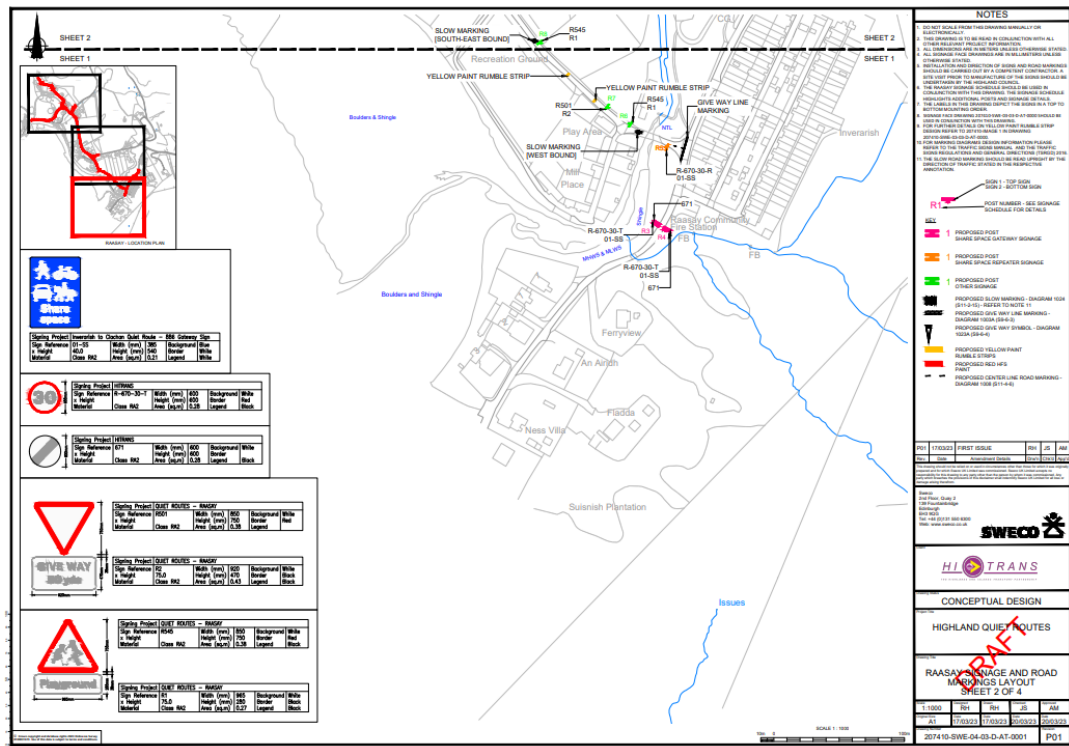


Figure 5 – Route Design Sheet 1 (Inverarish)



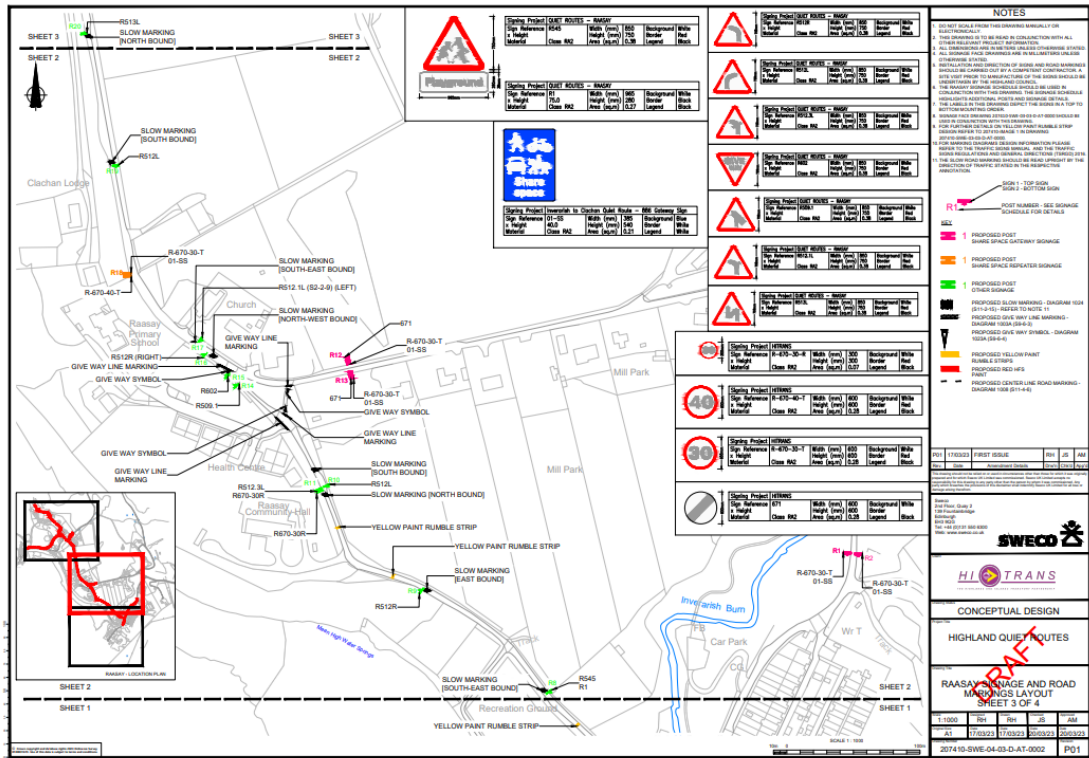


Figure 6 – Route Design Sheet 2

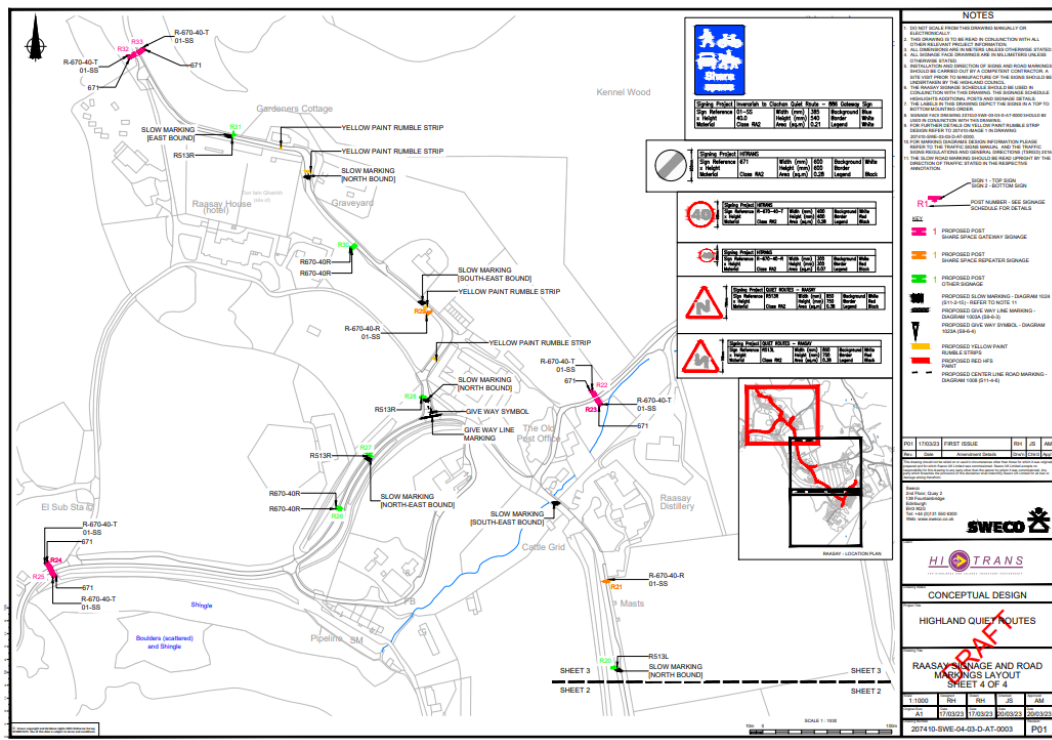


Figure 7 – Route Design Sheet 3

### Highland Quiet Routes - Community Engagement

An online engagement portal was developed for preliminary community engagement at the early stages of the project to (i) provide an introduction and background to the Quiet Routes project and the concept of Quiet Routes, (ii) highlight and inform readers of the benefits of active travel, (iii) outline the proposed route, and (iv) accommodate active travel behaviour and spatial surveys to gather feedback on the proposals. Links to the engagement portal and Active Travel Behaviour Survey were provided to local Community Council's who are supportive of the pilot project and to share with local residents and businesses.

The Active Travel Behaviour Survey comprised sixteen questions to capture the current active travel behaviour of local individuals to inform the design and set the foundational data for route evaluation; a similar survey will be enrolled during the pilot period to capture the potential behaviour change as a result of the introduction of the quiet route.

#### Armada to Tormore Quiet Route – Consultation

At the time of analysis (February 2023), there were 15 public survey respondents from varying age groups and employment statuses. Of which, no respondents confirmed having a long-term illness or disability that limit their daily activities. Within the active travel behaviour section of the survey, the following trends were identified:

- Within the average household, an average of 1.93 household members have access to a bicycle;
- 40% of survey respondents reported an increase in their walking/cycling activity in comparison to pre-Covid-19 activity levels;
- Just over 12.5% of those who commute to their place of work, do so by walking with the remainder using car/van;
- 33% of those who undertake school run/picking-up or dropping children at school do so by walking with the remaining travelling by car/van;
- Of those who travel for essential and non-essential shopping, 86% travel by car/van, 3% travel by motorcycle/moped, 7% travel by bicycle (or alternative form of active travel) and the remaining travel by walking;
- Just over 6% of survey participants use a form of active travel to access healthcare (GP/Pharmacy);
- 86.67% of survey participants are very likely or likely to use a quiet route, while only 6.67% are unlikely to use a quiet route;
- Of the respondents 33.34% said they do not feel safe walking/cycling/horse riding on local roads;
- Slower speeds of traffic in the area was highlighted to be the most the most important factor individuals are looking for in the area.

An open public engagement event was held at the Sleat Community Trust, Ardvassar, Sleat, Isle of Skye IV45 8R on 25 October 2022 to promote the Armadale to Tormore Quiet Route (Isle of Skye). Tormore Community Forest confirmed their support of the pilot project and said that they would welcome an improved active travel link to the Community Forest.

### **Raasay (Inverarish) Quiet Route – Consultation**

At the time of analysis (February 2023), there were 11 public survey respondents from varying age groups and employment statuses. Of which, 9% of respondents confirmed having a long-term illness or disability that limit their daily activities. Within the active travel behaviour section of the survey, the following trends were identified:

- Within the average household, an average of 1.93 household members have access to a bicycle;
- 27% of survey respondents reported an increase in their walking/cycling activity in comparison to pre-Covid-19 activity levels;
- Just over 33% of those who commute to their place of work, do so by walking with the remainder using car/van;
- No one who undertakes school run/picking-up or dropping children at school do so by any means of active travel with all travelling by car/van;
- Of those who travel for essential and non-essential shopping, 52% travel by car/van, 37% travel by walking, 11% travel by bicycle (or alternative form of active travel);
- Just over 10% of survey participants use a form of active travel to access healthcare (GP/Pharmacy);
- 90.09% of survey participants are very likely or likely to use a quiet route, while the remainder stated N/A;
- Of the respondents, 45.45% said they do not feel safe walking/cycling/horse riding on local roads;
- Slower speeds of traffic in the area was highlighted to be the most important factor individuals are looking for in the area.

A Hands-up Survey was carried out to capture the active travel behaviour of school pupils at Raasay Primary School and 5 pupils responded; 20% travel to school by car and remainder (80%) travelling by bicycle or scooter; over half of pupils are accompanied by a parent/guardian when going to school. All the pupils who took part in the survey travel just 5-10 minutes to get to school. No public engagement session was carried out in Raasay.