

Active Travel Toolbox

The Infrastructure Impact Tool

Guidance notes

Delivered by Sustrans in partnership with:

About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We are engineers and educators, experts and advocates. We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

Sustrans works in partnership, bringing people together to find the right solutions. We make the case for walking and cycling by using robust evidence and showing what can be done.

We are grounded in communities and believe that grassroots support combined with political leadership drives real change, fast.

Join us on our journey. www.sustrans.org.uk

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1. Introduction

This document provides guidance on how to use Sustrans' Infrastructure Impact Tool (IIT). The IIT estimates the impact, primarily in terms of increases in the number of cycle trips, of investments in specific types of cycling infrastructure.

It uses data from a range of previous interventions to develop a category model for different types of infrastructure, calculating the typical impact of those interventions¹. This document details the inputs required by the tool, and explains the resulting outputs.

It should be noted from the outset that this tool does not attempt to provide a definitive measure of the impact of an intervention. It should be used as part of a range of sources for forecasting the impact of a proposed intervention and should have appropriate sensitivity testing applied to the outputs. The tool does not make any attempt to identify the extent of displacement from alternative routes so this should be considered when reporting the results. It is also important to note that the

2.2 Intervention type

Sustrans' experience indicates that different types of infrastructure interventions have an influence on the number of trips likely to be achieved from investment. Four intervention categories are included in the tool:

- Cycle and pedestrian tracks
- Pedestrian and cycle bridge
- On-road cycle lanes
- Other intervention types

Although more categories would be possible, most interventions can be characterised according to these categories. Interventions that feature multiple types of infrastructure should be categorised according to the main element of the proposed intervention.

2.3 Urban classification of location

To simulate the level of demand for active travel, the IIT groups intervention according to the urban/rural classification of the scheme location. The urban classification used in the tool is based on the Office of National Statistics 2011 rural/urban classification for Lower Super Output Areas (LSOA) in England and Wales². However, because of the relatively small number of LSOAs in some categories, the IIT combines some of the groups (Table 2-1).

Table 2-2 Scottish Government 8 fold Urban Rural Classification (2013-14)

Label	Name	Equivalent IIT classification
1	Large Urban Areas	Urban conurbation (major and minor)
2	Other Urban Areas	Urban city and town
3	Accessible Small Towns	
4	Remote Small Towns	
5	Very Remote Small Towns	All rural
6	Accessible Rural Areas	
7	Remote Rural Areas	
8	Very Remote Rural Areas	

Source: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Information/About/Methodology/UrbanRuralClassification>

Table 2-3 Northern Ireland Settlement Development Limits (2015)

Label	Name	Equivalent IIT classification
Band A	Belfast Metropolitan Urban Area	Urban conurbation (major and minor)
Band B	Derry Urban Area	Urban city and town
Band C	Large town	
Band D	Medium town	
Band E	Small town	All rural
Band F	Intermediate settlement	
Band G	Village	
Band H	Small village, hamlet and open countryside	

Source: <http://www.nra.gov.uk/geography/UrbanRural.htm>

In scenarios where an intervention runs across several differently classified LSOAs, the highest level of urban classification of the relevant LSOAs should be used.

2.4 Proportion of leisure users

This input variable is used to estimate the proportion of trips that could have been made by car. In most cases the data for this input will be gathered from pre-intervention surveys of route users, but where this is not possible a best estimate can be used.

3. Outputs

This part of the document explains the outputs of the IIT.

3.1 Usage

The figures presented are

4. Conclusion

The Infrastructure Impact Tool helps to identify the possible impact of a proposed piece of infrastructure. Used correctly, although the outputs should be seen as indicative rather than precise estimates, the tool will help to simplify the appraisal of cycling interventions which in turn will help with the development of a successful strategy for investing in, and increasing, levels of cycling.