

MID SUSSEX LOCAL PLAN

IMPACTS OF COVID ASSESSMENT

IDENTIFICATION TABLE

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1. IMPACT OF COVID ON TRAFFIC FLOWS

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 As evidenced through DfT official statistics, the COVID pandemic had a significant influence on travel behaviours with overall traffic volumes for most modes still below pre-pandemic levels. This impact in travel demand is acknowledged in the most recent DfT TAG Guidance Unit M4 (Forecasting and Uncertainty) Appendix B, which provides recommendations on how this should be appropriately represented in any updates to transport analysis and appraisal.
- 1.1.2 As such, to interpret the robustness of existing Mid Sussex Local Plan forecasts and how COVID has impacted upon this, traffic data for pre and post COVID periods is analysed and compared against the current model forecasting assumptions. A comparison of neutral months (Feb-June & Sept-Nov, excluding bank holidays) traffic flows for 2019 (the Mid Sussex model base year), is compared against the 2025 post Covid position. Where 2025 data wasn't available, 2024 has been considered. Covid travel restrictions were considered lifted by 2022, enabling users to return to, or redefine, their 'normal' travel patterns.
- 1.1.3 The data considered includes weekdays only and excludes any UK bank holidays within the selected timeframe such as Easter and the May bank holidays. Additionally, any considered outliers within the dataset have already been reviewed and removed to avoid any averages being skewed. **Appendix A** of this note includes a summary of the data that has been included for each link presented within Chapter 2 of this report.

2. LOCAL COUNT DATA

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 Count data within the Mid Sussex District, and wider area for 2019 was compared to 2025 data and evaluated to determine any changes in travel trends. For a few sites that did not have data available for 2025, the data from year 2024 was used in the comparison. The comparison was made between an average flow from Feb-June and Sep-Nov for 2019 with the same months of 2024 or 2025. The analysis was undertaken for the main modelled time periods of the AM and PM Peak hour (0800-0900 & 1700-1800). The analysis was conducted to focus on weekdays, with outliers such as UK bank holidays removed from the datasets.
- 2.1.2 Due to limited available count sites, we have utilised data inside and outside the Mid Sussex District area. Whilst the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) count sites were considered to have comprehensive coverage of the Mid Sussex District, a reasonable number of these counts contained incomplete data, resulting in these count sites not being fit for this purpose.
- 2.1.3 A map detailing the comparison count site locations is shown in **Figure 1**.



- Site **ID 4** – A22 Lewes Road
- Site **ID 15** – A23 London Road between A273 and A27
- Site **ID 34** – A27 within A2038 junction Westbound
- Site **ID 37** – A285 High Street
- Site **ID 40** – A259, Charles Purley Lane
- It should be noted that all remaining Site IDs have kept their numbering in accordance with the 2022/2023 data report.

2.1.6 Data marked with an * uses some or all of 2024 data within the 2024/25 count data.

- 2.1.7 The % change per link is shown graphically for the AM and PM peaks in **Figure 2** and **Figure 3** respectively.



Table 1. Total average peak hour vehicle flows for the 2019 and 2025(2024), and % change between years, for sites within the Mid Sussex District.

ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
1	WSCC	11	A273, Isaac's Lane, Burgess Hill	942	892	-5%	935	861	-8%
2	WSCC	12	A273, Sussex Way, Burgess Hill	1195	1264	6%	1231	1291	5%
3	WSCC	15	A273, Jane Murray Way	1667	1476	-11%	1755	1499	-15%
5	WSCC	26	A272, Bolney Rd, Ansty	1352	1282*	-5%	1375	1222*	-11%
6	WSCC	55	A272, Rocky Lane	866	975	13%	871	987	13%
7	WSCC	56	A272, Haywards Heath, Rocky Lane (Eastbound Only)	665	747*	12%	683	790*	16%
8	WSCC	57	A273, Hassocks, London Rd	1183	1124	-5%	1191	1138	-4%
9	WSCC	58	B2116, Hassocks, Keymer Rd	768	865	13%	771	836	8%
10	WSCC	59	A273, Hassocks, Brighton Rd	985	824	-16%	1059	888	-16%
11	WSCC	60	B2116, Hassocks, Hurst Rd	574	640	11%	585	622	6%
12	WSCC	72	B2114, Handcross, Staplefield Rd	344	297	-14%	293	248	-15%
13	WSCC	99	B2115, Warninglid	411	343	-17%	403	336	-17%
14	WSCC	569	B2036, Balcombe Rd, Balcombe	1253	1233	-2%	1405	1305	-7%
16	Webtris	5997/1	A23, London Rd between B2110 and M23/A264	3498	2973	-15%	3057	2633	-14%
17	Webtris	5881/2	A23, London Road within the A2300 junction	2004	1915	-4%	2925	2444	-16%
18	Webtris	5884/2	A23 within the A281 junction	2704	2389	-12%	2093	2072	-1%
19	Webtris	5996/1	M23 within J11 (off-slip) - SB	1258	1615*	28%	2151	2209*	3%
Total (Within Mid Sussex District)				21669	20857	-4%	22783	21380	-6%

Data marked with an * uses some or all of 2024 data within the 2024/25 count data.
 Sites ID 4,15,34,37 and 40 have been removed due to insufficient 2024/2025 data



Table 2. Total average peak hour vehicle flows for the 2019 and 2025(2024), and % change between years, for sites within Mid Sussex District and within 10 mile buffer.

ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
1	WSCC	11	A273, Isaac's Lane, Burgess Hill	942	892	-5%	935	861	-8%
2	WSCC	12	A273, Sussex Way, Burgess Hill	1195	1264	6%	1231	1291	5%
3	WSCC	15	A273, Jane Murray Way	1667	1476	-11%	1755	1499	-15%
5	WSCC	26	A272, Bolney Rd, Ansty	1352	1282*	-5%	1375	1222*	-11%
6	WSCC	55	A272, Rocky Lane ((East of B2112 Roundabout)	866	975	13%	871	987	13%
7	WSCC	56	A272, Haywards Heath, Rocky Lane (West of B2112 Roundabout)	665	747*	12%	683	790*	16%
8	WSCC	57	A273, Hassocks, London Rd	1183	1124	-5%	1191	1138	-4%
9	WSCC	58	B2116, Hassocks, Keymer Rd	768	865	13%	771	836	8%
10	WSCC	59	A273, Hassocks, Brighton Rd	985	824	-16%	1059	888	-16%
11	WSCC	60	B2116, Hassocks, Hurst Rd	574	640	11%	585	622	6%
12	WSCC	72	B2114, Handcross, Staplefield Rd	344	297	-14%	293	248	-15%
13	WSCC	99	B2115, Warninglid	411	343	-17%	403	336	-17%
14	WSCC	569	B2036, Balcombe Rd, Balcombe	1253	1233	-2%	1405	1305	-7%
16	Webtris	5997/1	A23, London Rd between B2110 and M23/A264	3498	2973	-15%	3057	2633	-14%
17	Webtris	5881/2	A23, London Road within the A2300 junction	2004	1915	-4%	2925	2444	-16%
18	Webtris	5884/2	A23 within the A281 junction	2704	2389	-12%	2093	2072	-1%
19	Webtris	5996/1	M23 within J11 (off-slip) - SB	1258	1615*	28%	2151	2209*	3%
20	WSCC	44	A281 Cowfold, Henfield Rd	519	444	-14%	562	447	-20%
21	WSCC	46	A272, Cowfold, Station Rd	1568	1516*	-3%	1756	1636*	-7%



ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
22	WSSC	4493	A281, Cowfold, Horsham Rd	826	682	-17%	780	656	-16%
23	WSSC	5	A281, Hensfield Common Rd	453	411	-9%	488	445	-9%
24	WSSC	45	A24, High Wood Hill Interchange	1560	1448	-7%	1809	1685	-7%
25	WSSC	902	Gatwick Road, Gatwick Rd Roundabout	1536	1185*	-23%	1523	1189*	-22%
26	WSSC	5719	A2011, Crawley Avenue	3503	3061	-13%	3859	3459	-10%
27	WSSC	38	A283, Bramber	1850	1719	-7%	2001	1794	-10%
28	WSSC	4266	B2139, School Hill	685	564	-18%	616	575	-7%
29	WSSC	4475	A24, Horsham Rd	2292	2178	-5%	3109	2857	-8%
30	WSSC	378	A280, Long Furlong	1260	1267	1%	1548	1494	-3%
31	WSSC	253	A259, Brighton Rd	1467	1311*	-11%	1427	1306*	-8%
32	WSSC	5014	A259, Richmond Rd	1152	1105*	-4%	1159	1041*	-10%
33	WSSC	5035	A270, Shoreham Rd	1676	1684	0%	2022	1948	-4%
35	Webtris	M25/4432A	M25, between J6 and J7 - CW	5174	5280	2%	4287	4516	5%
36	Webtris	M25/4435B	M25, between J6 and J7 - ACW	4252	4255	0%	5947	5614	-6%
Total (Within Mid Sussex District & Buffer within 10 mile buffer)				51442	48967	-5%	55676	52041	-7%
ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
38	WSSC	184	A29, Bury Hill	979	913	-7%	1154	1009	-13%
39	WSSC	1524	Ford Road	564	219	-61%	550	317	-42%
41	WSSC	33	A259, Rowan Rd	1651	1657	0%	2033	1954	-4%
42	WSSC	3	A259 Bognor Rd	1870	1728	-8%	1981	1874	-5%
43	WSSC	9	B2178, St Pauls Rd, Chichester	982	1087	11%	1067	1085	2%
44	WSSC	208	A259, Fishbourne Rd West	1047	1056	1%	956	935	-2%
45	WSSC	461	A286, Birdham Rd	1175	1131*	-4%	1259	1179*	-6%

ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
46	Webtris	30360298	A3 between A3M and B2070	2423	2850*	18%	1587	1757*	11%
47	Webtris	30360299	A3 between B2071 and A3M	1629	1705*	5%	2801	3103*	11%
48	Webtris	A27/9472A	A27, Havant Bypass - EB	5072	4802	-5%	5621	5402	-4%
49	Webtris	A27/9476B	A27, Havant Bypass - WB	5258	4990	-5%	4850	4699	-3%
50	Webtris	A3/0419B	A3, near Thursley National Nature Reserve - NB	2123	2201	4%	1298	1365	5%
51	Webtris	A3/0419A	A3, near Thursley National Nature Reserve - SB	1219	1221	0%	2441	2166	-11%
52	Webtris	A3M/5049B	A3(M) near Waterloooville Golf Course - NB	2400	2381	-1%	2423	2320	-4%
53	Webtris	A3M/5049A	A3(M) near Waterloooville Golf Course - SB	2551	2351	-8%	2903	2769	-5%
54	Webtris	M27/9415B	M27, between J11 and J12	4902	4639*	-5%	5288	4817*	-9%
55	Webtris	M275/9902B	M275, Portsmouth	3709	3219	-13%	3639	3349	-8%
Total (Outside 10 mile buffer)				39554	38150	-4%	41851	40099	-4%
TOTAL ALL SITES				90996	87117	-4%	97527	92139	-6%

Data marked with an * uses some or all of 2022 data within the 2022/23 count data.

Sites ID 4,15,34,37 and 40 have been removed due to insufficient 2024/2025 data



Figure 2. AM Flow Difference between 2019 and 2025 (or 2024)

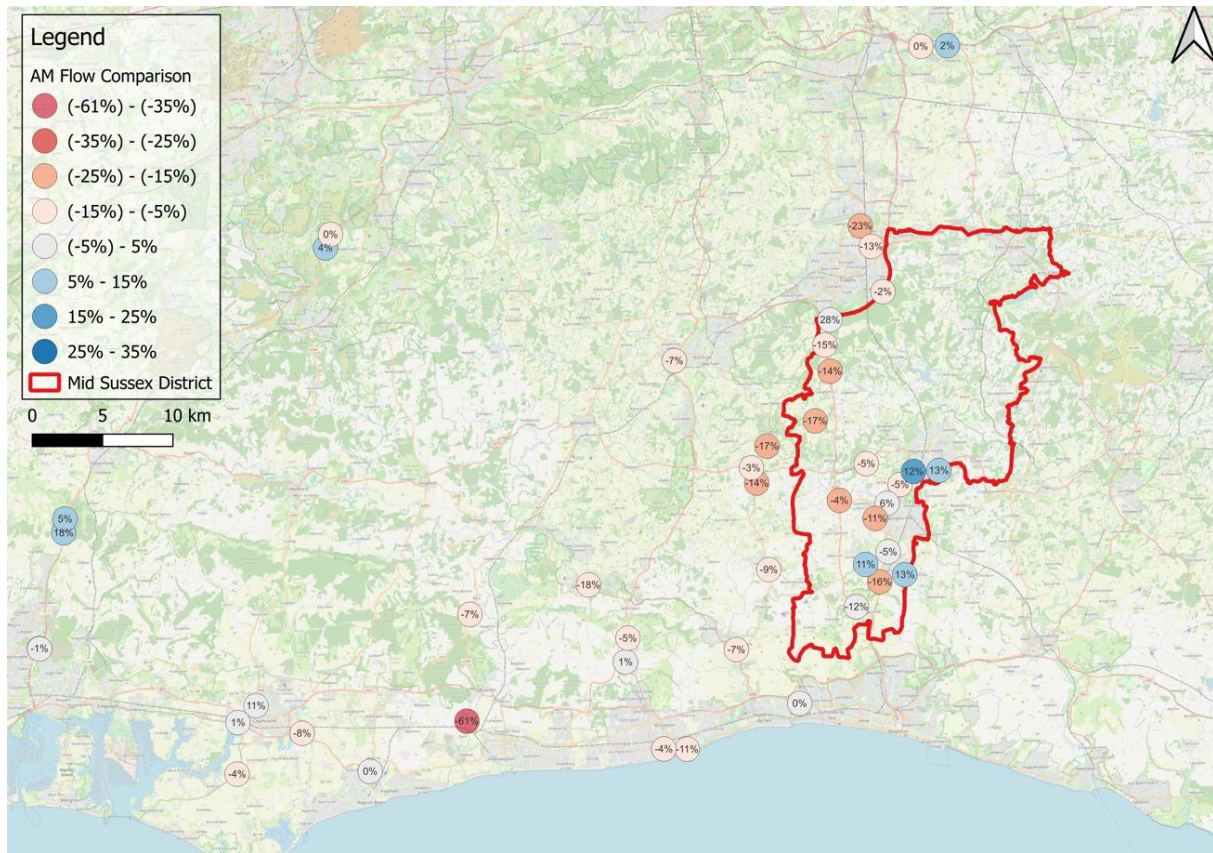
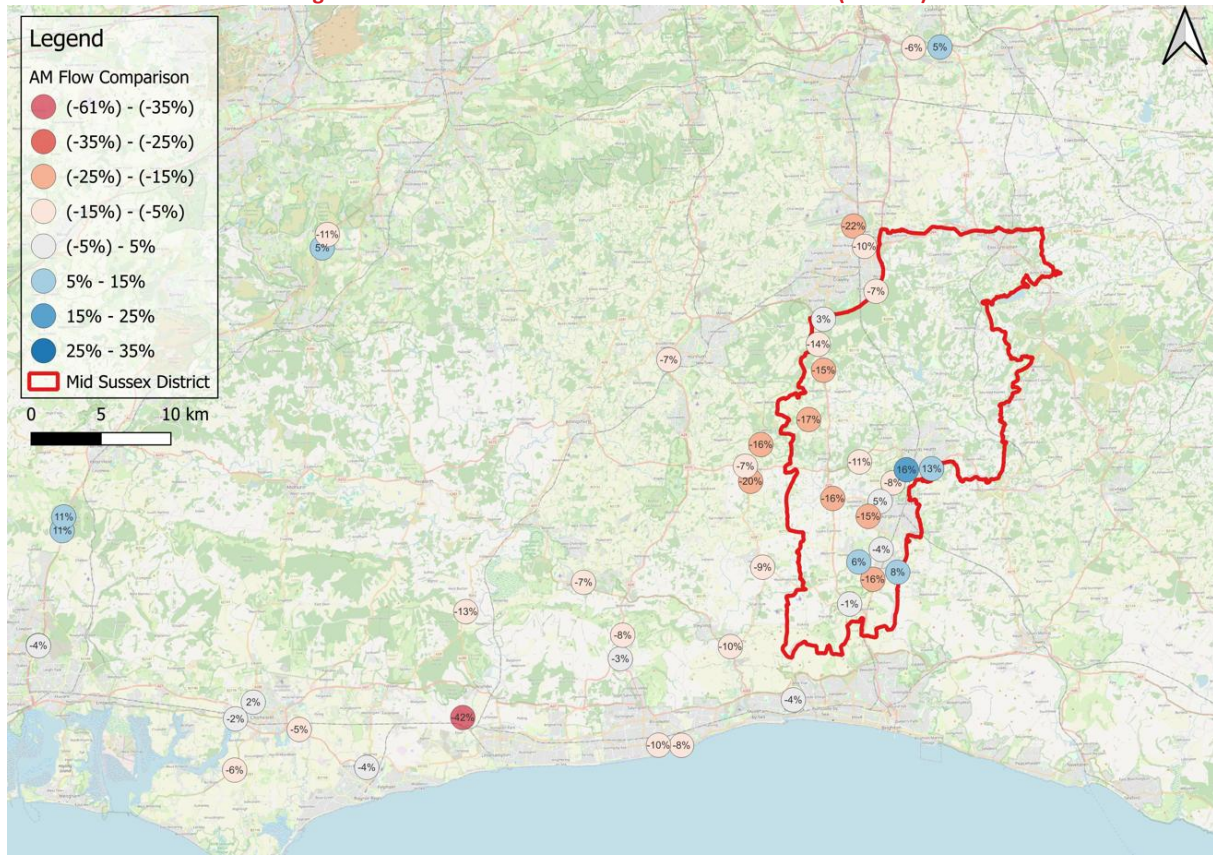


Figure 3. PM Flow Difference between 2019 and 2025 (or 2024)



3. RESULTS

3.1 Summary

- 3.1.1 At a headline level, the comparison confirms that there has been a reduction in traffic flow between 2019 to 2025. The underlying assumption is that this is predominantly the result of behavioural change following the Covid pandemic but for individual sites it may also account for local changes impacting on network capacity (e.g. transport scheme implementation or roadworks).
- 3.1.2 Within Mid Sussex, for the sites included, there is a 4% reduction in total flow in the AM peak hour and 6% reduction in the PM peak hour. For individual sites the changes range from +28% to -17 % in the AM peak and ranges from +16% to -17% in the PM peak.
- 3.1.3 For counts within Mid Sussex or within a 10km buffer of Mid Sussex, there is a 5% reduction in total flow in the AM peak hour and 7% reduction in the PM peak hour. For individual sites the changes range from +28% to -23 %.
- 3.1.4 Within the wider data analysis area (including Mid Sussex data), for all the sites included, there is a 4% reduction in total flow in the AM and a 6% reduction in the PM peak hours. For individual sites the changes range from +28% to -61 %.
- 3.1.5 Flow pattern changes indicate that there is a slightly higher percentage reduction within Mid Sussex District compared to surrounding areas outside the district. This may be an indicator of the types of trips being taken in the district being more susceptible to post covid flow change patterns such as home working.
- 3.1.6 It should be noted that whilst Covid can be considered a driver of flow pattern change in the local and wider area, there are a number of transport infrastructure schemes, development and other factors that may also be influencing flow pattern change. These factors are already accounted for in the forecast models.

3.2 Excluding 2024 Count Data

- 3.2.1 Additional analysis around the exclusion of the 2024 data has been undertaken, to understand if this inclusion of 2024 count data may be providing a higher reduction in % change in flow.
- 3.2.2 Below in **Appendix B, Table 4** details an updated count comparison list which excludes sites that use part or all the post covid count data from 2024 data. The results indicate:
- Within Mid Sussex the AM has an 6% reduction, whilst the PM has a 8% reduction.
 - Within Mid Sussex and 10 mile buffer, the AM has a 5% reduction, whilst the PM has a 6% reduction.
- 3.2.3 It can be concluded that there is still a notable percentage reduction in trips on the network post-covid. The percentage change when only considering sites with 2025 data is smaller than when using a combination of both 2024 and 2025 data, however there remains a greater reduction within Mid Sussex than the surrounding area.



APPROVAL

Version	Name		Position	Date	Modifications
1	Author	Abi Lindsay	Principal Consultant	01/05/2026	Version 1 – 2025 data revision
	Checked	Emma Jolly	Associate	05/05/2026	
	Authorised	Emma Jolly	Associate	05/05/2026	
2	Author	Abi Lindsay	Principal Consultant	09/06/2026	Version 2 – Following WSCC comment
	Checked	Emma Jolly	Associate	09/06/2026	
	Authorised	Emma Jolly	Associate	09/06/2026	



APPENDIX A

Table 3. Data Input 2024 vs 2025 availability .

	FEB	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	SEPT	OCT	NOV
1								
2								
3								
5								
6								
7					*			
8	*						*	
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43								
44								
45								

Not included
 2025 data
 2024 data
 * Partial month included

(NB: Site 7 includes Eastbound only)



46								
47								
48								
49								
50								
51								
52								
53								
54								
55								



APPENDIX B

Table 4. Total average peak hour vehicle flows for the 2019 and 2023only, and % change between years. Excluding any 2022 data for the post covid count data.

ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
1	WSCC	11	A273, Isaac's Lane, Burgess Hill	942	892	-5%	935	861	-8%
2	WSCC	12	A273, Sussex Way, Burgess Hill	1195	1264	6%	1231	1291	5%
3	WSCC	15	A273, Jane Murray Way	1667	1476	-11%	1755	1499	-15%
6	WSCC	55	A272, Rocky Lane ((East of B2112 Roundabout)	866	975	13%	871	987	13%
8	WSCC	57	A273, Hassocks, London Rd	1183	1124	-5%	1191	1138	-4%
9	WSCC	58	B2116, Hassocks, Keymer Rd	768	865	13%	771	836	8%
10	WSCC	59	A273, Hassocks, Brighton Rd	985	824	-16%	1059	888	-16%
11	WSCC	60	B2116, Hassocks, Hurst Rd	574	640	11%	585	622	6%
12	WSCC	72	B2114, Handcross, Staplefield Rd	344	297	-14%	293	248	-15%
13	WSCC	99	B2115, Warninglid	411	343	-17%	403	336	-17%
14	WSCC	569	B2036, Balcombe Rd, Balcombe	1253	1233	-2%	1405	1305	-7%
16	Webtris	5997/1	A23, London Rd between B2110 and M23/A264	3498	2973	-15%	3057	2633	-14%
17	Webtris	5881/2	A23, London Road within the A2300 junction	2004	1915	-4%	2925	2444	-16%
18	Webtris	5884/2	A23 within the A281 junction	2704	2389	-12%	2093	2072	-1%
20	WSCC	44	A281 Cowfold, Henfield Rd	519	444	-14%	562	447	-20%
22	WSCC	4493	A281, Cowfold, Horsham Rd	826	682	-17%	780	656	-16%
23	WSCC	5	A281, Hensfield Common Rd	453	411	-9%	488	445	-9%
24	WSCC	45	A24, High Wood Hill Interchange	1560	1448	-7%	1809	1685	-7%
26	WSCC	5719	A2011, Crawley Avenue	3503	3061	-13%	3859	3459	-10%
27	WSCC	38	A283, Bramber	1850	1719	-7%	2001	1794	-10%
28	WSCC	4266	B2139, School Hill	685	564	-18%	616	575	-7%
29	WSCC	4475	A24, Horsham Rd	2292	2178	-5%	3109	2857	-8%
30	WSCC	378	A280, Long Furlong	1260	1267	1%	1548	1494	-3%
33	WSCC	5035	A270, Shoreham Rd	1676	1684	0%	2022	1948	-4%
35	Webtris	M25/44 32A	M25, between J6 and J7 - CW	5174	5280	2%	4287	4516	5%

ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
36	Webtris	M25/44 35B	M25, between J6 and J7 - ACW	4252	4255	0%	5947	5614	-6%
Total (Mid Sussex District & Buffer within 10 mile buffer)				42444	40204	-5%	45602	42648	-6%
ID	Source	Site#	Site Location	AM Peak 2019	AM Peak 2025	AM % Diff	PM Peak 2019	PM Peak 2025	PM % Diff
38	WSCC	184	A29, Bury Hill	979	913	-7%	1154	1009	-13%
39	WSCC	1524	Ford Road	564	219	-61%	550	317	-42%
41	WSCC	33	A259, Rowan Rd	1651	1657	0%	2033	1954	-4%
42	WSCC	3	A259 Bognor Rd	1870	1728	-8%	1981	1874	-5%
43	WSCC	9	B2178, St Pauls Rd, Chichester	982	1087	11%	1067	1085	2%
44	WSCC	208	A259, Fishbourne Rd West	1047	1056	1%	956	935	-2%
48	Webtris	A27/947 2A	A27, Havant Bypass - EB	5072	4802	-5%	5621	5402	-4%
49	Webtris	A27/947 6B	A27, Havant Bypass - WB	5258	4990	-5%	4850	4699	-3%
50	Webtris	A3/0419 B	A3, near Thursley National Nature Reserve - NB	2123	2201	4%	1298	1365	5%
51	Webtris	A3/0419 A	A3, near Thursley National Nature Reserve - SB	1219	1221	0%	2441	2166	-11%
52	Webtris	A3M/50 49B	A3(M) near Waterloo ville Golf Course - NB	2400	2381	-1%	2423	2320	-4%
53	Webtris	A3M/50 49A	A3(M) near Waterloo ville Golf Course - SB	2551	2351	-8%	2903	2769	-5%
55	Webtris	M275/9 902B	M275, Portsmouth	3709	3219	-13%	3639	3349	-8%
Total (Outside 10 mile buffer)				29425	27825	-5%	30916	29243	-5%
TOTAL ALL SITES				71869	68029	-5%	76518	71891	-6%

