

DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING ANALYSIS FORM

The purpose of this form is to help you to consider whether a new policy (either internal or external) or legislation will require a full equality impact assessment (EQIA). Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The form will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will provide a basis for quarterly consultation on the outcome of the screening exercise, and will be referenced in the biannual review of progress made to the Minister and in the Annual Report to the Equality Commission.

Further advice on completion of this form and the screening process including relevant contact information can be accessed via the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) Intranet site. [Equality Intranet page](#)

HUMAN RIGHTS ACT – refer to the [Equality Intranet page](#)

When considering the impact of this policy you should also consider if there would be any Human Rights implications. Guidance is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/articles/human-rights-and-public-authorities>

Should this be appropriate you will need to complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment. A template is at:

- <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma>

Don't forget to RURAL PROOF – refer to the [Equality Intranet page](#)

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Part 1. Policy scoping

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

Information about the policy

Name of the policy

Traffic Management in Belfast – Autumn 2025 – proposed Interventions.

Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?

Extension of existing and new Interventions.

What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)

The proposed package of interventions in Belfast city centre considered below aim to increase the access and range of options for pedestrian, active travel and public transport movements through Belfast city centre. This in turn should reduce vehicular congestion throughout the city centre for those that cannot avoid using private vehicles in the run up to Christmas 2025 and beyond.

Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?

If so, explain how.

For all categories it is the purpose of these interventions to increase the access and range of options for pedestrian, active travel and public transport movements through Belfast city centre. This in turn should reduce vehicular

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

congestion throughout the city centre for those that cannot avoid using private vehicles in the run up to Christmas 2025 and beyond.

Interventions when implemented will benefit / have a positive impact on all those who walk, wheel and cycle as well as users of public transport, both existing and new. The following Section 75 categories are expected to benefit the most:

- **Age:** Children and young people, plus older population, are less likely to have access to a private car than other sections of the population and can therefore be expected to particularly benefit from the improved bus lanes (services). These Interventions seek to reduce traffic congestion and encourage a modal shift to sustainable travel modes and reduce reliance on the private car, will contribute to an improvement in the urban environment by reducing emissions and noise pollution which is likely to result in health improvements.
- **Disability:** According to 2021 census data, persons with disabilities are less likely to have access to a private car¹ than other sections of the population and therefore be expected to particularly benefit from improved bus lane provision (public transport services), including use by taxis, whether for work or leisure to advance their opportunities or lifestyle.

Who initiated or wrote the policy?

Department for Infrastructure initiated the options for implementation in consultation with other stakeholders, including, Belfast City Council: Business Improvement District teams: key Business stakeholders; and Translink.

Who owns and who implements the policy?

Department for Infrastructure as Roads Authority is primarily responsible for implementation of proposed interventions.

Translink will have responsibility for any increased service provision to compliment any enhanced bus lane extension / operational times or promotional measures to encourage modal shift to public transport use.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Background

The Department for Infrastructure is mindful of the issues relating to traffic congestion in Belfast City Centre in the run up to Christmas 2024. This was amplified to some extent by the closure of Durham Street necessary for the construction of Belfast Grand Central Station, and the associated redistribution of network traffic onto alternative routes. The closure of Durham Street (while temporary in nature) is still required to facilitate large scale engineering works and utility service alterations and is likely to remain closed until end November 2025.

The objectives for proposed interventions include:

1. Deliver a reduction in carbon emissions by increasing accessibility for all by sustainable travel modes.
2. Promote healthy and inclusive communities by developing safe sustainable travel modes that respect the local built and natural environment.
3. Reduce unnecessary use of the private car by promotion of alternative priority public transport choices.
4. Improve air quality and the environment by encouraging the use of sustainable travel modes.
5. Enhance the resilience and safety of the transport network to support the economy and meet the challenges of climate change.
6. Support the efficient, sustainable movement of goods and people and enhance connectivity for road users with the aim of minimising traffic congestion.

Previously Implemented Measures

To mitigate the impacts on traffic from the closure of Durham Street (associated with the construction of the new Belfast Grand Central station), the Department introduced a number of temporary mitigation measures during 2024. These measures included:

- Reconfiguration of the Great Victoria Street / Grosvenor Road / Howard Street junction to accommodate increased pedestrian volumes and to reduce pedestrian waiting times.
- Additional bus lanes on: Great Victoria Street; Howard Street, Bruce Street; Dublin Road and North Street.
- Allowing additional taxis classes to use certain bus lanes in Bruce Street, Dublin Road, Great Victoria Street and Shaftesbury Square.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

To reduce the levels of seasonal traffic congestion and therefore seek to avoid a repeat of widespread public concern, officials have been developing proposals mentioned above to improve traffic management in Belfast City Centre in the run up to Christmas 2025.

In summary, the following package of interventions are proposed: -

Package 1 (Pre Christmas 2025)

- Retain the current temporary arrangement at Great Victoria Street / Grosvenor Road / Howard Street junction;
- Retain the temporary bus lanes on: Great Victoria Street; Howard Street, Bruce Street; Dublin Road and North Street;
- Continue to allow taxis to use certain bus lanes on Bruce Street, Dublin Road, Great Victoria Street and Shaftesbury Square;
- Aim to open Durham Street to 2-way traffic (target end of November 2025);
- Develop and introduce bus lane proposals for Castle Street, subject to appropriate level of support;
- Introduce increased hours of operation of bus lanes on southern radial routes covering both directions during both peak periods (effective from 3 November 2025);
- Work with Translink to maximise Public Transport service frequency;
- Deploy a cordon of Vivacity sensors around the city centre;
- Work with PSNI to target visibility and engagement in relation to Yellow Box Infringements and reintroduce appropriate roadside signage; including a combination of our existing electronic signs and the use of additional mobile signs;
- Implement the Christmas 2025 embargo (10 November 2025 until 2 January 2026).
- Start the designs and planning of new bus lane infrastructure for Ormeau Road, Albertbridge Road and Lisburn Road.

Package 2 (Spring 2026)

- Implement permanent works to retain the current temporary arrangement at Great Victoria Street / Grosvenor Road / Howard Street junction;
- Evaluate the performance of the temporary bus lanes and decide whether or not to make these measures permanent;
- Monitor and evaluate the long-term requirement for the inbound bus lane on Bedford Street along with a controlled pedestrian crossing;

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

- Undertake necessary consultations to assess the proposal to increase the hours of operation of bus lanes on radial routes, potentially to 12 hours;
- Continue design and planning of new bus lane infrastructure for Ormeau Road, Albertbridge Road and Lisburn Road.

Implementation factors

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

The introduction of additional bus lanes or amendments to operational hours on a permanent basis would necessitate an amendment to The Bus Lanes (Belfast City Centre) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018.

There is a legislative process to be followed in order to introduce an experimental traffic control scheme – Article 5 of The Road Traffic Regulation (Northern Ireland) Order 1997

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/nisi/1997/276/article/5>

but this should not detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision

Financial Implications

The costs of the proposed interventions in the run up to the Christmas 2025 will be met within existing project and programme budgets.

An accelerated programme for the opening of Durham Street will need to be agreed between Translink and DfI.

Any enhancement to Public Transport Services will need to be delivered within the indicative Translink budget for 2025/26, where funding permits.

Legislative Implications

The addition of additional bus lanes or amendments to operational hours on a permanent basis would necessitate an amendment to The Bus Lanes (Belfast City Centre) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018.

Regarding the potential introduction of a temporary bus lane on Bedford Street and the peak extension to Bus Lane operation times, consideration is currently being given to the use of Temporary Traffic Regulations or an Experimental Traffic Control Scheme (ETCS) on the basis that the measures are being trialled

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

to assess if they achieve the desired outcomes before they are implemented on a substantive basis. This work is ongoing.

other, please specify **N/A**

Main stakeholders affected

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon? (please delete as appropriate)

service users – pedestrians, bus users, taxi users, cyclists, motorcyclists, motorists, private car users, HGVs

other public sector organisations - Translink

other, please specify _____

Other policies with a bearing on this policy

- what are they?

The key policies considered to date are:

- Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill
- Draft Programme for Government/Outcomes Delivery Plan
- Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035
- Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation
- Planning for the Future of Transport – Time for Change
- Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (2015)
- Northern Ireland Changing Gear – A Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland, (2015)
- Making Belfast an Active City – Belfast Cycling Network (2021)
- Belfast Cycling Network Delivery Plan 2022–31
- Public Transport Reform (Department for Infrastructure).

- who owns them?

- Northern Ireland Climate Change Bill – NI Executive Office/NIA

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

- Draft Programme for Government/Outcomes Delivery Plan – NI Executive Office.
- Regional Development Strategy (RDS) 2035 – DFI
- Ensuring a Sustainable Transport Future: A New Approach to Regional Transportation – DFI
- Planning for the Future of Transport – Time for Change – DFI
- Belfast Metropolitan Transport Plan (2015) – DFI
- Northern Ireland Changing Gear – A Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland, (2015) – DFI
- Making Belfast an Active City – Belfast Cycling Network (2021) – DFI
- Belfast Cycling Network Delivery Plan 2022–31 – DFI
- Public Transport Reform (Department for Infrastructure). – DFI

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

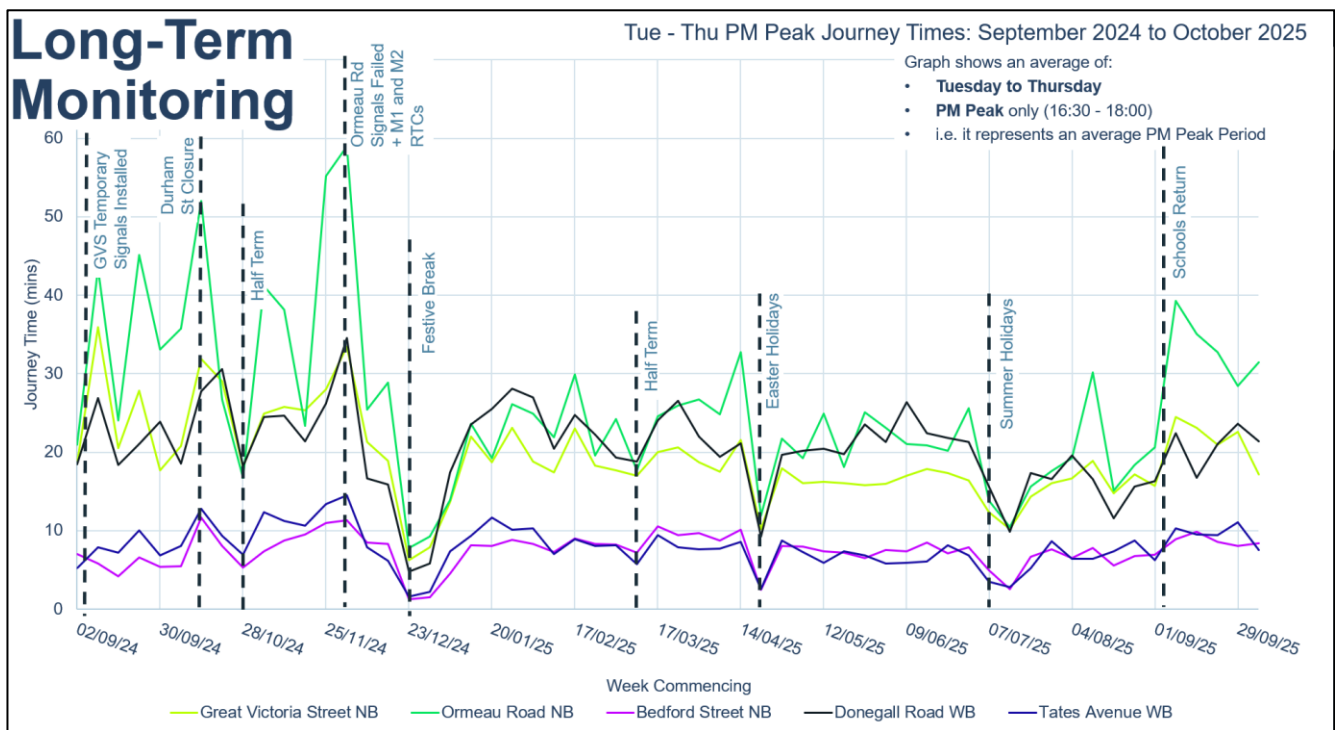
Available evidence

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data. The Commission has produced this guide to [signpost to S75 data](#). Also refer to the [Equality Intranet page](#) for some evidence sources.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

2024 Belfast Traffic Congestion figures.

The chart below shows the increase in vehicular congestion in the run up to Christmas 2024. It can be seen below the impact this had on journey time.



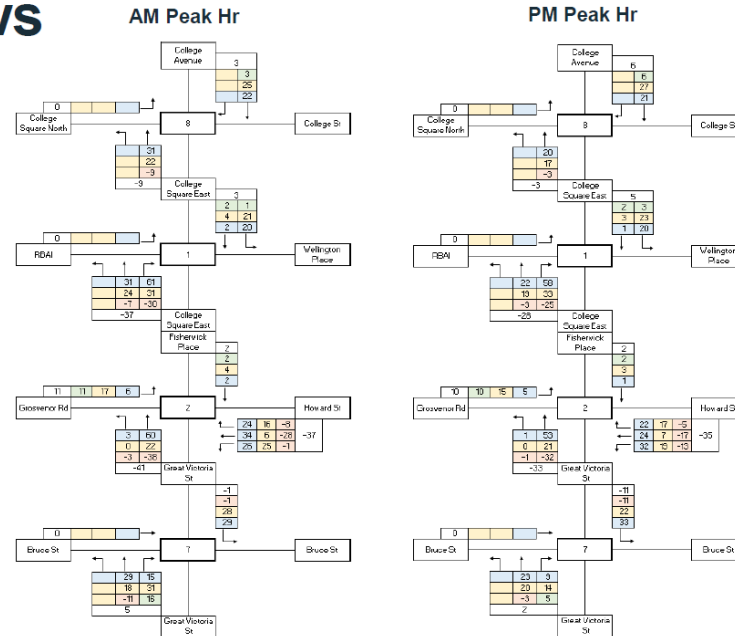
1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

The chart below shows the general decrease in bus flows from 2023/24 in the Christmas period. It can be seen from the chart below the general negative effect that the congestion issue had on Bus movements.

Bus Flows

BUS

2023 Flow (buses)
2024 Flow (buses)
Flow Diff (increase)
Flow Diff (decrease)
Total Flow Change on Arm



Reduction in bus flows recorded in both peaks along:

- Great Victoria St
- Howard St

Increase in bus flows recorded:

- Great Victoria St to Bruce St
- Glengall St
- College Avenue

Pedestrian movements

The inherent nature of pedestrian movements is difficult to monitor. As such limited pedestrian movements have been recorded over the 2024 Christmas period at the newly reconfigured GVH/Howard St/Grosvenor Rd Junction.

From the ‘Progress of Belfast on the Move’ page on the DFI website, less than half of people travelling into the city centre in the morning peak are travelling by private car. About 40% of households in Belfast do not have access to a private car.

Going forward unto 40 ‘Vivacity’ sensors are being installed at locations around Belfast. Amongst other things these sensors will be able to monitor the movements of pedestrians at these locations and provide feedback on the effectiveness of interventions. Following calibration these sensors should be operational in November 2025.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Religious belief evidence / information:

In the 2021 Census a population of 1.9 million “all usual residents” is recorded. (Source: NI Census 2021).

The Census records that the breakdown of the “Religion Brought Up In” is Catholic 45.7%; Protestant, and other Christian (including Christian related) 43.48%; Other Religions 1.5% and No Religion 9.32%.

The Census also shows that the breakdown in Belfast as : Catholic 43%, Protestant & Other Christian 36%, Other 3%, No Religion 12%

The 2021 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) data indicates that in 2021, Catholics and Protestants took the same proportion of journeys by private taxi (1% of all journeys for Catholics, 1% of all journeys for Protestants).

2% of all journeys were on public transport, similar to 2020 (3%). There were 20 public transport journeys per person in 2021, around the same as 2020 (27 journeys per person). Given the religious belief breakdown 2% of public transport journeys were made by both Catholics and Protestants.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

Political Opinion evidence / information:

Belfast City population data

National Identity (Classification 1) continued Table population: All usual resident

Total Population	British Only	Irish Only	Northern Irish Only	British and Irish only	British and Northern Irish only	Irish and Northern Irish only	British and Northern Irish only	Other
345,418	27%	35%	17%	<1%	2%	2%	2%	10%

Source: [NI Census 2021](https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today)

The results from the 2022 Assembly elections indicate that just below 40% of voters identify as nationalist with roughly the same percentage identifying as unionist, the balance being largely made up of voters for the Alliance party which has a ‘united community’ vision for Northern Ireland.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

- <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
- <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Racial Group evidence / information:

Total population data

Ethnic Group Table population: All usual residents

Total	White	Irish Traveller	Roma	Indian
1.9M	96.55%	0.14%	0.08%	0.52%
	Chinese	Filipino	Pakistani	Arab
	0.50%	0.23%	0.08%	0.10%
	Other Asian	Black African	Black Other	Mixed
	0.28%	0.42%	0.16%	0.76%
	Other Ethnicities			
	0.19%			

Source: [NI Census 2021](#)

In Belfast, the summary figures are 93% white and 7% other.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

Age evidence / information:

Belfast Age Bands: 0-14 18%, 15-39 37%, 40-64 30%, 65+ 5%.

The [2021 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland Report](#) shows that children (aged 0-15) made 9% fewer journeys than adults (children: 772 journeys, adults: 851 journeys). Seven in ten (70%) of these journeys were by car while one fifth (20%) were on foot. Comparing adults (aged 16+) with children, a similar proportion of journeys were made by car (69%) and on foot (24%). Overall, children made more of their journeys by public transport (6%) than adults (2%). The evidence identifies that older and younger people have a higher reliance on public transport or active travel as within their groups there is a higher proportion that do not have access to cars and vans. Access to healthcare can be a priority issue for older people.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Marital Status evidence / information:

Total population data

Marital and Civil Partnership Status Table population: All usual residents aged 16 and over.

Total	Single (never married or never registered a same-sex civil	Married	In a registered same sex civil partnership
1.81M	36.14%	47.56%	0.09%
	Separated (but still legally married or still legally in a same-sex civil partnership)	Divorced or formerly in a same-sex civil partnership which is now legally dissolved	Widowed or surviving partner from a same sex civil partnership
	3.98%	5.45%	6.78%

Source: [2011 Census | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#) (the 2021 information for this group has yet to be released).

In Belfast, the figures are: Single 50%; Married or Civil Partnership 33%; Separated 5%; Divorced 6%; and, Widowed 6%.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

Sexual Orientation evidence / information:

Total population data

• The Office of National Statistics have indicated that 1.2% of the household population in Northern Ireland identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual.

The Continuous Household Survey 2021 records that for all of NI, 0.7% of participants as gay/lesbian, 0.6% bisexual, 0.3% Other, 1% undetermined and 97.3% heterosexual.

From the 2021 NI census data, Belfast the figures are: Heterosexual 87%; Gay or Lesbian 2.3%, Bisexual 1.5%, 0.3% other and 8.8% prefer not to say/not stated.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Men & Women generally evidence / information:

According to the NI Census 2021 the total population of Northern Ireland is 1.9M, of which 967,043 are female and 936,132 are male. (The 2021 NI Census data included a question on sex and gender identity and results which will be available at a later date).

In Belfast the figures are Female 51%, Male 49%

The 2021 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) data indicated that in 2021, males and females took the same proportion of journeys by private taxi (1% of all journeys for males, 1% of all journeys for females).

2% of all journeys were on public transport, similar to 2020 (3%). There were 20 public transport journeys per person in 2021, around the same as 2020 (27 journeys per person). Given the religious belief breakdown 2% of public transport journeys were made by both Catholics and Protestants.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

Disability evidence / information:

According to 2024 data compiled by confused.com, there were 149,038 blue badge holders in Northern Ireland, of which over 60% are over the age of 65.

However, DFI's Blue Badge System does not differentiate between new and renewal applications. The table below provides detail of the total number of applications received in each of the last five years

Year	Total Applications	Blue Badges Issued	Applications Rejected
2020	45,722	45,026	696
2021	45,097	44,425	672
2022	42,283	42,179	86
2023	52,184	52,042	142
2024	57,439	56,888	551

In Belfast the figures for long term health problem or Disability are;

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Activities not limited 73%; Limited a little 13%; Limited a lot 14%.

The 2021 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland (TSNI) data indicates that in 2021, those with a disability (limiting long-term illness) took a higher proportion of their journeys by private taxi (2%) than those without a disability (1%).

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

Dependants evidence / information:

The Continuous Household Survey 2022/2023 indicates that province wide 7% of primary school pupils use the bus as their main mode of travel to school with the figure rising to 42% for post primary pupils.

Census figures indicate that in Belfast the number or dependant children in household are 0 - 73%; 1 - 12%; 2 -10%; and 3 or more children 5%.

Whilst It is acknowledged that the dependant's category is not just dependent children, additional data on other 'dependants' is not available.

This proposal also affords the opportunity to monitoring traffic / pedestrian movement in key city centre areas.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Needs, experiences and priorities

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision?

(Specify details of the needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories below).

From the above it can be seen that increasing the access and range of options for pedestrian, active travel and public transport users (including Section 75 category users) will benefit some section 75 groups disproportionately as they are more statistically likely to use public transport, private vehicles and taxis.

The interventions proposed intend to strike a balance between private car use and those choosing to use public transport as a preferred mode of travel. The latter is more sustainable from an environmental perspective and will make some contribution to climate change by reducing carbon emissions.

Previous experience regarding the use of taxis in bus lanes (12 week trial undertaken in 2017) gave an indication that allowing Class A taxis into bus lanes had no discernible impact on bus services in terms of journey times and speeds, despite the additional volumes of traffic using the bus lane, which should in theory adversely impact both. [Class A taxis in bus lanes trial 2017 - data review technical report](#)

The trial also sought views for the public on the use of bus lanes by Class A taxis and a majority of respondents indicated that the trial represented a 'Better use of the road space - taking some vehicles out of the main traffic flow, however the majority of respondents to the questionnaire identified themselves as taxi drivers. 95% of cyclists felt that the use of bus lanes impacted on 'safety of cyclists' compared with 1% (7) of Class A taxi drivers and 38% (47) of car drivers.

Religious belief

The planned interventions are to alleviate congestion for all road users irrespective of a s75 identity. Evidence does not highlight specific needs, experiences or priorities for this group or when belonging to more than one category.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Political Opinion

As outlined above.

Racial Group

As outlined at religious belief above.

Age

The data in the [2021 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland Report](#) shows that children (aged 0-15) made 9% fewer journeys than adults (children: 772 journeys, adults: 851 journeys). Seven in ten (70%) of these journeys were by car while one fifth (20%) were on foot. Comparing adults (aged 16+) with children, a similar proportion of journeys were made by car (69%) and on foot (24%). Overall, children made more of their journeys by public transport (6%) than adults (2%).

The evidence identifies that older and younger people have a higher reliance on public transport or active travel as within their groups there is a higher proportion that do not have access to cars and vans. Access to healthcare can be a priority issue for older people.

Older people also rely on well designed and maintained active travel infrastructure as mobility impairments can make it harder to walk and this group can also be more susceptible to trips and falls due to defective and damaged walkways etc. Their continuing independence at home is often dependent on having available a range of transport mode and route options. Retention and enhancement of bus lanes in Belfast City Centre will therefore enhance their accessibility into and through the city by public transport.

Marital status

As outlined at religious belief above.

Sexual orientation

As outlined at religious belief above

Men and Women Generally

The [2021 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland Report](#) shows that looking at those aged 16 and over, men made a similar number of journeys to women in 2021

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

(men: 830 journeys, women: 868 journeys). However, men travelled 24% further than women, averaging 5,846 miles per year, compared to 4,725 miles for women. The car was the most commonly used main mode of transport for both men (67%) and women (71%). There was no real difference between men and women comparing the proportion of journeys made by car. A similar proportion of journeys were made on foot by men (23%) and women (26%). Women may be less likely to drive and can also face complex journeys associated with roles undertaken in the home and related to caring responsibilities.

The proposals outlined above are aimed at having a positive impact on all road users in terms of making the transport network more sustainable, accessible, and safe.

Disability

The [2021 Travel Survey for Northern Ireland](#) (TSNI) data indicates that in 2021, overall, 20% of respondents said they had some difficulty with travel due to a physical disability or long-standing health problem (see definition on page 90). There was no difference between men (20%) and women (20%) in terms of difficulty with travel due to a physical disability or long-standing health problem. As expected, difficulty with travel due to a physical disability or long-standing health problem increases with age: 6% of 16-34 year olds had difficulty with travel compared to 35% of those aged 65 and over.

The Report also showed that those with a mobility issues are more likely to travel by public transport, private vehicle and taxi's than those without mobility issues. The likelihood of traveling by bicycle is the same and people with mobility issues are less likely to walk overall.

Currently permitted taxis in bus lanes are wheelchair accessible vehicles, however the expansion to cover all taxis will give other disabled people a wider choice of taxi accessible on a bus lane.

Allowing all taxis to use the defined bus lanes in Belfast City Centre may make transport more accessible to those with mobility issues as taxis may be able to stop closer to the pick-up and destination points.

Dependants

Some children depend on either buses or taxis to get to school. The extent of the proposal which is limited to bus lanes in the vicinity of the Belfast Grand

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Central Station and in the city centre generally will mean that the impact is not considered significant.

Whilst It is acknowledged that the dependant's category is not just dependent children, additional data on other 'dependants' is not available.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Part 2. Screening questions

Introduction

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 66-68 of this Guide.

If the public authority's conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority's conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority's conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

- measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
- the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of a 'major' impact

- a) The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
- b) Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
- c) Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
- d) Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;

- e) The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
- f) The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

In favour of 'minor' impact

- a) The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
- b) The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
- c) Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
- d) By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

In favour of none

- a) The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
- b) The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Screening questions

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories?

(Please provide details of the likely policy impacts and determine the level of impact for each S75 categories below i.e. either minor, major or none).

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

It is not anticipated that there will be a direct adverse impact on equality of opportunity for this Section 75 Group or a multiple identity that includes religious belief by the change to traffic management arrangements in the city centre.

The options under consideration relate to increase the access and range of options for pedestrian, active travel and public transport movements through Belfast city centre. This in turn should reduce vehicular congestion throughout the city centre for those that cannot avoid using private vehicles in the run up to Christmas 2025 and beyond.

Additionally, the proposal to continue to allow all taxis to use certain bus lanes in the vicinity of the Belfast Grand Central Station works will provide some benefit to the movement of taxis and possibly free up road space in the adjacent lanes. It is therefore anticipated that the scheme will benefit those using taxis and other road users while not impacting bus services.

What is the level of impact? Potentially Minor Positive

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: As per religious belief.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: As per religious belief.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Age**: As per religious belief.

Additionally, as mentioned above in the evidence section, older and younger

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

people have a higher reliance on public transport or active travel as within their groups there is a higher proportion that do not have access to cars and vans, as such the elder and young may benefit from provision of greater public transport accessibility (and service provision) into and through the city centre.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Marital Status**: As per religious belief.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Sexual Orientation**: As per religious belief.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Men and Women**: As per religious belief.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Disability**: As per religious belief. Additionally people with disabilities who need to use buses (or taxis) will have greater choice.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Dependants**: As per religious belief.

What is the level of impact? As per religious belief.

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? NO

(Detail opportunities of how this policy could promote equality of opportunity for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below).

Religious Belief - For all these groups, infrastructure has a role to play in removing barriers and creating opportunities for interaction and engagement between communities. Providing well-designed connectivity links, alongside other actions, can improve equality of opportunity for all who live in or travel through Belfast.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Political Opinion - As outlined in Religious Belief.

Racial Group - As outlined in Religious Belief

Age – As outlined in Religious Belief

Marital Status - As outlined in Religious Belief.

Sexual Orientation - As outlined in Religious Belief

Men and Women generally - As outlined in Religious Belief

Disability – As outlined in Religious Belief

Dependants - As outlined in Religious Belief

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Please provide details of the likely policy impact and determine the level of impact for each of the categories below i.e. either minor, major or none.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Religious belief**:

For all these groups, infrastructure has a role to play in removing barriers and creating opportunities for interaction and engagement between communities. Providing well-designed connectivity links, alongside other actions, can break down historical barriers (physical or otherwise) between segregated communities in Belfast.

What is the level of impact? Minor positive.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Political Opinion**: As outlined above.

What is the level of impact? Minor positive.

Details of the likely policy impacts on **Racial Group**: As outlined in religious belief.

What is the level of impact? Minor positive.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

Detail opportunities of how this policy could better promote good relations for people within each of the Section 75 Categories below:

Religious Belief –Infrastructure has a role to play in removing barriers and creating opportunities for interaction and engagement between communities. Providing well-designed connectivity links, alongside other actions, can break down historical barriers (physical or otherwise) between segregated communities in Belfast.

Political Opinion - As outlined above.

Racial Group - As outlined above in religious belief.

Additional considerations

Multiple identity

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(Every citizen belongs to more than one group - For example: disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).

Yes – potential positive impacts on all multiple identities who travel through Belfast City centre.

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Part 3. Screening decision

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

The decision is not to conduct a full EQIA as it is expected that this short-term traffic congestion plan in and around Belfast city centre will have a minor positive impact on all S75 Groups. This plan will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in conjunction with the experimental traffic control scheme which allows taxis into some bus lanes.

Should evidence be presented that indicates any impact on any specific Section 75 groups the need for an equality impact assessment will be reassessed.

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced - please provide details of this consideration.

No mitigation measures or alternative policies are being considered at this time.

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

N/A

All public authorities' equality schemes must state the authority's arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Mitigation

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is 'minor' and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

No as the minor positive impacts are considered to positively impact on all S75.

If so, **give the reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Timetabling and prioritising

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been ‘**screened in**’ for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

Priority criterion [choose 1 2 or 3 if a full EQIA is to take place]

Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Social need **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Effect on people’s daily lives **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Relevance to a public authority’s functions **Rating 1, 2 or 3**

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details.

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>
2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>

Part 4. Monitoring

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

Part 5 - Approval and authorisation

Screened by: Gabriel Doherty
Position/Job Title: PPTO / RAD HQ
Date: 25 July 2025

Approved by: Liam McEvoy
Position/Job Title: Grade 5 / RAD Director
Date: 11 November 2025

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be 'signed off' and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority's website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.

For Equality Team Completion:

Date Received:	25.07.25	17.10.25	30.10.25
Amendments Requested:	Yes	Yes	No
Date Returned to Business Area:	19.08.25	27.10.25	07.11.25
Date Final Version Received / Agreed:	11.11.25		
Date Published on DfI's Section 75 webpage:	11.11.25		

1. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/news/transport-accessibility-statistics-northern-ireland-report-has-been-published-today>

2. <https://www.infrastructure-ni.gov.uk/articles/progress-belfast-move>