NESTRANS REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY /2021

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The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire

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The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire
In association with Steer Davies Gleave

FOREWORD

Councillor Kevin Stewart
Chair of Nestrans

The Scottish Government has made clear its purpose: “to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth”. In the north east this is being embedded into our development plans through the development of a new joint Structure Plan and the Aberdeen City and Shire’s Economic Manifesto.

Nestrans and our local authority partners have a major role to play in making this sustainable economic growth happen. Aberdeen City and Shire is one of the most economically productive regions in Europe with an enviable quality of life, but faces major transport challenges due to its geography, rapid growth and distance from key markets. This strategy sets out what needs to happen over the period to 2021 to provide a transport system that ensures continued economic growth, improves accessibility and protects the environment and our quality of life in Aberdeen City and Shire.

This strategy was originally produced in 2007, following extensive consultation. Since then we have been busy taking forward its themes through a series of projects and action plans. Following guidance from the Scottish Government, it has been revised and updated but its objectives and direction have not changed. In keeping with a document that looks ahead to 2021, this strategy is essentially high level and will be followed by a detailed Delivery Plan later this year.

We are also working closely with both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils on the development of Single Outcome Agreements for our area. Transport plays a key role in achieving the national outcomes in the Concordat between local and central government and delivery of this strategy will contribute to achieving these outcomes at a local, regional and national level.

This strategy is ambitious but also realistic. It recognises the importance of improved connectivity, but also that we all have a responsibility to consider the impact of our travel choices on each other and the environment. We recognise and support the priority this Government has attached to tackling climate change and the challenging targets it proposes. If we are to strike a balance between improving our accessibility and economic competitiveness, while reducing carbon emissions, it is up to everybody in the north east to play their part.

We are grateful to all those who have contributed to the development of this strategy. Delivering it will require joint working between Nestrans, local authorities and the private and voluntary sectors, as well as Government support. The consultation we undertook demonstrated a high level of support for our objectives and proposals and this provides us with a strong foundation to work together to the benefit of the north east and Scotland as a whole.

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INTRODUCTION 01

THIS REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY (RTS) SETS OUT THE CHALLENGES FACING ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE OVER THE NEXT FIFTEEN YEARS AND HOW WE WILL ADDRESS THEM.

It includes a comprehensive appraisal of the problems and issues affecting transport in the north east and sets clear objectives for improving transport in the region between 2007 and 2021.

The strategy was originally submitted to Ministers in March 2007. Following the election in May 2007 and consideration by the new Government, Ministers issued further advice on the content of the Strategies, separating interventions into a separate Delivery Plan leaving the RTS document itself as a high level strategic document. This April 2008 version complies with this latest guidance. Following completion of the Action Plans described in this document, a Delivery Plan will be prepared for agreement with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils.

This update of the Strategy has also provided the opportunity to re-assess the objectives to check consistency with the new Governments stated purpose in its economic strategy and ensure that the RTS meets the principles of not only the regions Community Plans but also contributes to meeting the Government's national objectives. Appendix A shows how the RTS contributes to these local and national objectives. This strategy has also been used to advise the development of the Single Outcome Agreements that Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils agreed with the Scottish Government.

Aberdeen City and Shire is a major driver of the Scottish and UK economy and home to around 438,000 people. The City of Aberdeen is complemented by important regional towns and a varied rural area, stretching from the Cairngorms National Park to the North Sea and Banffshire coasts.

The accessibility of Aberdeen City and Shire to the rest of Scotland, the UK and the wider world is essential to achieving sustainable economic growth and a high quality of life. Transport connects people to jobs, healthcare, education and other public services. It also helps connect communities and enables people to access retail and

leisure facilities, meet with friends and family, promoting social inclusion across the region. The RTS has a key role to play in shaping the future of Aberdeen City and Shire and contributing to the achievement of wider economic and social goals for the region.

In developing the draft regional transport strategy, Nestrans was not starting from a blank sheet of paper. As a voluntary transport partnership, we developed the Modern Transport System (MTS) – a 14 strand integrated strategy for improving transport in the region up to 2011 – which was endorsed by the Scottish Executive in 2003. The MTS has been taken as a starting point for the RTS and is integrated into the package of measures it contains.

As a voluntary transport partnership, Nestrans worked in partnership with others to take forward the priorities in the Modern Transport System. This included securing Scottish Executive commitment to build and fund jointly with the Councils, the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR), progressing detailed appraisal work for Aberdeen Crossrail, securing Scottish Executive commitment to dualling the A90 between Balmedie and Tipperty, working with Aberdeenshire Council on the Northern Maritime Corridor project and working with the Scottish Executive and Aberdeen City Council to identify solutions to the problems at the Haudagain roundabout in Aberdeen. We have worked through the Airport Business Development Forum and supported Aberdeen Airport in developing new air routes and have developed partnership working with the freight and maritime sectors.

The RTS has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and Scottish Government guidance. It has also been influenced by the local transport strategies produced by the local authorities, Structure and Local Plans, the regional economic manifesto developed by Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum (ACSEF), Community Plans and other major policy documents. It is in line with the national purpose and national objectives as set out by the new Government's Economic Strategy, takes account of the principles set out in the Climate Change Bill, supports the national objectives and policies set out in the 2004 White Paper, Scotland's Transport Future, and has been influenced by the National Transport Strategy (NTS), which was published by the Scottish Executive, following a period of consultation.

Transport is a subject which is fundamental to our daily lives, our economic future and the quality of our environment. The RTS covers a 15-year period from 2007 to 2021, which is likely to be a time of major change. The strategy has a role in both leading and responding to economic and social changes over this period, while seeking to limit the impact that transport has on the local and global environment. There are some major issues to be tackled and difficult choices to be made. We consulted widely on the draft strategy and have revised the final version where appropriate to take account of consultation responses. The next section provides more detail on the process we have followed.

The RTS sets out the context, issues and challenges which have helped determine our objectives. It then goes on to detail the process of generating and appraising options for achieving these objectives and sets out the preferred strategy resulting from this appraisal and prioritisation. The document proposes creating a series of Action Plans that will detail deliverable projects to meet the strategy objectives. These Actions plans will be brought together into a prioritized and costed Delivery Plan that will be agreed with our partner Local Authorities and other funding partners.

Nestrans

Nestrans is the Regional Transport Partnership for the north east of Scotland. Our purpose is to develop and deliver a long-term regional transport strategy and take forward strategic transport improvements that support and improve the economy, environment and quality of life across Aberdeen City and Shire.

Constituted as the North East of Scotland Transport Partnership under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005, Nestrans began work on 1 April 2006. It is one of seven statutory Transport Partnerships set up across Scotland.

Nestrans' area covers both the City of Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Its Board is made up of four Councillors from each of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, four non-councillor members appointed by the Minister for Transport and two professional advisers from each of the Councils. Its Chair is Councillor Kevin Stewart.

The new Partnership builds on five years of Nestrans operating as a voluntary partnership between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Scottish Enterprise Grampian and Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce.

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PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE RTS

02

THE PROCESS OF DEVELOPING THE DRAFT RTS HAS BEEN BASED ON PRINCIPLES OUTLINED IN THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE GUIDANCE FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGIES ISSUED IN MARCH 2006 AS WELL AS SCOTTISH TRANSPORT APPRAISAL GUIDANCE (STAG).

In line with these guidelines, Nestrans has developed the strategy by involving stakeholders and with consultation forming a key element throughout. The strategy has been developed in an objective-led fashion as described in STAG, following the guidance on Participation and Consultation set out in Chapter 13 of STAG. Nestrans has used the consultation to inform each stage of the process with the outcomes of consultation helping the Board to reach decisions.

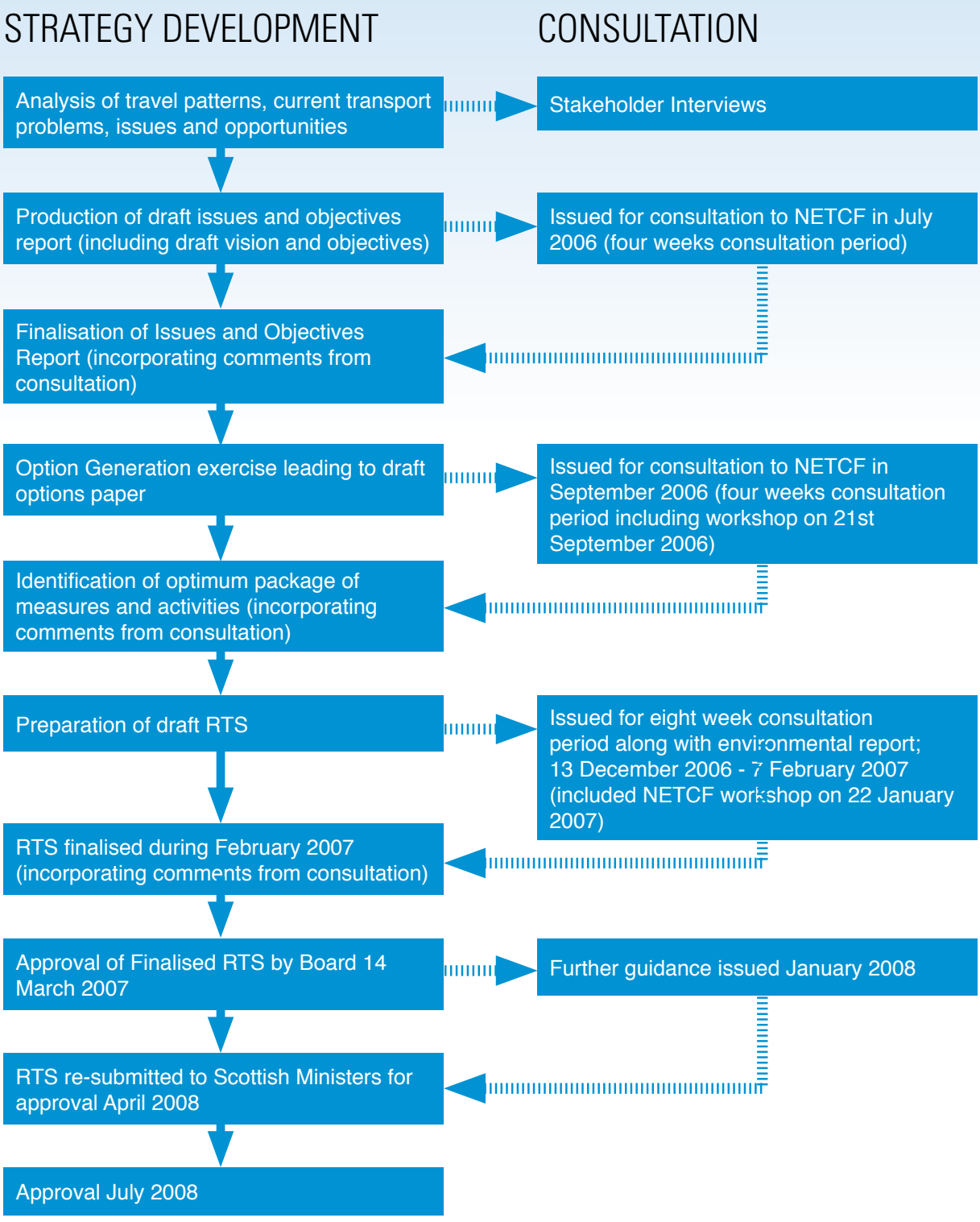
The RTS development has been reflected by a process of engagement with the appropriate key stakeholders at each stage of strategy development. Consultation with the North East Transport Consultative Forum (NETCF) formed a key input to the development of the Issues and Objectives Report and the Option Generation Report. Each of these papers was circulated for consultation prior to being finalised to ensure stakeholders' views and comments were taken into account.

Throughout the process of developing the draft RTS and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), there was dialogue with the NETCF and this formed a key aspect of the consultation methodology. This forum is made up of stakeholders drawn from the public, private and voluntary sectors in the north east, and they had a key input into the development of the RTS. This involvement was complemented by a formal consultation exercise to gather the views of the wider community. Details of the Consultation process and how comments have helped to shape this strategy are contained within a separate Consultation Report. The methods utilised were in compliance with those suggested in STAG and the RTS Guidance which emphasises the importance of using a wide range of methods to enable the highest possible inclusion rate for stakeholders across the community. Methods used ranged from formal consultation through distribution of documents to meetings and workshops.

A full Consultation Report, outlining the processes of involvement and a summary of responses and how they have influenced the strategy, has been produced and forms a separate supporting document to this strategy.

Figure 2.1 outlines the process of developing the RTS, highlighting how key papers and the strategy itself have been fed in to by the results of the consultation programme.

FIGURE 2.1 PROCESS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE RTS



Analysis of current transport patterns, problems, issues and opportunities involved carrying out a wide range of in-depth face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders in both private and public sectors in the north east. These were conducted throughout April and May 2006, the output from this was the development of a draft vision and supporting objectives for the draft RTS. The draft vision and objectives fed into production of an issues and objectives report which was distributed in July 2006 for consultation with stakeholders over a one month period.

The option generation exercise identified a broad range of initial measures and activities that had the potential to satisfy one or more of the strategy's objectives. These were placed into alternative packages so that their relative merits in meeting the strategy's objectives could be determined. Following a process of sifting, appraisal and prioritisation, an optimum package of measures and activities was identified that on balance best meets the strategy's objectives. This led on to the development of the draft RTS which was the subject of consultation and has now evolved into the Finalised Strategy. This Finalised Strategy, submitted to Ministers in March 2007 has been updated to take account of further guidance from Ministers received in January 2008 and events, including the election, new Government priorities, new strategic and policy documents and the completion of a number of projects identified within the strategy.

Alongside the processes outlined in Figure 2.1, a SEA was developed in conjunction with the RTS. Environment constitutes one of the five key objective areas on which STAG is based. Consideration of the environmental effects of transport schemes and policies is therefore fundamental in project design and appraisal. A key challenge of the RTS has been to achieve progress across each objective, environmental effects are wide-reaching and environmental considerations should accordingly involve the whole community. The SEA was carried out in accordance with the Scottish Executive Strategic Environmental Assessment Tool Kit.

Along with the consultation on the draft RTS, the SEA was also subject to consultation with statutory consultees through the SEA Gateway and was made available to the public through the Nestrans website. Comments and suggestions have been taken on board and amalgamated into the final RTS and a final version of the SEA including the responses from Gateway consultees and consideration of their key points was submitted to the Scottish Executive along with this RTS. This revision and update to the RTS is not of itself substantial enough to warrant re-visiting the SEA.

In accordance with the Scottish Government Guidance, equality issues have been considered throughout the process of developing the strategy. The needs of minority groups and people with mobility impairments have been included in considerations and representatives included on the stakeholder Forum which has helped to direct the strategy development. A Health Impact Assessment, incorporating the principles of Equality Impact Assessment, has been undertaken as part of the development of the Health and Transport Action Plan.

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LINKS TO OTHER PLANS AND STRATEGIES

03

THE RTS RECOGNISES THE LINKAGES BETWEEN TRANSPORT AND THE ECONOMY, ENVIRONMENT, HEALTH AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN THE NORTH EAST.

Transport can play a key role in supporting wider regional objectives and as a statutory body, Nestrans has a duty to participate in community planning, which brings together the main public sector bodies to co-ordinate the delivery of public services. The RTS has been developed in the context of other plans and strategies, which exist at national, regional and local level. While the planning horizons of these plans and strategies may differ, it is important to ensure that there is an integrated approach to the development of the regional transport strategy.

THE GOVERNMENT ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The Government's Economic Strategy, published in November 2007, made clear that the Government's overriding purpose is to increase sustainable economic growth. This purpose is supported by five strategic objectives and fifteen national outcomes, which have been agreed in the Concordat between Cosla and the Scottish Government and form the basis for a new performance framework for all of the public sector in Scotland. These are set out in more detail in chapter 6. This will underpin the work of local government through Single Outcome Agreements, which are to be agreed between local authorities and the Scottish Ministers.

There is an important role for the RTS in delivering the Government's Economic Strategy and Nestrans will work in partnership with the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum (ACSEF), which brings together key public and private sector bodies in the north east to plan and co-ordinate economic development activity. Transport is identified within the regional economic development strategy as being a key ingredient of delivering sustainable economic growth and Nestrans maintains close links with ACSEF and its member organisations.

The RTS objectives reflect and contribute positively towards the regional economic objectives, identified in "Building on Energy", the economic manifesto for Aberdeen City and Shire. The key infrastructure projects that Nestrans has promoted and supported since its formation contribute to improving the region's connectivity and competitiveness. The measures and activities contained in the strategy build on these and meet the economic objectives of the strategy.

LAND USE PLANNING

There is a clear linkage between transport strategies and land-use planning. National planning guidance, SPP17 Planning and Transport, provides a clear direction for planning authorities on the need for development that reduces the need to travel and promotes the use of sustainable modes of transport. Nestrans works closely with senior officers responsible for planning in both local authorities and the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Planning Committee provides a forum for the two Councils to co-ordinate planning and transport. The Structure Plan for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, North East Scotland Together, sets out strategic land-use policy for the period 2001 to 2016 and includes provision for key aspects of the existing MTS, including the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, Aberdeen Crossrail and expansion of park and ride.

The Structure Plan is being reviewed and an Issues Paper has been produced for public consultation. Nestrans has been involved in the development of the new plan through the stakeholder consultations and in briefing meetings with the Structure Plan team. A provisional draft of the Structure Plan was published on 2 April 2008. This provisional draft is a consultation with the Local Authorities with a draft Plan issued in May 2008 for wider consultation until July 2008. The Nestrans Board considered the new Plan fully at its 18 June 2008 Board meeting.

The provisional draft Plan, covering the period to 2030 beyond the RTS 2021 horizon, has been drafted taking into account the RTS and has a central core of reducing the need for travel which is fully in line with the RTS. The Plan envisages the bulk of development along the main transport corridor in the area, the Laurencekirk to Aberdeen to Huntly corridor with 50% of proposed development taking place in Aberdeen City assisting the “reduced need for travel” philosophy.

The Plan also permits development along the Aberdeen to Peterhead corridor, primarily in its later years, encompassing the Energetica proposals arising from the ACSEF Economic Manifesto. These proposals are in the early process of development but are being taken forward in a manner to ensure that there is a linkage between the Energetica proposal, the Structure Plan and the Regional Transport Strategy. The Energetica proposal will impact on the Regional Transport Strategy and Nestrans will work with the Structure Plan team and ACSEF as the proposal becomes more refined to ensure that the transport impacts and requirements are an integral part of the development process.

Local plans provide more detailed policy and allocation of land-use within Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City. The Aberdeenshire Local Plan was adopted in June 2006, covering the period up to 2015, while the new Aberdeen City Local Plan has been the subject of a Public Local Inquiry and amendments are being consulted on prior to adoption by the Council.

COMMUNITY PLANNING

Community Planning provides a strategic context and process for the development and implementation of plans at a local level. The Community Plans developed by the local authorities and their public sector partners for both Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City recognise the role of transport in achieving their respective visions. Nestrans has a duty to participate in Community Planning and has formally joined the Community Planning Partnerships in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire. Nestrans will also continue to co-ordinate the North East Transport Consultative Forum and ensure that this feeds into the Community Planning frameworks in both local authority areas. Through Community Planning, Nestrans will seek to ensure that its transport objectives contribute to wider community objectives and will work with its Community Planning partners to achieve common goals, particularly with regard to health, social inclusion and economic development.

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK (NPF2)

The National Planning Framework is Scotland's national spatial strategy and provides high-level guidance on future land use development. The Planning etc (Scotland) Act 2006 enshrines a formal role for the National Planning Framework in the planning system. The current document highlights the key role of the east coast transport corridor between Aberdeen and Newcastle. A revised National Planning Framework, NPF2, produced under the new legislation, was published in draft in January 2008 and a final version will follow later in 2008. Although a number of National Developments have been identified, these do not include any of the key strategic priorities within the north east. Nestrans will continue to press for strategic schemes in the north east to be recognised as national developments.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGIES (CLIMATE CHANGE BILL)

The Scottish Executive's strategy for sustainable development is set out in Changing our Ways, which is intended to place sustainable development principles at the heart of decision-making. It provides national policy guidance to local authorities and other bodies on adopting these principles in their plans and activities. Changing our Ways sets the context for Scotland's Climate Change programme, which links to the UK Government's programme. This sets out Scotland's contribution to meeting the UK Government's commitments on carbon reduction (the 'Scottish Share') and establishes a Scottish Target which seeks to go beyond achieving the Scottish Share to make a larger contribution to tackling climate change. The Scottish Government has committed to reducing emissions by 80% by 2050.

Considerations for a Climate Change Bill are currently being consulted upon, with a view identifying actions to create a long-term framework for the current and successive administrations in Scotland to ensure that emissions are reduced to achieve the above target.

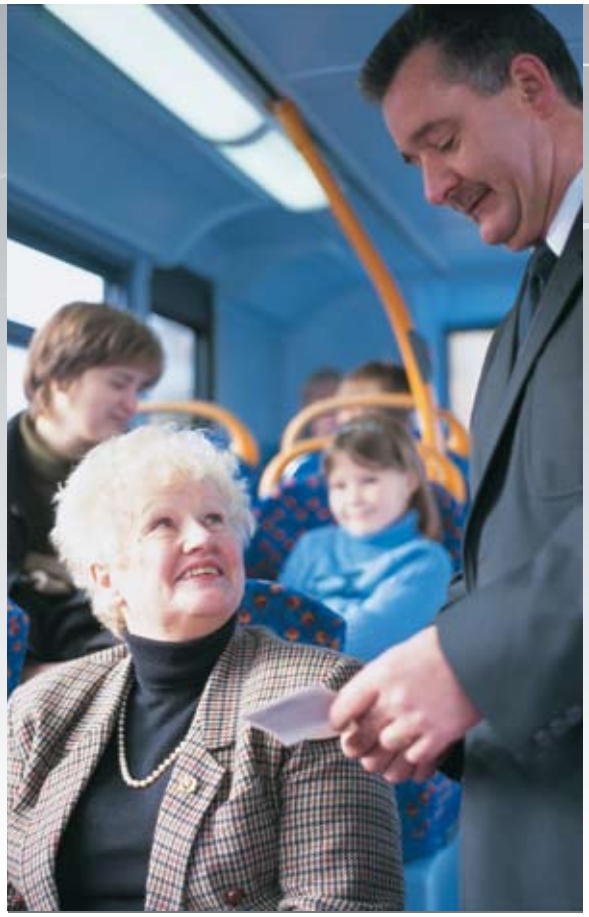
The Scottish Executive expects that public sector bodies across Scotland will play their part in helping to achieve this target and encourage action by others. The importance of reducing carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions has been underlined by the Stern Review into the Economics of Climate Change, which highlights both the dangers to the planet of global warming, but also the economic costs that will arise through failure to act now. The evidence base on the threat of climate change has also been enhanced by the recent publication of a report by the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change.

NATIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The then Scottish Executive published Scotland's first National Transport Strategy (NTS) in December 2006. This followed a commitment in the 2004 Transport White Paper and extensive public consultation over the past year, to which Nestrans and partners in the region have responded.

The NTS's national objectives for transport have been supported by the new Government. The NTS sets out how it proposes to achieve these over the period to 2025. In so doing, the NTS establishes three strategic outcomes for the NTS to deliver, to:

- Improve journey times and connections
- Reduce emissions
- Improve quality, accessibility and affordability



The NTS makes clear that these three strategic outcomes will inform transport decision-making and that regional transport partnerships, local authorities and transport operators will be key partners in achieving these outcomes. In particular they will set the context for the Strategic Transport Projects Review which is being taken forward by Transport Scotland and will determine expenditure on transport in the decade beyond 2012. This review is due to be published later in 2008.

The NTS is also accompanied by three more detailed action plans focusing on Scotland's railways, buses and freight. These provide more specific guidance on the Government's policies towards these sectors of transport and point to the role that regional transport partnerships will play in delivering improvements.

LOCAL TRANSPORT STRATEGIES

Local authorities are expected by the Scottish Government to develop Local Transport Strategies (LTS) for their areas, although this is not a statutory requirement. The first round of Local Transport Strategies were produced by both Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils in December 2000 and submitted jointly to the then Scottish Executive. Together they formed the basis for the Modern Transport System. The Scottish Executive issued guidance on the second round of revised Local Transport Strategies in February 2005, which are intended to cover three-year periods. Aberdeenshire Council published its final LTS in March 2007, following public consultation. Aberdeen City Council approved its finalised strategy in March 2008 again following public consultation. The Local Transport Strategies and information gathered through their respective consultation exercises form an important input to the development of the RTS.

LINKS TO OTHER REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGIES

The area covered by this regional transport strategy has land borders with those produced by two other regional transport partnerships: HITRANS for the Highlands and Islands and Tactran covering the Angus, Dundee, Perth and Kinross and Stirling area. There is also a maritime connection with the Shetland Islands covered by ZetTrans, the Shetland Transport Partnership. Nestrans maintains close connections with its neighbouring regional transport partnerships and is particularly keen to work together on common issues such as strategic road and rail corridors and the ferry connections between Aberdeen and Lerwick. The role of Aberdeen's Foresterhill hospital complex as a regional centre beyond the boundaries of Aberdeen City and Shire also calls for close working to ensure good transport provision to its facilities.

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CONTEXT
ABERDEEN CITY & SHIRE

04

THE POPULATION OF ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE WAS ESTIMATED TO BE 437,810 IN 2005 BY THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE FOR SCOTLAND. THIS COMPRISED 202,370 IN ABERDEEN CITY AND 235,440 PEOPLE IN ABERDEENSHIRE.

The 2006-2031 Strategic Forecasts produced by the two local authorities show slightly higher levels of population, and project an increase in population between to 464,000 by 2021. The population in the City is expected to rise by 5.7% to 214,000 and by 6.2% in Aberdeenshire to 250,000. Over the period 2006-2021, household numbers are expected to increase by 15% across the region, with a significant increase in single person households. The current population forecasts will be dependent on economic performance and inward migration, which will be significant factors in population growth.

The region makes a strong contribution to the Scottish economy with the wider Grampian area (that is Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and the neighbouring area of Moray) outperforming Scotland as a whole in terms of economic performance over a number of years. In recent years, the region has ranked third in the UK with 2004 Gross Value Added (GVA - a measure of economic performance) per head 25% above national average, reflecting the economic structure and the level of wealth generated by the oil and gas sector.

Evidence on earnings shows that the region enjoys higher male average earnings than for Scotland and Great Britain as a whole. Scottish Executive Statistics show that average earnings in the north east were 3% higher than GB in 2004, despite Scotland being 10% below the GB average. Again this reflects earnings in the oil and gas related sector, which despite accounting for only some 15% of employment is a dominant player in the regional labour market. Unemployment rates within the region are relatively low. Aberdeen City has an average rate of 1.7% (2005), whereas Aberdeenshire has a rate of just 1.1% (2005). These rates have been consistently lower that the Scottish average since 1996 (in 2005, the national average was 2.8%).

However, there are areas within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire where incomes are low and unemployment is high, and which are ranked among the 5% most deprived areas in Scotland, according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation. These include areas within the Woodside, Tillydrone, Middlefield, Cummings Park, Torry and Seaton neighbourhoods in Aberdeen, which are the focus of regeneration masterplans as well as parts of Peterhead and Fraserburgh in Aberdeenshire, which are covered by the Building Buchan - New Beginnings initiative.

The way land use and the economy have developed has led to housing and employment locations being widely dispersed. More than half of the region's population (56%) lives outside the City and employment density averaged across the north east is very low. High income levels, rural living, employment sites away from transport nodes and other factors combine to generate high levels of car ownership and car use with Scottish Household Statistics showing that 59% of Aberdeen residents and 70% of Aberdeenshire residents drove to work in 2005/06.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) produce statistics of carbon dioxide emissions for local authority areas. The results estimated that in 2004, around a million tonnes of carbon dioxide was emitted from road transport in Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire, which equates to a slightly lower per capita level than the national average and represents about 8% of the total for Scotland.

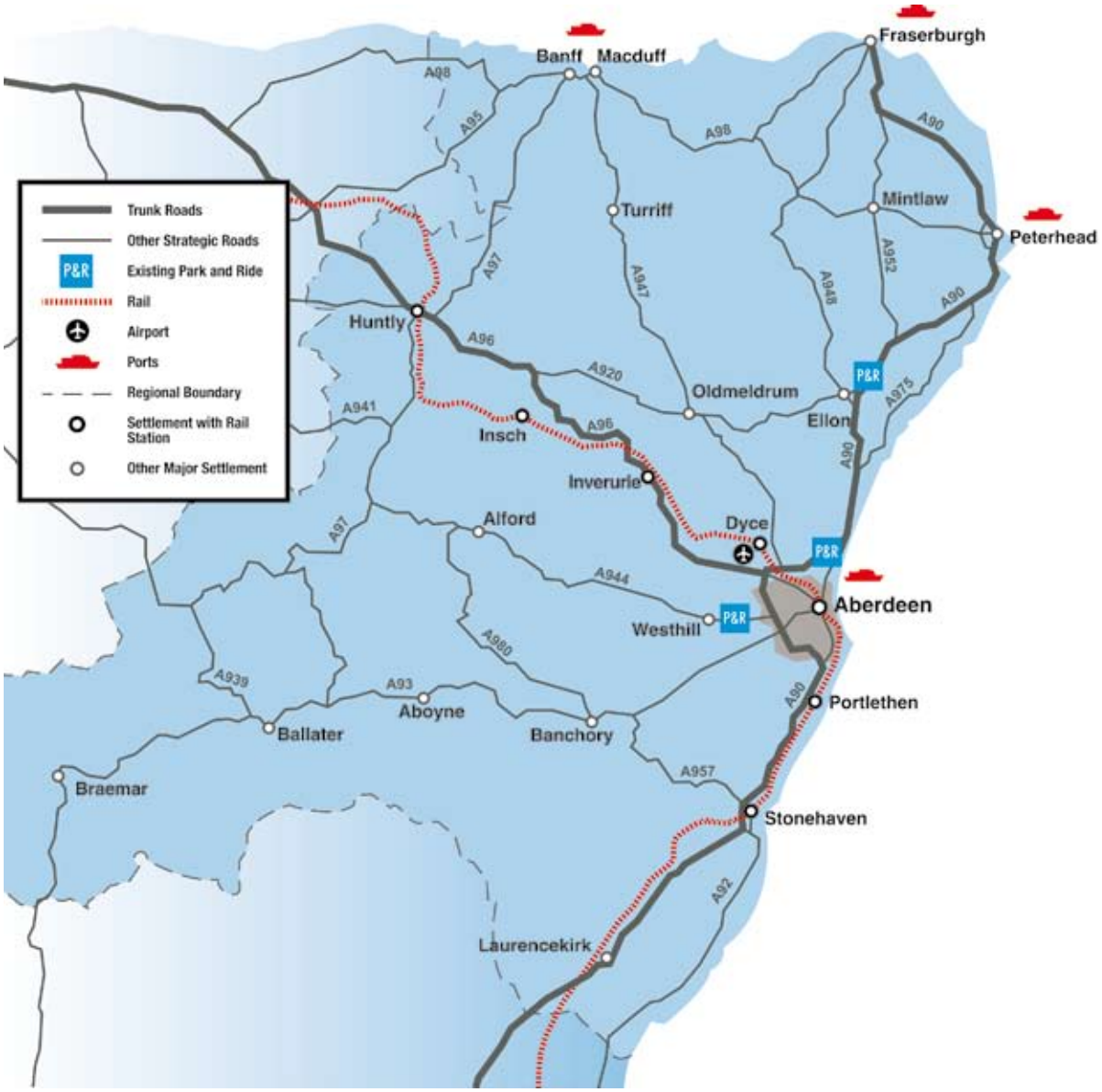
In terms of safety, casualty numbers in road traffic accidents have been falling - the number of casualties (all severities) dropped by 33.4% between 1994/98 and 2001/05 in Aberdeen and by 18.6% in Aberdeenshire. This is against a backdrop of increasing traffic within the region, but the authorities aspire to seeing greater reductions in the numbers of casualties from 2005 levels of 43 fatalities, 226 serious and 1,079 slight injuries.

TRANSPORT IN ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE TODAY

TRANSPORT NETWORK

The north east has an extensive transport network with air, sea, and land links that connect the region both internally and externally to the rest of the UK and beyond. This is illustrated in Fig 4.1.

FIGURE 4.1: EXISTING SITUATION



ROAD NETWORK

The main trunk road linking the north east to central Scotland and the rest of the UK is the A90, which links the region to Dundee, Perth, Edinburgh, Glasgow (via A9 and M80/A80), and beyond. The other major trunk road serving the region is the A96, which connects the north east to Inverness and the Highlands. There are 132 miles (211 kilometres) of trunk roads in the north east, representing 3% of road length but carrying 28% of all traffic. In addition the A92, A93, A98, A952, A944 and A947 roads also cater for strategic and regional movements within the north east. There are 470 miles (745 kilometres) of A class local roads in the area which carry 27% of all traffic. The remaining 45% of traffic uses the region's 4,000 miles (5,500 kilometres) of minor roads.

Currently the A90 goes through Aberdeen and acts as a local distributor as well as the main strategic route connecting the north and west of the region. This leads to significant congestion and slow and unreliable journey times across the city. These problems are being addressed by the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, which is scheduled to open in 2011, and will substantially improve cross-City travel enabling better access to key industrial and business locations and to the airport as well as contributing to other objectives.

The north east is served by several bus operators, but the majority of commercial services are operated by either First Aberdeen or Stagecoach Bluebird. First Aberdeen provides a network of services in Aberdeen City, including dedicated Park and Ride services and a service to Aberdeen Airport. Stagecoach Bluebird provides the majority of inter-urban services between Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen, including services which call at Aberdeen Airport, Ellon Park and Ride and two routes which extend through to Inverness. There are important inter-city coach links between the major centres and linking the region to other centres in Scotland and beyond. Many local bus services within Aberdeenshire operate under contract with financial support from Aberdeenshire Council. Through a Quality Partnership involving the local authorities and the two major operators, which Nestrans has recently joined, bus priority measures have been introduced and bus shelter facilities have been upgraded to enhance the overall bus network, in conjunction with enhanced vehicles and investment.

At present, the north east is served by three bus-based park and ride sites, one located at Bridge of Don next to the AECC (600 spaces), another at Kingswells on the A944 (950 spaces) and a site at Ellon (250 spaces). All three facilities operate between 10 and 15 minute frequency services into and out of Aberdeen City Centre. Rail park and ride facilities are also provided at Stonehaven and Inverurie railway stations.

National Cycle Network Route 1 runs through the north east, which links Stonehaven, Aberdeen, Turriff and Banff, and forms part of the North Sea Cycle Circuit. Former railway lines have also been utilised in the creation of the Formartine and Buchan Way and the Deeside Way cycle routes. In addition to these, a number of on-street cycling facilities have been introduced across the north east.

RAIL NETWORK

The rail network in the north east is relatively limited. While there are links to Inverness (trains every two hours) and to Edinburgh and Glasgow (trains every hour), parts of the network are single track and there are numerous places where speeds are constrained, making for extended journey times and a lack of regular hourly services. The frequency of commuter services is limited, although these are increasing well-used. Within the north east there are seven stations - at Huntly, Insch, Inverurie, Dyce, Aberdeen, Portlethen and Stonehaven. First ScotRail provide some 42 services per day to or from the region, Cross Country provide services direct to and from Penzance and there are three National Express services per day to and from London via the East Coast Main Line, in addition to the overnight Caledonian Sleeper service.

MARITIME

Aberdeen and Peterhead are the principal sea ports within the north east. Aberdeen Harbour handled over five million tonnes of cargo in 2006 and inputs an estimated £100 million per year into the local economy. Aberdeen is also the port for passenger and freight ferries to Orkney and Shetland, and passenger interchange with rail and bus services is an important issue for foot passengers. Northlink operates a daily overnight sailing to Lerwick (which calls at Kirkwall four times per week).

Peterhead Harbour is the UK's leading white-fish port with over £70 million worth of white fish being landed at Peterhead each year. A number of smaller ports operate in the region, the largest of which are Fraserburgh and Macduff.

In recent years, further maritime opportunities have been examined, notably through the European Union's Northern Maritime Corridors Project.

AIRPORT

Situated seven miles north-west of the city centre, Aberdeen Airport handles over 3 million passengers per year and serves around 38 different destinations. Over the last two to three years, many new routes have been introduced and Aberdeen Airport has experienced the fastest passenger growth of all Scottish airports. The airport serves a wide area and despite a range of surface connections, over 90% of all those travelling to/from the airport currently do so by car or taxi. The airport is also the world's busiest heliport, handling over 35,000 helicopter movements every year, the majority serving the off-shore oil and gas industry, which is a key sector of the economy.

ABERDEEN'S LEVEL OF CAR OWNERSHIP IS 24% GREATER THAN THE AVERAGE OF SCOTLAND'S LARGE URBAN AREAS; ABERDEENSHIRE HIGHER THAN COMPARABLE RURAL AREAS

TRANSPORT USE

Settlements within the north east are relatively widely dispersed and incomes are generally high. This leads to car ownership and car use being high reflecting dispersed land use patterns for employment and housing, pointing to a high level of dependency on the car for mobility. The following results summarise many of the findings contained in the Scottish Household Survey.

Car ownership in the north east is higher than the national average of 66% of households, and the rate of increase is slightly higher than the average for Scotland, however a significant number of people do not have access to a car.

- Aberdeen's level of car ownership with 85,600 cars is 24% greater than the average of Scotland's large urban areas.
- In Aberdeenshire, car ownership of 123,100 cars is 21% greater than in comparable rural areas (the average of accessible small towns, remote small towns and accessible rural areas).
- The 2001 Census showed that in Aberdeen over 30% of households (and in some Aberdeenshire towns over 20% of households) do not have access to a car.

Car use is high in the region; half of motorists in the north east of Scotland use their car every day. Within the population aged 17 and over:

- 42% of residents in Aberdeen City use a car every day, compared to 33% in urban Scotland as a whole
- 57% of Aberdeenshire residents use a car every day, compared to 48%
- in rural areas averaged across Scotland although often this is a necessity which causes economic hardship requiring other sacrifices.

These proportions have remained relatively stable between 1999/2000 and 2005/2006.

The proportion of journeys to work by car drivers in the north east has risen steadily from 60% in 1999/2000 to 65% in 2005/2006, in contrast to the average for Scotland which remained fairly static at around 60%.

Parking is a factor in the marginal cost of using a car and parking policy and charges can be important in affecting car use. In the north east, free parking provided by employers is more prevalent than Scotland as a whole, and this plus provision of company cars is a factor in high car use for work journeys.

While use of the car has grown, in contrast, numbers travelling to work by bus have dropped relative to the national average. In 2005/06 among employed adults:

- 17% of city residents travelled to work by bus compared to 18% in large urban areas
- 5% of Aberdeenshire residents travelled to work by bus compared to 7% in rural areas generally
- 14% of city residents walked to work compared to 15% in urban areas
- 12% of Aberdeenshire residents walked to work compared with 13% in rural areas.

Levels of cycling to work were similar in all areas at between 1% and 2%, despite cycle ownership being relatively high. In 2005/06 just 3% in Aberdeen and 3% in Aberdeenshire had cycled as a means of transport in the previous week; 4% in Aberdeen and 6% in Aberdeenshire cycled for pleasure or to keep fit.

The region suffers from pockets of severe congestion such as south and north of Aberdeen at the River Dee and Don crossings. These bottlenecks bring delays, uncertain travel times and lost productive time and add to costs for business and for freight movements. All vehicle use adds to greenhouse gas emissions, and single occupant cars, which tend to be the main cause of peak hour congestion, add more emissions per traveller than other surface modes. Despite this, surface transport emissions per head as contained in the Defra statistics are only 55% of the Scottish average in the city, but 34% above the average in Aberdeenshire, and overall transport emissions are slightly below the Scottish average.

Overall, bus use is relatively low in the north east, although investment in improved services and fleet has resulted in growth in recent years. In both the City and Shire, the proportion of residents using buses more than twice a week was below the corresponding urban and rural averages, and especially so in Aberdeenshire. Access to services and service frequencies are factors that affect how often people use buses:

- 79% of city residents live within 6 minutes walk of a bus stop and a service frequency of three or more buses per hour, compared to 65% for large urban areas in general;
- Only 10% of Aberdeenshire residents live within 6 minutes walk of a bus stop and a service frequency of at least three buses per hour, compared with 15% in rural areas on average.

Survey findings on views on bus services show more positive views in the north east than other areas with regard to running on time, frequency, meeting needs, personal safety/security and information. However, residents of both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire were more negative than residents of Scotland's urban and rural areas with regard to interchange (integration) and value for money.

The rail network in the north east is very limited in extent and less than 1% use rail for travel to work, although in towns with a good rail service this can rise to 4%, such as Stonehaven. Scottish Household Survey data show that:

- 87% of Aberdeen residents had not used a train in the month prior to the survey, compared to 79% in large urban areas across Scotland;
- 90% of Aberdeenshire residents had not used a train in the month prior to the survey, compared to 84% in rural areas on average.

The north east depends to a greater degree than many regions on the ability of people to travel into and out of the region on business - not just the day and short stay business visitor but also for people working offshore. Research indicates that access to a range of frequent direct air services is important for inward investment and city development. Aberdeen currently has services to many major UK and European business destinations including direct services to 24 business destinations. There are three direct rail services to London per day via the East Coast, plus an overnight sleeper service. There is one Cross-Country service per day, providing a direct link to the Midlands of England.

FREIGHT

In addition to the energy sector, the north east continues to have a manufacturing base which requires efficient movement of freight both outwards for fresh foods including fish, and for finished and processed goods, and inwards for raw materials and semi-finished goods. The region also imports goods for wholesale and retail sales. The forestry industry also relies on a good road network to enable movements of timber. In the period 2000 to 2005, an average of almost 30 million Tonnes (excluding oil and gas which are predominantly moved by pipeline) were moved to/from or within Grampian per year.

- Around 80% is moved by road, 18% goes through the region's ports;
- An annual average of 15.6 million tonnes of freight is moved within Grampian region: much of this is high bulk items moving short distances;
- Around 3.2 4 million tonnes of freight per year was lifted by HGV in Grampian and moved to the rest of Scotland; and another 900,000 tonnes was moved to the rest of the UK;
- In the same period 3.3 million tonnes of freight moved from the rest of Scotland to Grampian, along with 969,000 tonnes from elsewhere in the UK;

- In volume terms, there is an imbalance of trade with “exports” amounting to 17% compared to “imports” of 21% of total freight moved (62% remains within the Grampian area);
- The value of Scottish road freight accruing to the region is estimated in a report for the Scottish Executive in 2006 at £263 million, 11.5% of the Scottish total; and the value of cross border road transport is £262 million, 7.9% of the Scottish total.

Aberdeen and Peterhead are among Scotland’s major ports, with other ports operating at Fraserburgh, Macduff and many smaller harbours

- Department for Transport Statistics show that together Aberdeen and Peterhead account for 11.3% of all Scottish domestic cargo by volume, but only 5% of Scotland’s domestic and foreign maritime traffic by volume;
- In-bound traffic exceeds outbound at both ports by volume;
- 76% of Aberdeen’s traffic is domestic, 10% is to the EU, 8% is to other short sea destinations and 3% is to deep sea destinations;
- Aberdeen handled 8.4% of Scotland’s container traffic and 12.2% of unaccompanied trailers, but less than 1% of road goods vehicles.

Sea freight is expected to grow with the development of coastal and short sea ferry services, and the region’s ports are likely to see the development of domestic, coastal and short sea services. Deep sea activity might also grow depending on the location and scale of oil-related exploration and development activity.

Rail freight currently accounts for a relatively small proportion of freight transport (around 1%) in the north east, and at the Scotland level accounts for only 3.5% of total freight by value. Between 2000 and 2006, air freight volumes declined at all of Scotland’s major airports except Edinburgh. Aberdeen saw decline of 17% to 4,000 Tonnes. Air freight is a complex area because a high proportion of air freight is trucked from Scotland to English airports and is not recorded as air freight within Scotland.

TRANSPORT IN ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE IN THE FUTURE

The then Scottish Executive’s vision for the future of transport in Scotland was elaborated in the National Transport Strategy and accompanying documents, published in December 2006. The new Scottish Government has endorsed the principles therein and its national outcomes are consistent with the objectives identified. The direction of future transport policy in a UK context will also be influenced by the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change and the Eddington Transport Study, both commissioned by HM Treasury and published in late 2006. This strategy needs to recognise the role it can play in helping to minimise emissions of greenhouse gases which can contribute to climate change and also to consider the implications of changes, such as the likelihood of flooding events, weather changes and extreme events.

Any strategy for the next 15 years has to have a degree of future proofing against unforeseen change and risks. The need for future transport to be more sustainable and to contribute much lower greenhouse gas emissions has become considerably more apparent during the preparation of the Regional Transport Strategy. Accordingly, the future is likely to be one in which the need for improved connectivity to promote economic development will go hand in hand with the imperative of emissions reduction and within a more sophisticated national regulatory and fiscal regime, incorporating measures to promote carbon reduction. In Aberdeen City and Shire it will be important to ensure that any fiscal or regulatory measures introduced in a Scottish or UK context to reduce carbon emissions or tackle congestion do not disproportionately affect the economy of the region and its future development.

Future demographic changes are likely to put upward pressure on levels of car use. The numbers licensed to drive will increase, as older people continue to drive while young people become new drivers and join the car using population. Further, there are clear trends towards smaller households with more cars per household, and it is expected that there will be some 30,000 more households in the region by 2021. Income growth is expected to continue to contribute towards increasing the numbers of cars per head, although income growth might be at a slower rate than it has been over the last 30 years. Overall, therefore, car ownership is expected to grow.

Many commuting trips using the strategic road network already have origins and destinations that are dispersed, driven by the attractiveness of rural living and dispersed centres of employment. This has been reinforced by rising real costs of public transport compared with cars. These trends are likely to continue, however there is a need to ensure that this does not lead to a consequent increase in road traffic.

In the next 10-15 years new measures to tax car use and incentivise greater use of other modes may be introduced nationally. Depending on the levels of fiscal costs, such measures could begin to change travel and also choices of where to live and work, which over the long term could change the nature of the region's economy and settlement pattern.

The AWPR will increase connectivity across the region and between key employment centres and the airport, enabling the labour market to be more efficient and increasing overall employment. Land use policy will need to ensure that the increased connectivity provided by the AWPR does not encourage further dispersal of homes and businesses, which could increase car travel. This will need to be complemented by transport measures to improve the availability and attractiveness of alternatives to car travel if traffic growth is to be restrained and then reversed. A consultants report into "Locking in the Benefits of the AWPR" identifies complementary measures to ensure that improvements are protected for the long term.

Developments in vehicle technology may lead to reductions in emissions. However technological change has tended to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary and while there are cleaner fuels and better electric and hybrid cars available now, these have not yet become commonplace. There is however potential for Aberdeen City and Shire to capitalise on its role and reputation as a centre for energy technology by developing or piloting alternative fuels. This should not be confined to private cars as significant emissions savings can be made through buses and trains adopting alternative fuels.

Measures to reduce trends towards using ever larger vehicles and engines and to tighten emission controls would have a more immediate impact, and here locally targeted measures could be useful in

addition to possible national changes in taxation. It is also likely that manufacturers would respond to continued high oil prices by producing more efficient vehicles, and that consumers would switch to smaller cars and change travel and possibly lifestyle patterns.

High energy costs and national charging mechanisms would also help to change the way information technology (ICT) is used. This is an area that could see revolutionary changes, especially if businesses and workers seek to increase levels of home working and reduced travel to meetings. However there are limits to extent to which ICT will reduce the demand for travel and despite recent advances in ICT, face-to-face contact has remained important and business travel has grown. Flexible working practices and initiatives such as home-working and increasing use of technology including video-conferencing can make significant contributions to reducing travel and may be increasingly relevant in the future.

It will be necessary to balance measures to reduce carbon emissions against their impact on connectivity and economic growth. People will continue to need to travel for economic, social and other purposes, but it is important to break the link between economic and traffic growth. Reducing carbon emissions without damaging economic performance and competitiveness will be critical in the future where economic success depends on attracting and retaining talent.

The introduction of a national system of road user charging may be brought forward within the next ten years. The impact of any system on transport and the economy of the north east would depend on the detail of implementation. However it is possible that if combined with consequent reductions in Vehicle Excise and fuel duties, that the cost of car use could actually be reduced outwith city centres and congested routes.

As well as better connectivity within the north east, there is a need to sustain and enhance the region's place competitiveness. Aviation is an important means of connecting the region to the rest of the UK and Europe. However, high speed rail connections between Scotland and London would bring about a step-change in journey times and accessibility, which would rival the speed of air travel. Development of high speed rail between London and Scotland is being considered, but services would need to extend to north east Scotland for the region to significantly benefit. There would also be a long lead-in time before such improvements were realised. In the meantime a significant reduction in journey times between Aberdeen and Edinburgh / Glasgow would improve connectivity between Scotland's three main cities and enable rail to compete more effectively with the car. Coastal and short sea shipping services are also expected to grow in importance for freight movements, while the capacity and capability of rail freight is likely to continue to be developed as an alternative to using heavy goods vehicles.

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The Transport Partnership
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ISSUES

05

THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER PAINTED A PICTURE OF THE CURRENT CONTEXT IN WHICH THE STRATEGY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED, AND OUTLINED TRENDS AND CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE.

This analysis has led to the identification of twelve strategic issues which the strategy needs to address. These issues are founded on a strong evidence base of published data and research, other plans and strategies and wide stakeholder consultation.

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

In line with the Scottish Government's over-riding purpose, sustainable economic growth has been identified as a key objective within "Building on Energy", the economic development strategy developed by ACSEF and the structure plan for the area, North East Scotland Together. The competitiveness of the north east as a location in which to live, work, visit and do business is crucial to achieving this goal and transport is a key element of this.

The connectivity of Aberdeen City and Shire and its accessibility to the rest of Scotland, the UK and the wider world is essential to both supporting the competitiveness and growth of existing businesses, but also providing the right environment for business formation and development, inward investment and increased leisure and business tourism. Access to a large, skilled labour market is important to companies seeking to invest or develop in the region and transport has a clear role to play in connecting people with employment and education opportunities.

It is recognised that the north east economy needs to diversify in order to ensure that current economic growth is sustained and strengthened in the future. The Regional Transport Strategy has a key role to play in supporting the Global Connections theme in A Smart Successful Scotland and should help achieve regional economic development goals and initiatives. It is also important that there is synergy between investment in transport infrastructure and future land use plans for the region.

REDUCING EMISSIONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES AND POLLUTANTS

Climate change is acknowledged as an international priority that requires action at all levels to reduce carbon emissions. The transport sector contributes 22% of carbon emissions in Scotland, with 86% of these emissions arising from road transport. While transport emissions in the north east are close to the average for Scotland, this level is already unsustainably high, so real reductions in emissions are required if transport's impact on climate change is to be reduced. The Scottish Climate Change Programme and the consultation on a Climate Change Bill set out Scotland's contribution to meeting the UK Government's commitments to reducing carbon emissions – these will require action at regional and local, as well as national levels.

The Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change provides a detailed evidence base for the climate challenge that we face and concludes that acting now to stabilise and reduce carbon emissions considerably outweighs the costs in the future. Both the National Transport Strategy and the Stern Review acknowledge that there is a major challenge in reducing carbon emissions, while maintaining economic competitiveness. However Stern recognises that there are considerable opportunities to be gained from moving to a low-carbon economy. Measures to tackle climate change do however need to be balanced against the need to ensure continued connectivity of the region to sustain employment and economic growth. The key is to uncouple economic growth and traffic growth through reducing the need to travel and encouraging a shift to more sustainable modes of transport. There is a major role for the public sector in leading this change, but to make a real impact action is required at all levels, particularly through the travel choices made

by organisations and individuals. Emissions from vehicles are a major cause of poor air quality which can damage health and affect the attractiveness of the urban environment. Part of Aberdeen City Centre has been designated an Air Quality Management Area, which requires setting and monitoring targets for improving air quality and proposals are being considered for declaring 2 further areas at Haudagain junction and on Wellington Road between the Queen Elizabeth II Bridge and Balnagask Road. While advances in engine technology have reduced harmful emissions, these have been offset by traffic growth and congestion. It is important to improve air quality, both through reducing traffic growth in urban centres and promoting the use of cleaner engines and alternative fuels.

ENSURING SOCIAL INCLUSION

Transport has a key role to play in ensuring social inclusion and improving quality of life. Lack of access to transport can limit access to employment, services and health care, despite an overall high wage economy and low unemployment. In areas of multiple deprivation and poor health, mobility is limited by the availability of public transport

and lack of access to a car, which affects 31% of households in Aberdeen and 16% in Aberdeenshire, although these figures are higher for disadvantaged areas. Bus access is better than average in the City, and an above average proportion of people walk to work there. While access to a car in Aberdeenshire is relatively high, for low income households the cost of using a car reduces money available for other things. The availability and frequency of public transport are also factors which affect mobility in remote rural areas and lack of access to transport can limit employment and training opportunities. Transport therefore has an important role to play in supporting the regeneration initiatives being taken forward in both Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire by the local authorities and Community Planning partners.

Public transport plays an important role in providing access to education and social opportunities for young people. The accessibility of public transport to older and disabled people involves the availability of low-floor buses, the proximity to a bus stop with a frequent service, the accessibility of information and ease of interchange.

Demand responsive and community transport initiatives have an important role to play in filling gaps in the transport network and providing tailored services for people who have difficulty accessing conventional public transport.

IMPROVING SAFETY AND SECURITY

The north east has had a good record of road casualty reduction, but there are still far too many deaths and serious injuries on our roads. Engineering, education and enforcement all have a role to play in preventing accidents and reducing deaths and serious injuries. Many serious accidents in the north east occur on the trunk and primary road network and inappropriate speed is a major contributory factor in a high proportion of these. Reducing the number and severity of road accidents needs to continue to be a priority at both a national and north east level and the contribution to improving road safety should be a major consideration in determining investment in road improvement schemes. Partners across the north east are working on a joint Casualty Reduction Strategy, recognising the importance of the issue and considering opportunities to improve reduction rates further.

Addressing real and perceived safety issues is important in encouraging people to use public transport, walk or cycle. Personal security needs to be built into the design of waiting and interchange facilities and CCTV on trains and buses can help deter and detect crime, while reassuring passengers.

Street lighting, streetscape design and the provision of pedestrian crossing facilities improve safety for pedestrians, but there is a particular need to provide safe crossing facilities on busy trunk roads which bisect communities. Segregated cycle ways reduce conflicts between cycles and vehicles and increase the safety of users.

IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY

The north east's geographical location presents connectivity challenges, with significant surface journey times to the rest of the UK and onwards to continental Europe. However Aberdeen City and Shire is an outward-looking region, with the percentage of local companies increasing their market share in international markets rising year on year over the past decade.

External connections by rail, road, air and sea are vital to the north east economy and contribute to its attractiveness as a place to live, work, invest or visit. There is a need for constraints on the strategic road network outside the region to be addressed in order to reduce journey times and increase their reliability. Faster rail services to Edinburgh, Glasgow and London are needed to enhance both real and perceived accessibility. High speed rail would have a major impact on the connectivity of the region and it is important that the benefits of any new High Speed Rail links extend to north east Scotland to ensure that the relative peripherality of the region does not increase.

Aviation is central to improving connectivity and direct air connections from Aberdeen have a key role in sustaining the economic growth of the region. The environmental impacts of aviation need to be mitigated, but it is important that any future measures to tackle carbon emissions from aviation do not increase the relative peripherality of the north east. The region has well-established global maritime links and it is important that these continue to develop, particularly for the transport of freight, which is highly efficient and can contribute to reducing road traffic. EU programmes such as the Motorways of the Northern Seas and the Northern Maritime Corridor project can assist in developing links and identifying future opportunities.

INCREASING PUBLIC TRANSPORT USAGE

National data shows that car use in the north east is high and bus use is low compared with urban and rural benchmarks. The National Transport Strategy identified increased use of public transport as a key means of tackling congestion and reducing carbon emissions. Improving public transport has been a key focus for Nestrans and is central to achieving increased rail and bus use. Responses to the consultation on the RTS showed strong public support for improved bus and rail services and innovative approaches that will deliver a step-change in passenger numbers. Travel to work and education were identified as particular areas for action. Surveys suggest that a consistent factor in low bus use is perceived poor value for money, along with availability of services and interchange problems. In Aberdeen, people recognise they could use alternatives to the car but far fewer rural area residents believe there are viable alternatives. An ageing

population and the need to encourage more sustainable travel habits by young people will require improvements and innovation in public transport, including development of demand responsive transport, backed by measures to tackle out of date perceptions and change travel choices.

ENSURING EFFICIENT MOVEMENT OF GOODS

The north east's economy is underpinned by efficient and reliable freight movements, which are predominately undertaken by road. Although road is the dominant mode because much of the movement is entirely within the region, the costs of movement of freight by road are high. Due to distances to market this disadvantages manufacturing industries within the north east. The AWPR will improve local journey times and reliability, but there remain constraints elsewhere in the national road network.

The recent success of the North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group in securing loading gauge improvements opens up the potential for further transfer of freight from road to rail. Modern freight terminal capacity is now available, but further enhancements to infrastructure and increased incentives may be needed in future to accommodate increased use of rail freight. Sea and rail based freight movements are growing, and as energy costs rise, the economics of coastal and continental roll-on roll-off services become more attractive. The north east has well developed ports capable of exploiting such opportunities, which will be helped by faster and more cost-effective interchange between sea and other modes.

MAXIMISING THE BENEFITS OF THE ABERDEEN WESTERN PERIPHERAL ROUTE

The AWPR will improve travel across Aberdeen by better connecting existing trunk roads to the north, south and west of the city, as well as linking to strategic local roads. By taking through traffic away from the city and unsuitable rural roads, it will reduce the time cost of travel, which will help to sustain economic growth in the region. It is important that the connectivity and accessibility benefits that the AWPR will bring are fully realised, and that the opportunity is taken to 'lock-in' improvements to congestion and journey times to ensure that these are not eroded through additional traffic growth. A consultants' report identifying measures which could be implemented to secure benefits for the long term has been considered by the Nestrans Board and will be the subject of further detailed consideration and implementation. For example, public transport and pedestrian improvements to delivery of the AWPR and it is important that these are taken forward and fully implemented through the RTS. There may also be pressure for further dispersal of land use, which would increase the demand for travel. Transport and land use policies will therefore need to be integrated to ensure the transport benefits of the AWPR are maximised, and not diminished through dispersal and consequent additional car travel.

DEVELOPING A STRONG CITY CENTRE

Aberdeen has potential to perform better as a regional centre of the scale and quality befitting the north east's status as a world player in the energy sector, as Scotland's third city in terms of the population and as the capital of one of the UK's most prosperous regions. Research has shown that regional growth largely depends upon growth in a region's urban centre. A stronger city centre could strengthen and diversify the economy of the region as a whole. The retail and business service base within the city centre has potential to expand, with businesses serving a wider market, with greater reliance on locally sourced goods.

Both sectors need to develop to contribute to growing and restructuring the regional economy. These activities need to be concentrated rather than dispersed, in order to secure the advantages that can come from co-location. A strong centre with a more concentrated retail, leisure and business base will increase demand for travel to the centre, which in turn makes improvements in public transport more viable, helping to attract more trips by public transport as an alternative to the car.

SUPPORTING VIBRANT ABERDEENSHIRE TOWNS

Transport plays an important role in connecting towns in Aberdeenshire and facilitating access to local services and employment. The north east's larger settlements presently have a mixed residential, service and employment role, which may be further enhanced by focussing housing and commercial developments (other than that which is more appropriate for Aberdeen) to these settlements, helping to reduce travel demand. Transport links can support economic development initiatives in Aberdeenshire, such as the innovative hydrogen power and carbon capture plant in Peterhead, through providing access to employment and facilitating the movement of goods and raw materials. Good transport links between towns, particularly public transport, also help promote tourism and improve the connectivity of the region. Developments that encourage walking and cycling within towns, as well as local bus services can improve accessibility and help reduce car use.

EMBRACING NEW TECHNOLOGIES

New technologies are likely to have a major impact on our need to travel, our travel choices and impact on the environment. The next 15-20 years will see innovative transport initiatives, which may include a national road user charging scheme, the roll out of alternative fuel technologies and greater use of information technology to reduce the need to travel. The north east has the opportunity to be a leader of change in the development of new fuel and related technologies and in promoting their use for private as well as public transport. This fits with the region's economic aspirations to develop as a centre of excellence in energy technologies and links to the Next Generation projects being taken forward by Scottish Enterprise Grampian and

ACSEF. This would send positive signals about the north east's ambitions to address both economic competitiveness and environmental issues. New technology also has the potential to help transport adapt to changing demographics, particularly to meet the needs of an ageing population, and increased consumer expectations. However, we cannot rely on new technologies alone and must embrace behaviour change in the short term rather than awaiting future technological advances.

CHANGING TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

We all have a part to play in reducing the negative impacts of our travel such as pollution and congestion. Even small changes to the way we travel can have a big impact. Based on 2001 Census survey data, 53% of City residents and 76% of Aberdeenshire residents commute to and from work by car on a regular basis. With continued strong growth in car use – often with only a single occupant – it is impossible to foresee any realistic rate of road building and improvement which would avoid major traffic congestion and parking problems in the future.

Nestrans aims to encourage a shift away from single occupancy car use by promoting Travel Plans and travel awareness. Nestrans has already developed a Travel Planning Strategy and this needs to be taken forward with other measures in the Regional Transport Strategy, to tackle barriers to reducing car use. The MTS piloted projects such as a car share scheme, sustainable travel grant scheme and the Dyce Transport Management Organisation. The Regional Transport Strategy aims to ensure that Nestrans continues to pilot new and innovative travel awareness projects.

Land use planning has a key role to play in reducing the need to travel, particularly by car. The Scottish Government's planning guidance, SPP17, promotes developments that encourage more sustainable travel. For many trips in rural areas, car use will remain essential, but measures to encourage higher car occupancy can help reduce the number of journeys on the network. Improved bus services and an increase in Demand Responsive Transport services can also provide alternatives for many journeys. Increasing energy costs are also likely to have a significant impact on travel choice in the future.

ADDRESSING THE ISSUES

The public consultation on the RTS showed broad agreement with the issues identified, and a strong message that it is important to contribute to tackling climate changes, while improving the transport network in the north east and supporting the continued development of the economy. The issues identified here have informed the development of objectives in the next chapter, which in turn have led to the development of actions and measures that meet the objectives and address the issues identified in the strategy.

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VISION AND OBJECTIVES

06

THE PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING THIS RTS IS DRIVEN BY AGREEING A VISION AND ESTABLISHING A SERIES OF OBJECTIVES.

OUR VISION FOR TRANSPORT UNDERPINS OUR OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS:

"A TRANSPORT SYSTEM FOR THE NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND WHICH ENABLES A MORE ECONOMICALLY COMPETITIVE, SUSTAINABLE, AND SOCIALLY INCLUSIVE SOCIETY."

The RTS objectives stem from the detailed analysis of problems and issues, and are influenced by the objectives developed for the Modern Transport System and local transport strategies.

Since the RTS was developed, the Scottish Government has published the Government Economic Strategy, which declared its overriding purpose is:

"to focus the Government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth."

The Government Economic Strategy makes clear that it expects all public sector organisations to gear their activities to this purpose and five high level objectives:

WEALTHIER & FAIRER - Enable businesses and people to increase their wealth and more people to share fairly in that wealth.

SMARTER - Expand opportunities for Scots to succeed from nurture through to life long learning ensuring higher and more widely shared achievements.

HEALTHIER - Help people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care.

SAFER & STRONGER - Help local communities to flourish, becoming stronger, safer places to live, offering improved opportunities and a better quality of life.

GREENER - Improve Scotland's natural and built environment and the sustainable use and enjoyment of it.

There is clearly a strong correlation between the RTS vision and objectives and the national purpose and objectives set by the Government. The RTS is focused on enabling and sustaining economic growth in the north east, improving access to opportunities and enhancing our environment and quality of life. Through the RTS, Nestrans and its partner local authorities will focus their activities in support of the Government's national purpose.

The Concordat between central and local government also sets out fifteen national outcomes and 45 national indicators, which provide the basis for determining local outcomes and indicators through Single Outcome Agreements. Appendix A sets out how the RTS contributes to these outcomes.

Single Outcome Agreements are intended to be developed in conjunction with community planning partners, including regional transport partnerships. Transport has a key role to play in achieving these outcomes and there is a strong fit between the Government's national objectives and the regional transport strategy. Nestrans is working closely with both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils to inform the Single Outcome Agreements for their areas.

The RTS was also developed in the context of the Government's more specific national objectives for transport set out in the 2004 White Paper and re-affirmed in the National Transport Strategy, which are to:

- Promote **economic growth** by building, enhancing, managing and maintaining transport services, infrastructure and networks to maximise their efficiency;
- Promote **social inclusion** by connecting remote and disadvantaged communities and increasing the accessibility of the transport network;
- Protect our **environment** and improve health by building and investing in public transport and other types of efficient and sustainable transport, which minimise emissions and consumption of resources and energy;
- Improve **safety** of journeys by reducing accidents and enhancing the personal safety of pedestrians, drivers, passengers and staff;
- Improve **integration** by making journey planning and ticketing easier and working to ensure smooth connection between different forms of transport.

In addition, the National Transport Strategy focuses on three strategic outcomes to:

- Improve journey times and connections;
- Reduce emissions; and
- Improve quality, accessibility and affordability.

The RTS objectives comprise four Strategic Objectives, each of which is supported by three Operational Objectives. These have been developed through stakeholder consultation in summer 2006.

The objectives set out clearly what the strategy needs to achieve. These in turn guide the development of options and different scenarios, to ensure that the final strategy meets the objectives. As will be detailed in the next section, all options were tested against the objectives to ensure that all elements of the strategy contribute positively towards achieving the vision and one or more of the objectives. The objectives will be used to develop SMART targets to be set out in the Delivery Plan, which will be published following approval of the strategy. These will assist in monitoring implementation of the strategy. The objectives are listed below.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: ECONOMY

TO ENHANCE AND EXPLOIT THE NORTH EAST'S COMPETITIVE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES, AND REDUCE THE IMPACTS OF PERIPHERALITY.

- To make the movement of goods and people within the north east and to/from the area more efficient and reliable.
- To improve the range and quality of transport to/from the north east to key business destinations.
- To improve connectivity within the north east, particularly between residential and employment areas.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

TO ENHANCE CHOICE, ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY OF TRANSPORT, PARTICULARLY FOR DISADVANTAGED AND VULNERABLE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY AND THOSE LIVING IN AREAS WHERE TRANSPORT OPTIONS ARE LIMITED.

- To enhance travel opportunities and achieve sustained cost and quality advantages for public transport relative to the car.
- To reduce the number and severity of traffic related accidents and improve personal safety and security for all users of transport.
- To achieve increased use of active travel and improve air quality as part of wider strategies to improve the health of north east residents.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: ENVIRONMENT

TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE NORTH EAST'S NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE AND REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF TRANSPORT ON CLIMATE AND AIR QUALITY.

- To reduce the proportion of journeys made by cars and especially by single occupant cars.
- To reduce the environmental impacts of transport, in line with national targets.
- To reduce growth in vehicle kilometres travelled.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: SPATIAL PLANNING

TO SUPPORT TRANSPORT INTEGRATION AND A STRONG, VIBRANT AND DYNAMIC CITY CENTRE AND TOWN CENTRES ACROSS THE NORTH EAST.

- To improve connectivity to and within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire towns, especially by public transport, walking and cycling.
- To encourage integration of transport and spatial planning and improve connections between transport modes and services.
- To enhance public transport opportunities and reduce barriers to use across the north east, especially rural areas.

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OPTION GENERATION AND APPRAISAL

07

IN KEEPING WITH THE SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE'S DESIRE FOR EACH RTS TO BE VISIONARY, A WIDE RANGE OF POTENTIAL STRATEGIC POLICY INTERVENTIONS WAS GENERATED.

The strategic objectives were used as the starting point for the option generation, with schemes and packages developed which complement the existing schemes within the MTS and were likely to address the issues identified and achieve the agreed objectives. No realistic options were dismissed at this stage in order to ensure that a wide range of options was considered for inclusion in the strategy. During the process, consideration was given to how measures would interact as elements of a strategic package as opposed to isolated schemes.

Broad strategic categories covering external links, network capability, travel choice and fiscal & financial interventions were developed within which projects and measures which met the objectives were identified. These measures build on the Reference Case, comprising projects contained in the MTS, which have achieved a certain level of commitment. For the purposes of developing the RTS, these projects have been taken as a given. Table 8.1 in the next chapter provides further details on the Reference Case projects. In the final RTS, the broad strategic categories outlined have been refined into three sub-strategies titled External Connections, Internal Connections and Strategic Policy Framework.

PACKAGES OF COMPLEMENTARY MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

For the purposes of modelling and progressing towards a preferred package, measures and activities were assigned to one or more distinct packages, so that their relative merits could be assessed against the objectives and indicators. For the initial appraisal, six different packages were created, all of which build on the Reference Case. Three of the initial packages leaned towards particular objectives to ensure different impacts would be captured during appraisal. The six packages were:

1. LOW COST – Measures and activities that will require relatively low levels of revenue and capital funding. This would approximate to a continuing level of expenditure for transport broadly equivalent to present levels of funding.

2. MEDIUM COST (ECONOMY) – This package would require an increased level of expenditure on transport over the life of the strategy, to relatively medium levels of revenue and capital funding. Options are included that would focus on achieving the economic objectives, yielding benefits with an emphasis towards relieving congestion, boosting the north east's economy and infrastructure-based solutions.

3. MEDIUM COST (ACCESSIBILITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION) - This package also requires relatively medium levels of revenue and capital funding of a scale broadly equivalent to the other Medium Cost packages. Schemes are included which would best achieve the social inclusion objectives, yielding benefits with an emphasis towards public transport measures, making travel more affordable and favouring socially excluded sectors of population or areas.

4. MEDIUM COST (ENVIRONMENT) - A third package, also requiring relatively medium levels of revenue and capital funding similar to other Medium Cost packages. Focus is on schemes that would best achieve the environmental objectives, yielding benefits including measures to encourage modal shift and active travel.

5. MEDIUM COST (SPATIAL PLANNING) – a further package requiring relatively medium levels of funding similar to other Medium Cost packages. Emphasis is on schemes which best achieve objectives which yield benefits for connectivity within and between settlements in the north east

6. HIGH COST – this package combines many of the schemes within the medium cost scenarios and contains some measures and activities requiring a relatively high level of revenue and capital funding. Realistically these schemes would require a very high funding allocation combined with new revenue streams, but they were included to ascertain their relative merits and acceptability.

In parallel with testing these scenarios, a consultation exercise was undertaken with key stakeholders to determine whether all appropriate measures and activities had been identified and set within the most apposite package. Once it was evident that all realistic options had been identified and set in appropriate packages, this was fed into the process of sifting and appraisal. The sifting was based on parallel work undertaken to assess the success of the strategy, which provided a set of performance tests, including testing to ensure that it achieved success against core performance measures.

This analysis was used to develop the packages, alongside an assessment of

- deliverability – could the measure be delivered;
- integration – how well did a measure fit with other measures; and
- whether any measures might be mutually exclusive.

The external connections measures are considered to primarily relate to the economic prosperity of the north east, particularly in reducing the impacts of peripherality. The internal connections measures and elements within the strategic policy framework were assembled into packages for detailed appraisal. The appraisal was undertaken using a system dynamics model developed by Steer Davies Gleave and adapted for use in the north east. This model provides direct appraisal outputs against key indicators, namely:

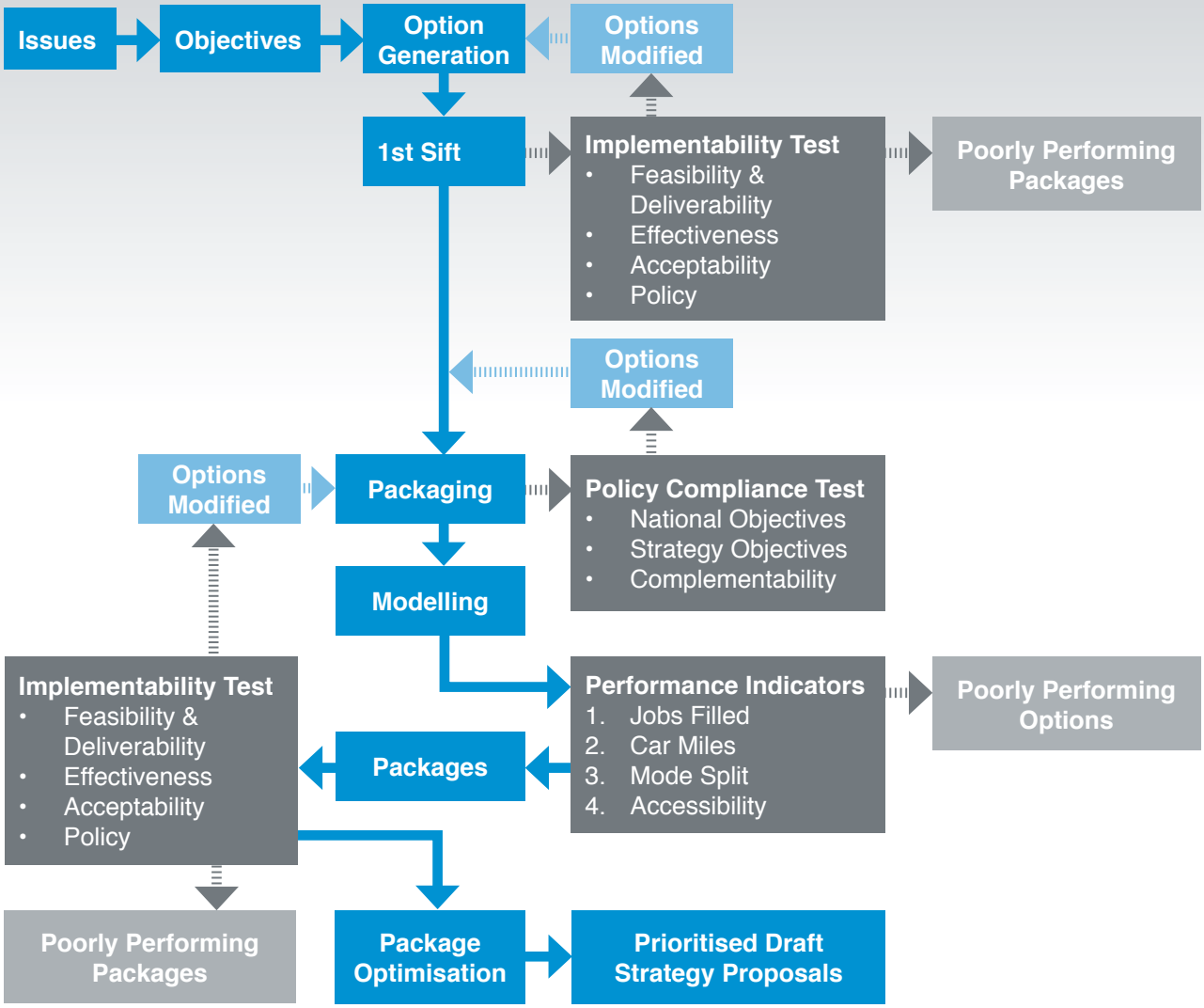
- employment (jobs filled), as an economy indicator;
- car miles, as an environment indicator;
- mode shares, as an environment and social inclusion indicator; and
- changes in accessibility to central health service locations, as a social inclusion indicator.

The early model runs indicated that packages with restrictive measures to constrain car use could offer environmental benefits, but had serious economic consequences and that packages with elements to enable economic growth had significant growth in car miles. A further series of runs were modelled, with measures added, removed or modified in order to achieve the most acceptable combination of outcomes against the indicators. In practice the packages went through over 40 versions until the optimal final package was determined, which offered benefits against all of the indicators and objectives.

The preferred package compared with the reference case, achieves all of the following:

- An increase in predicted numbers of jobs filled across the region, which would denote an improvement in the performance of the economy, largely due to better access to jobs and employment land;
- A stabilisation in car miles, denoting an environmental gain and supporting the Scottish Executive's aspiration of road traffic reduction: technological and other benefits in terms of emissions reductions over the period of the strategy will be additional to these benefits;
- Increased mode share by public transport, which is necessary in order to reduce car travel and to increase opportunities for travel by socially excluded groups; and
- Improved accessibility to key locations such as universities and hospitals, which is a major contributor towards social inclusion.

FIGURE 7.1: OPTION APPRAISAL PROCESS



The option appraisal process is summarised schematically in Figure 7.1. This depicts how a long list of potential interventions to address one or more of the four strategic objectives was developed and then scored against the objectives by Steer Davies Gleave and Nestrans using a scoring prioritisation method developed from that recommended by the Scottish Executive.

This informed the shorter list of interventions which were then subjected to further testing using the dynamic model. The model helped to develop a more complete future picture of the north east following the implementation of committed schemes, so that future transport scenarios could be considered alongside land use and demographic changes. This provided a joined up and holistic approach, rather than simply appraising transport impacts of individual interventions.

The screened interventions were modelled using the dynamic model and tested against a number of key performance indicators as discussed above. The final package is based on the model outputs, supplemented by contributions from the Nestrans Board and responses to consultation. The final package was tested using the dynamic model.

PRIORITISATION

The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 requires that Regional Transport Strategies include provision about the order of priority in which different elements of the provision, development and improvement of transport should be undertaken. This involves prioritisation of possible interventions through the development of a preferred package, and then proposals for the phased implementation of the preferred package.

Throughout the development of this strategy all the different options considered have been subject to a process of prioritisation in order to identify an optimum package of implementable measures and activities that best meet the strategy's objectives.

The Scottish Executive has issued guidance, which supports a STAG-based prioritisation framework, to aid this prioritisation process. This guidance has been used to help identify an optimum package of measures and activities that best meet the following criteria (recognising that there is a high degree of overlap between the following):

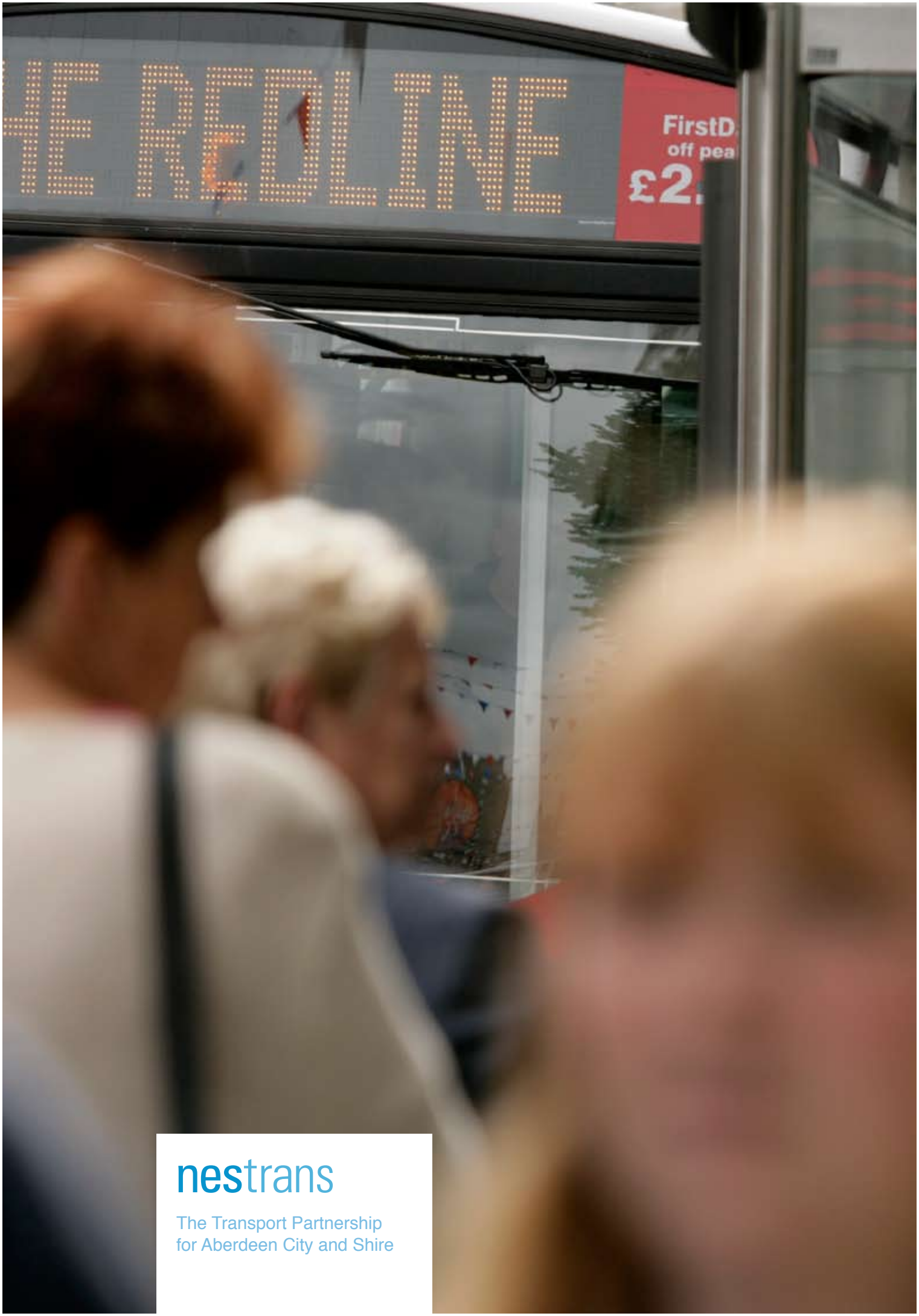
- The Government's five key policy objectives of Economy, Environment, Integration, Social Inclusion and Safety;
- The strategy's objectives as identified in Section 6;
- Feasibility and deliverability;
- Effectiveness in performing positively against the identified indicators;
- Acceptability, as assured through consultation with Board members and stakeholders; and
- Policy, including fit with related policy areas such as land use and economic development.

The process of sifting and testing options leading to identifying the optimum package of measures and activities has incorporated a prioritisation in terms of relative implementability and which measures are required early in the delivery process to ensure optimum acceptability and performance against the objectives.

Consultation was a fundamental tool in ensuring the most effective and deliverable package of measures and activities was identified. Input from key stakeholders has been incorporated throughout the prioritisation process.

The option appraisal process has identified an optimum package of measures and activities that provides positive benefits against all of the strategy's objectives. Delivering all the measures and activities in the optimum package will yield the maximum benefits. It should be noted that a significant number of schemes have been sifted out or included only as long term aspirations, because they did not contribute positively against all of the objectives or offered poor value for money.

The Delivery Plan will set out how this high level strategy will be delivered through projects and other measures. This plan will be developed and approved in partnership with both local authorities and will tie in with the local transport strategies. The Delivery Plan will set clear priorities in terms of funding and timescales and will seek to exploit linkages between projects to maximise impact and achieve Best Value.



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THE PREFERRED STRATEGY PACKAGE

08

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY SETS OUT AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO MEET FUTURE TRANSPORT NEEDS AND BRING SUSTAINABLE IMPROVEMENTS TO TRANSPORT ACROSS THE REGION BETWEEN 2007 AND 2021.

This strategy document provides the detailed policy framework for the accompanying Delivery Plan, which sets out the projects and measures to implement the strategy. It seeks to meet the region's economic development aspirations as set out in the Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum's (ACSEF) Economic Development Strategy and integrate with the development plan framework set out in the North East Structure Plan and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire's Local Plans.

The preferred strategy package sets out a strategic framework of integrated measures and interventions. It represents an optimum package, developed through modelling and testing to ensure a balanced approach offering economic, environmental and accessibility improvements. The detailing and implementation of the strategy will be undertaken by a wide range of agencies, public and private, including Transport Scotland, Nestrans, Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, private sector transport operators, and also the wider community, through our individual actions and travel choices. The package will be developed in more detail through Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils' Local Transport Strategies and where appropriate by Nestrans itself through implementation and action plans.

BUILDING ON THE MODERN TRANSPORT SYSTEM

As a voluntary transport partnership, Nestrans developed the Modern Transport System or MTS - an integrated package of measures aimed at delivering significant benefits to the transport system in the north east over the period to 2011. The MTS was developed and appraised using the Scottish Executive's STAG guidance and formally endorsed by the Scottish Executive in 2003. Since then it has formed the basis for Nestrans' activities and expenditure.

In developing the Regional Transport Strategy to 2021, Nestrans has taken the MTS as a key building block, integrating its policies and proposals within the new strategy. In particular, we have sought to identify opportunities created by the construction of Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route to implement complementary transport measures which 'lock in' and maximise its benefits.

In looking to 2021, existing projects from the MTS strategy which have secured a certain degree of commitment or have advanced significantly have been taken as a given. This strategy assumes that these projects will be implemented and therefore looks beyond existing transport problems identifying those which will need to be tackled in the next decade. These existing projects have formed a Reference Case against which proposed new projects have been assessed. The scale of the projects which have already secured commitment and are in the process of being delivered is testament to the achievements of Nestrans and its partners over the past five years. The major projects included within the Reference Case are set out in the following table. This is essentially the same list of projects included in the Reference Case previously and currently modelled for the AWPR to ensure compatibility in technical assumptions.

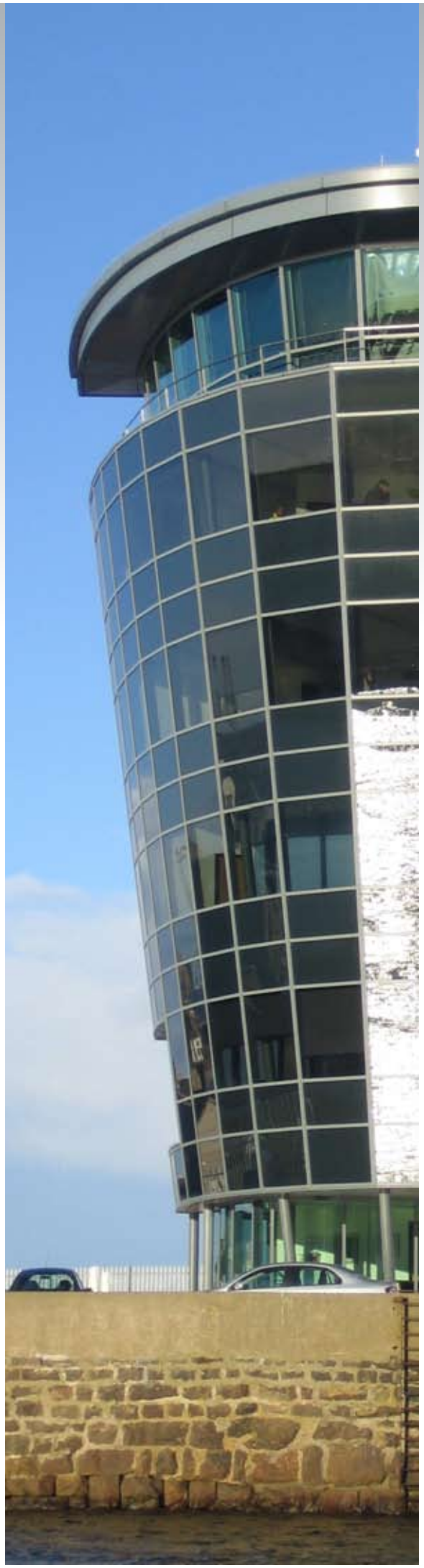

FIGURE 8.1: REFERENCE CASE PROJECTS (INCLUDING COMMITTED PROJECTS CONTAINED IN THE MTS)

Project	Lead Agency	Estimated Delivery Date
Committed Projects - Completed		
Rail Freight Gauge Enhancement	Transport Scotland	Completed
Aberdeenshire Towns Interchanges – Peterhead Bus Station and Interactive information points	Aberdeenshire Council	Completed
Guild Street transport interchange – Aberdeen Bus Station	Private sector	Completed
New rail freight facilities at Raiths Farm and Craiginches – to replace Guild Street facility	Private sector/ rail industry	Completed
Committed Projects – Delivery Underway		
Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route	Transport Scotland	2012
Laurencekirk Station Re-opening	Transport Scotland/Nestrans	2009
A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling	Transport Scotland	2012
Local road and traffic management improvements	Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils	2007 onwards
Guild Street transport interchange – Aberdeen railway station redevelopment	Private sector	2008
Aberdeenshire Towns Interchanges - Inverurie and A93 Banchory Park & Ride	Aberdeenshire Council	2009
Committed Projects – Delivery Not Yet Commenced		
Park and Ride Sites at A96 and A90 (south)	Aberdeen City Council	2009/10
Park and Ride Site on the A947	Aberdeenshire Council	2009/10
Union Street Pedestrianisation	Aberdeen City Council	2012
Projects at an Advanced Stage of Development		
Aberdeen Crossrail: December 2008 service improvements Aberdeen-Inverness line upgrade	First ScotRail/ Transport Scotland	2008 To be agreed
Other Projects promoted by Nestrans		
Kintore Station re-opening	Nestrans and rail partners	To be agreed

OVERVIEW

The RTS sets out a package of measures to address the transport issues identified, to build on opportunities and achieve the agreed objectives; and sets out interventions and measures which make the strategy operational and deliverable. The package has been rigorously tested and shown to demonstrate positive results against key indicators reflecting the strategic objectives:-

- It offers an opportunity to grow jobs and enhance economic performance;
- It achieves a reduction in total car miles travelled;
- It achieves significant modal shift away from car dependence;
- It improves accessibility, making key locations such as hospitals more easy to access by those who suffer most from lack of transport choice; and
- It offers good value for money in offering significant benefits which justify the costs involved.

The Strategy is expressed through three Sub Strategies, reflecting different ways of achieving the objectives and indicators:

1. Improving external connections between the north east and elsewhere, so tackling the reality and perceptions of location, distance, travel time and peripherality and enhancing the performance of the north east as a location.
2. Improving internal connections, enhancing the performance of the north east in economic, social and environmental terms.
3. Strategic policy framework, which indicates areas where measures such as Travel Awareness, incentives and enforcement can influence travel choice.

Taken together, the combination of external and internal measures and the policy framework will achieve the RTS objectives. External measures will enhance the economic potential and performance of the north east. Internal measures including fiscal and awareness initiatives will reduce the environmental impact of transport in the north east by encouraging a significant modal shift from the car towards more sustainable modes of transport and enable a “locking in” of the benefits offered by the AWPR. The package also increases accessibility and helps tackle social exclusion to ensure that all members of society in the north east have easy access to services.

THE REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY IN CONTEXT

Nestrans and the local authorities already invest significantly in transport, including managing the asset and ensuring maintenance, lighting and winter maintenance functions are fulfilled. In future years, it is assumed that this will continue at least at the current level, and this strategy makes the case for additional expenditure for specific schemes.

Nestrans' previous strategy, the Modern Transport System, will be substantially delivered in the period to 2011. Many of the schemes already enjoy a level of commitment, are being delivered or taken forward through study or design work or are already supported through other policy documents – these are taken as the Reference Case and have not been subject to retesting or modelling. The options, or those schemes, measures and activities above the base budget and reference case, which have been tested as alternative scenarios have led to the formulation of a Preferred Package.

Nestrans also has aspirations beyond this package, but recognises that it is necessary to prioritise which schemes are essential to delivering the identified objectives. The Regional Transport Strategy should be regarded as comprising the base budget, the Reference Case schemes, and the Preferred Package which builds on the existing commitments. Nestrans also recognises the merits of other schemes which cannot presently be justified as they do not meet funding criteria. These are referred to as "aspirations", with an acknowledgement that there is a need to keep these under review, as they may be suitable for longer-term development subject to funding becoming available or changing situations shifting the longer term suitability of schemes.

ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES

As well as performing well against the key indicators, each element of the Strategy has been tested to ensure fit with the Strategic Objectives agreed following stakeholder consultation in summer 2006 and set out in section 6 of the Regional Transport Strategy.

Figure 8.2 demonstrates the strong links between the objectives and the elements of the Preferred Package. Each of the elements contained in the Internal Connections and Strategic Policy Framework Sub Strategies has a positive contribution to two or more of the strategic objectives. The External Connections are primarily aimed at securing economic benefits for the region and for Scotland as a whole and are therefore not included in the following table, which shows the fit between the internal measures and activities and the strategic objectives.

The measures and activities which perform best against the objectives have been pulled together in the three Sub Strategies, as indicated in Figure 8.3. The measures have been summarised within twenty one elements under three broad strategic categories.

FIGURE 8.2: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ELEMENTS OF THE INTERNAL CONNECTIONS AND STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

Strategic Objective	IC1 Rail	IC2 Roads improvements	IC3 Bus improvements	IC4 Demand responsive transport	IC5 Transport interchange	IC6 Walking and Cycling	IC7 Airport surface connections	IC8 Port Surface Connections	IC9 Freight	IC10 Powered Two Wheelers	TB1 Promoting Travel Planning	TB2 Promoting Active Travel	TB3 Improving Safety	IE1 Changing Choices through Incentives	IE2 Using Enforcement	IE3 Parking Strategy & incentives
Strategic Objective 1: Economy To enhance and exploit the north east's competitive economic advantages, and reduce the impacts of peripherality.	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Strategic Objective 2: Accessibility, Safety and Social Inclusion To enhance choice, accessibility and safety of transport, particularly for disadvantaged and vulnerable members of society and those living in areas where transport options are limited.	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓				✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	
Strategic Objective 3: Environment To conserve and enhance the north east's natural and built environment and heritage and reduce the effects of transport on climate and air quality.	✓		✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓ ✓		✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓		✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓
Strategic Objective 4: Spatial Planning To support transport integration and a strong, vibrant and dynamic city centre and town centres across the north east.	✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓	✓	✓ ✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓ ✓	✓	✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓

FIGURE 8.3: ELEMENTS OF THE STRATEGY

Sub Strategy 1: The External Connections Strategy		
External Connections Improving UK, European and global connections through public and private sector partners	EC1	Rail links and services
	EC2	Strategic roads
	EC3	Inter-regional Bus and Coach Travel
	EC4	Connections by sea
	EC5	Connections by air

Sub Strategy 2: The Internal Connections Strategy		
Internal Connections Linking up people, businesses, public and private sector services and healthcare within the north east	IC1	Rail
	IC2	Road Improvements
	IC3	Bus Improvements
	IC4	Demand Responsive Transport
	IC5	Transport Interchange
	IC6	Walking & Cycling
	IC7	Airport Surface Connections
	IC8	Port Surface Connections
	IC9	Freight
	IC10	Powered Two Wheelers

Sub Strategy 3: The Strategic Policy Framework		
Travel Behaviour Changing travel behaviour through information and targeting	TB1	Promoting Travel Plans and Travel Awareness
	TB2	Promoting Active Travel
	TB3	Improving Safety
Incentives and Enforcement Using financial and other measures to change travel choices	IE1	Changing Choices through Incentives and Partnerships
	IE2	Using Enforcement
	IE3	Parking

THE EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS STRATEGY

Supporting sustainable economic growth and improving connectivity were identified as key issues for the strategy to address. External connections are central to achieving this and play a crucial role in linking the north east to the rest of Scotland and the UK, Europe and the world. The measures in this section largely contribute towards the economic objectives of the strategy.

Nestrans will continue to work with neighbouring Regional Transport Partnerships, transport operators and Transport Scotland to ensure that connections to and from the north east are both maintained and enhanced.

There are five elements within the external connections strategy, corresponding to the key modes for people and freight.

RAIL LINKS AND SERVICES (EC1)

Rail journey times between the north east and central Scotland are long relative to the distances involved, and there are also issues of train capacity, fare levels and peak-hour overcrowding. Faster and better rail links will improve connectivity and reduce perceptions of remoteness, especially for travel to Edinburgh and Glasgow, Inverness, the north of England and London (including Sleeper services). Better and faster rail services will enable modal shift from cars, which will have environmental benefits, and enhances the productivity of business travel, which is beneficial to the economy.

Nestrans will work with the rail industry, Transport Scotland and others to promote and support measures to cut journey times, including addressing pinch points in Angus and Fife and at Edinburgh Waverley and Glasgow Queen Street stations. Nestrans will also support measures to reduce overcrowding and improve the reliability of services to central Scotland and beyond.

The proposed railway station at Gogar to provide a connection to Edinburgh Airport would enable improved rail access to and from the north east, but needs to be complemented by reduced journey times. Investment in rail infrastructure should also improve reliability and capacity for rail freight. Improvements to the Aberdeen-Inverness line are discussed in the Internal Connections strategy.

High speed rail connections between Scotland and London would bring about a step-change in journey times and accessibility, which would rival the speed of air travel. Development of high speed rail is supported, but the benefits need to extend to the north east to ensure that the relative peripherality of the region is not increased as a result of improved connectivity for central Scotland and northern England.

STRATEGIC ROADS (EC2)

Congestion and unreliable journey times on the strategic road network affect the competitiveness of businesses across Scotland, and particularly those from the north east of Scotland. These companies are already disadvantaged by limits on drivers' hours and the costs associated with the extra distances involved, and increasingly face potential bottlenecks between the north east and the national motorway network, which adds to costs.

Nestrans will support the development of the strategic road network beyond the region, where bottlenecks can be especially harmful to journey time reliability, particularly for freight. Nestrans will press for the Strategic Transport Projects Review and National Planning Framework 2 to incorporate priority schemes within the north east and for measures to address constraints between the north east and central Scotland which can directly affect north east businesses, for example around Dundee and at the River Forth crossing points. However, Nestrans cautions against over-concentration of resources in a few major schemes which could dilute the availability of funding for priorities within the north east. Nestrans suggests that priority for investment should be determined reflecting all-day demand relative to capacity, impacting on strategic movements and business, rather than where peak-hour demands cause short-term problems for commuters.

INTER-REGIONAL BUS AND COACH TRAVEL (EC3)

Inter-city coach services operated by Citylink and Megabus play an important role in providing regular, express links between Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, with potential for onward connections. Megabus and National Express also provide daily services between Aberdeen and London.

Nestrans will support the continuation and development of regular inter-city coach services, to provide travel choices and a competitive alternative to the car. We will also explore the potential for improved interchange with inter-city coach services, for example at Park and Ride sites.

There are a number of further cross-boundary bus and coach links, which provide important travel connections between the north east and neighbouring areas. We will work with other RTPs, particularly Tactran and HITRANS, and local authorities (and the Cairngorms National Park Authority) to ensure that cross-boundary requirements are recognised and met.

CONNECTIONS BY SEA (EC4)

Aberdeen City and Shire's connectivity has historically been focused around its maritime links. In particular, the ports of Aberdeen and Peterhead are important for goods movement, ferries, cruise ships and supporting the fishing and offshore oil and gas industries – other harbours also have fishing fleets, including Macduff and Fraserburgh. Aberdeen Harbour Board is currently investing in widening and deepening the harbour to enable access by larger vessels. Peterhead Port Authority is also progressing plans for additional berthing capacity and associated shore facilities. The use of coastal and short sea shipping as an alternative to road and rail freight is expected to grow. Scotland's north east's ports are well placed to handle such services to major UK and continental ports. The public sector can play a supportive role in this and Nestrans is leading the development of a North East Freight Action Plan.

The lifeline ferry services to Orkney and Shetland terminate at Aberdeen harbour, which is close to a rail and bus interchange for ferry passengers travelling onwards to central Scotland and beyond. Nestrans will work with the maritime industry including shipping lines and port providers to enhance the role of the north east as a gateway and to ensure that services between the north east and Orkney and Shetland fully meet the needs of passenger and freight users. The use of particular harbours is a commercial decision for service providers, but Nestrans will support the development of better surface access to all major ports in the north east.

Nestrans and its partners will also seek to promote passenger and freight movements by short sea shipping routes through the EU's Programme for the Promotion of Short Sea Shipping, and similarly will seek to promote coastal shipping services to major UK ports. This will help manage the growth of heavy goods vehicle traffic and allow freight movements to bypass land bottlenecks. The EU programme contains a set of 14 actions subdivided into measures and describes legislative, technical and operational initiatives which are aimed at developing Short Sea Shipping at EU, national, regional and industry levels. Nestrans will encourage the development of existing and new freight / passenger ferry connections and routes between the north east and Europe and will continue to promote and support projects to enhance the role of the north east's ports particularly to Scandinavia and the recent EU accession countries in the Baltic.

Nestrans will work with partners to promote Northern Maritime Corridor II projects and other Motorways of the Sea projects as appropriate.

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CONNECTIONS BY AIR (EC5)

Aberdeen Airport is one of the busiest regional airports in the UK and one of the fastest growing. It plays a key role in supporting the economy of Aberdeen City and Shire, both through providing connections for business and acting as a gateway for in-bound tourism. It is also the base for many lifeline services to Orkney and Shetland. The Aberdeen Airport Masterplan, published by BAA in December 2006, sets out a strategy for the airport's development to 2030. This focuses on expanding the airport infrastructure, extending the runway and increasing the number of direct flights to international destinations.

Aberdeen's geographical location makes aviation a crucial element of the transport system. Journey times by other modes are generally not competitive with air services and accessing alternative airports involves a surface journey of over two hours. Direct domestic and international services, as well as frequent links to hub airports, are therefore essential in supporting the place competitiveness of the north east. To sustain Aberdeen City and Shire's role as a centre of excellence in the energy sector, services are needed to major cities, continental hubs and other energy centres such as Houston.

Aviation is known to be a growing source of carbon emissions and it is therefore important that airlines are encouraged to adopt more modern, efficient aircraft which emit less CO2 per passenger than older aircraft. Direct flights to other destinations can help to reduce the need for making multiple flights or travel to other airports, contributing towards reducing environmental impacts.

Aberdeen Airport - Air Routes and Frequency of Services

Nestrans will continue to work through the Airport Business Development Forum to support the important role that Aberdeen Airport plays in the north east. This work will focus on the following:

- establishing new direct routes to European and international business destinations;
- maintaining the frequency of services to international hubs – London Heathrow, Amsterdam Schiphol, and Paris Charles de Gaulle; and
- improving the availability of leisure travel, especially to encourage inward tourism.

Aberdeen Airport - Runway Extension

A key infrastructure improvement that is required to facilitate the development of transatlantic and other long haul routes is the extension of the existing runway at Aberdeen Airport. BAA has been granted permission by Aberdeen City Council to extend the existing runway by 300 metres, which will enable airlines to use larger, more fuel-efficient aircraft, and allow aircraft to operate non-stop direct services from Aberdeen Airport without payload restrictions or costly and inconvenient en-route stops. A further extension, currently proposed for the longer term, would bring destinations in North America and the Middle East within non-stop range of Aberdeen Airport.

Aberdeen Airport – Support for Key Aviation Routes

Nestrans will seek to ensure the continuation of services to major hubs, including Heathrow and Gatwick (London) by protecting slots and interlining opportunities. Nestrans will explore the most appropriate means for ensuring routes which are critical to the economic and social well-being of the north east are retained - if need be through the use of Public Service Obligations.

THE INTERNAL CONNECTIONS STRATEGY

The internal connections strategy aims to improve the transport infrastructure and services within Aberdeen City and Shire to meet the strategy's objectives. A large focus of this approach is on delivering significant improvements to public transport that will increase usage and bring economic, environmental and social inclusion benefits. This reflects consultation feedback which pressed for significant investment in public transport to enable more people to use it. Walking and cycling are important means of getting around, both in their own right and in providing linkages with other modes. The strategy also seeks to improve the standard of the strategic road network, tackling pinch points, improving junctions and supporting road safety.

The construction of the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route during the lifetime of the strategy facilitates the delivery of complementary transport measures, as originally set out in the Modern Transport System. These will enable the benefits to be "locked in", to ensure that traffic does not increase to fill the additional capacity created. This will be achieved by introducing an integrated package of measures.

RAIL (IC1)

The north east's rail network, while limited, can play a significant part in the development of the region and improving transport links within and to/from the area. External rail links are covered in section EC1 and improvements to rail lines serving the north east will complement proposals to enhance rail opportunities within the region.

The railway between Aberdeen and Inverness is single track which severely constrains the frequency of services and affects journey times and reliability.

Achieving an hourly frequency between Aberdeen and Inverness is an aspiration within the Scottish Government's High Level Output Statement for rail. This would enable regular, reliable services from towns such as Inverurie and Insch as well as offering the opportunity to develop additional services as part of the Aberdeen Crossrail project and open a new station at Kintore. This would require investment in passing loops, line speed improvements and new signalling.

Developing the existing passenger rail network in the north east will increase accessibility to employment, education and essential services and provide a real alternative to the car. The reopening of Laurencekirk station, which was promoted by Aberdeenshire Council, is now being delivered by Transport Scotland with Nestrans' funding support. This will offer significant economic and accessibility benefits to the town and the Mearns area when it opens.

In developing the strategy the merits of re-opening former railway lines to Peterhead and Banchory were considered, and supported by some respondents. While remaining aspirations, it was considered more cost effective to focus on bus-based solutions for these corridors. The former rail alignments will continue to be preserved as transport corridors.

Aberdeen Crossrail

Nestrans and its constituent Councils have for a number of years investigated ways of improving local rail services within the Nestrans area and explored the potential for additional stations. The primary focus has been on improving commuter rail services into Aberdeen and Dyce from stations in Aberdeenshire, with a view to growing rail's mode share for travel to work journeys. A further objective has been to widen access to rail network through opening additional stations.

Detailed feasibility studies into delivering improved services through Aberdeen Crossrail have been undertaken, exploring a range of options and assessing their costs and benefits. From these, it is clear that improved rail services can only realistically be delivered on an incremental basis and in a way that capitalises on existing planned investment. This strategy reaffirms Nestrans support for improving local rail services in the north east and we will continue to work closely with the local authorities, Transport Scotland and rail industry to secure improvements.

Additional services to and from Inverurie are anticipated to be delivered through the December 2008 timetable change and we are already progressing initial work on re-opening Kintore station. The Scottish Government's High Level Output Specification for Rail indicates that improvements to the line between Aberdeen and Inverness will be delivered around 2014, which will enable services to be improved. The detail of our approach to improving the rail network in the north east will be set out in the North East Rail Action Plan.

ROAD IMPROVEMENTS (IC2)

The Modern Transport System made the case for an Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) to facilitate movements across and around Aberdeen, reduce traffic levels and emissions on urban and rural routes and contribute to the economy and sustainable communities across the north east. This route, and other committed schemes including the dualling of Balmedie-Tipperty on the A90 north, are included within the Reference Case and are scheduled for completion in 2012.
The strategic road network provides the principal transport links within the north east and connects the region to the rest of Scotland and Europe through the Trans-European Network. The trunk roads through the north east, the A90 and the A96, are the responsibility of Transport Scotland, however the current trunk road through Aberdeen will revert to local authority responsibility following completion of the AWPR. Other major routes in the Nestrans area are managed and maintained by Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils. While there is continuous dual carriageway south of Aberdeen, the A90 and A96 trunk roads to the north and west of the City are largely single carriageway and there are pinch points within Aberdeen, with implications for journey times, reliability and safety.

Nestrans believes that further enhancements to the region's road network will be needed to ensure that road quality is improved and capacity pinch points are addressed. In addition, the safety of the network will be kept under review with investment allocated to sites or routes with higher than average accident statistics. Through continued involvement in the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey project, maintenance expenditure will be targeted to appropriate areas of the network.

Improvements to the road network enhance journeys for all road users, including cyclists, motorcyclists, public transport users, lorries and delivery vehicles and car drivers. Reduced noise levels improve ambience for residents and better surfaces can enhance safety, including for pedestrians, so road and footway improvements are important, not just for their economic contribution, but also for the benefits they provide to users and non-users.

Strategic Roads (Quality and Capacity Improvements)

Journey times and reliability can be affected by poor quality alignments and capacity constraints at junctions. This carries economic costs, but also health and social costs, particularly due to poor air quality arising from standing traffic or traffic diverting onto inappropriate alternative routes.

Nestrans is currently working with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland to identify measures to relieve congestion at the A90/A96 Haudagain Roundabout in support of Aberdeen City Council's wider approach to improve Access to Aberdeen from the North as set out in its Local Transport Strategy. A study setting out options for improving Access to Aberdeen from the South has also been completed. Nestrans has also worked with Transport Scotland and HITRANS on a multi-modal appraisal of the A96 Aberdeen-Inverness corridor, which will feed into the national Strategic Transport Projects Review.

The following parts of the road network are considered by Nestrans to be priorities for action. The Delivery Plan sets out in more detail individual projects, which will require to be delivered in partnership with Transport Scotland and the local authorities.

- Capacity and journey time improvements on the A90 between Ellon and Peterhead;
- Capacity and journey time improvements on the A96 west of Inverurie;
- Upgrading the A90/A96 Haudagain junction including the third Don crossing;
- Improving traffic flow on the access to Aberdeen from the south, including the A90 at the Bridge of Dee and the A956 corridor;
- Addressing capacity constraints at trunk and local road junctions serving towns in Aberdeenshire.

Particular consideration will be given to a corridor approach, which will identify priority corridors or routes for action, linked to the strategy for land use contained in the Structure Plan and economic development opportunities. For instance the A90 Peterhead-Bridge of Don corridor to support innovative energy industry proposals being promoted by ACSEF.

Local roads improvements are not specifically included in the Regional Transport Strategy although in many cases these projects provide benefit to the strategic road network and contribute towards strategic objectives. In such instances, Nestrans will support local authorities in bringing forward projects through their Local Transport Strategies.

Strategic Roads (Safety Priorities)

Improving road safety is a key objective of this strategy and in addition to addressing capacity constraints, there are locations and corridors where improvements are required to improve road safety. This involves addressing concerns at particular locations and corridor improvements to provide increased safe overtaking opportunities to cater for different types of traffic and reduce driver frustration. Nestrans will work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland in order to improve the safety of the existing road network by supporting measures such as increased lighting, more pedestrian facilities (particularly to enable safe crossing of trunk roads) and infrastructure upgrades at key locations and corridors.

The following parts of the road network have been identified by Nestrans as priorities for action. The Delivery Plan sets out in more detail individual projects, which will require to be delivered in partnership with Transport Scotland and the local authorities.

- A90 south of Aberdeen - more grade-separated junctions at key locations, such as Laurencekirk, improved alignments and reduced central-reserve crossings;
- A90 north of Aberdeen - junction, alignment and overtaking opportunities;
- A96 west of Inverurie - junction, alignment, removal of constraints and providing overtaking opportunities;
- A947 - further improvements through route actions;
- A944 - further improvements through route actions;
- A93 - further improvements through route actions; and
- A92 – further improvements through route actions.

Car Share Lanes

Higher occupancy of vehicles and especially of private cars will enable road space to be more efficiently used and reduce emissions per person. Nestrans will consult with key stakeholders to identify at least one corridor suitable for trialling a high occupancy vehicle lane, additional to existing bus lanes, that would give priority to multiple occupancy vehicles. Suitable enforcement measures would need to be put in place prior to implementation. Careful consideration will be given to potential impact on other road users, including public transport and cyclists. In particular it will be important to ensure that there is no detriment to bus services and the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. If successful, this approach could be expanded to other corridors. Nestrans and Aberdeen City Council will progress with Transport Scotland the commissioning of a feasibility study to identify what would be necessary to deliver a northbound High Occupancy Vehicle lane on the A90 Stonehaven Road on the approach to the Bridge of Dee and the likely benefits of such a demonstration project.

Prioritised Maintenance

Maintenance of the transport network is a key issue for transport authorities, and significant sums are invested in maintaining assets, lighting and providing winter maintenance. Nestrans supports local authorities' calls for a higher maintenance regime but considers this to be a matter between authorities and the Scottish Executive.

Nestrans will however, support prioritised maintenance (over and above existing statutory obligations) which could contribute to the aims of this strategy, including for example to enhance safety or where high levels of footway maintenance may encourage walking, on cycle routes, on routes requiring additional maintenance to facilitate safe cycling or motorcycling, or to ensure higher standard of public transport across the north east.

BUS IMPROVEMENTS (IC3)

A key strand of this strategy will be to improve bus services throughout the north east, to encourage modal shift and thereby reduce carbon emissions and other pollutants and utilise roadspace more effectively. Bus services provide the most effective and efficient form of motorised road transport and are essential in providing socially-necessary transport for people without access to a car, which is over a third of households in some parts of the north east. Nestrans will work with bus operators to increase bus patronage and enhance the performance and quality of bus services across the region. Better access for all to buses will address social exclusion issues and ensure better accessibility to priority areas, such as health services.

Improving Quality

The quality of bus services in terms of frequency, reliability and vehicle capacity and comfort are crucial elements in providing a high quality public transport network that meets the needs of people and business in the north east. High-quality information, ease of interchange, simple and integrated ticketing and excellent customer service also play an important role in making bus travel more attractive and increasing bus use.

In recent years Nestrans, the local authorities and bus operators have worked in partnership through the Local Authorities/Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) to deliver improvements on a quality corridor basis. This involves complementing operator investment in new vehicles with infrastructure improvements such as new waiting shelters, raised kerbs to ease boarding and real-time information. We will encourage further fleet enhancements and piloting of more environmentally-friendly fuels. It is proposed to continue this partnership approach, and priorities for future action will be established in the Bus Action Plan, which will be developed following the approval of the RTS. We will also work with operators and local authorities to identify improvements to existing routes and potential new services.

The bus will remain the main form of public transport in the north east. For bus patronage potential to be fully realised, it is essential that the image that the bus currently presents and the performance it delivers is enhanced. This strategy aims to improve the reliability of bus services and reduce their journey times relative to car.

Improving Reliability

The Bus Action Plan will set out the necessary measures to maintain and improve levels of bus reliability on key routes in the region. Reliability is important in terms of passenger confidence, operational efficiency and integration. Bus priority measures help buses keep to timetable and provide journey times that are competitive with car travel. This can be achieved through bus lanes, but increasingly other engineering and traffic management measures can also be effective in ensuring bus journey times and reliability.

Nestrans will support measures which offer improved journey times and reliability for public transport, where this can be achieved without causing undue penalty to other road users. This will build on previous investment by Aberdeen City Council in bus priority measures on key routes in the form of bus lanes, bus gates (giving buses priority at key locations) and upgraded traffic signals which can give priority to late-running buses. Nestrans will work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, and bus operators to review the effectiveness of existing bus priorities in the north east and further measures will be set out in the Bus Action Plan and Delivery Plan.

This work will complement the new junctions associated with the AWPR to contribute to locking in the benefits. Nestrans will also explore the opportunities for introducing bus priorities to support new services providing passage on corridors throughout the north east where there is currently inadequate public transport provision.

Bus Rapid Transit

Bus Rapid Transit, utilising conventional or guided busways and high specification vehicles is a more advanced way of delivering improved quality and reliability of services. The potential for introducing any form of BRT will be explored initially in the Bus Action Plan.

Some consultees suggested that a tram system should form part of the Preferred Package. While trams were considered as part of the strategy's development, from examples in other parts of the UK, this option is likely to be prohibitively expensive without providing sufficient return for investment. Trams are therefore not included as measures within the RTS, but remain aspirations to be kept under review and could be implemented in the longer term if national policy changes the economic criteria for considering major projects.

Park and Ride

Bus-based Park & Ride sites exist at Ellon, Bridge of Don and Kingswells. These facilities have enjoyed varying degrees of success but are an important and growing resource offering travel choice. They contribute to reducing traffic in and on approaches to the City, and free up parking demand in the City Centre. Future proposals are for the completion of a ring of Park & Ride services around Aberdeen, linked to the AWPR, enabling easy access to the City. This will have benefits in terms of reducing congestion, improving urban air quality and providing wider transport choices. New edge of city sites on the A96 and A90 (South) would be complemented by an inter-urban Park and Ride on the A93 at Banchory and through expanded parking at north east rail stations. Park and Ride would also need to be supported through ticketing and promotion. Our approach to developing Park and Ride has been informed by a strategic review completed in December 2006 and the outcome of the Access from the South study, completed in March 2008. The Delivery Plan sets out our detailed programme for delivering additional Park and Ride sites and improved services.

Information

Accurate and accessible travel information is a vital part of a high quality bus network and a key ingredient in attracting people to use the bus. Real Time Information has been in operation in Aberdeen City for almost ten years and electronic journey planning terminals have been introduced at key locations in both the City and towns in Aberdeenshire. The Bus Action Plan will set out how information provision could be improved, including the development and expansion of Real Time Information. Delivering improved travel information will require strong partnership working between the public and private sectors. It is also important to ensure that information is accessible to disabled people.

DEMAND RESPONSIVE TRANSPORT (IC4)

Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services provide an important role by filling in gaps in the conventional public transport network and can provide important links to conventional bus networks or Park & Ride facilities. Existing services such as A2B in Aberdeenshire and Dial-a-Bus in Aberdeen City are popular and offer travel opportunities to people who would otherwise have limited options.

From April 2008, local authorities will be responsible for funding DRT services. The Bus Action Plan will look at how DRT links in with other conventional bus services and opportunities for further development. The Health and Transport Action Plan also recognises that DRT could play an increased role in providing access to healthcare facilities. Nestrans has already supported the expansion of DRT in the region through providing capital funding for the purchase of minibuses and will continue to work with both local authorities to further develop DRT in line with their local transport strategies.

Community Transport

Community transport services are operated by voluntary sector organisations and provide services which promote social inclusion, particularly in rural areas. Utilising a range of vehicles from cars to mini buses and special vehicles, these offer opportunities for travel for people who may be unable to access conventional public transport. This enhanced mobility and the specialised service provided by community transport operators has a big impact on quality of life for many people.

Nestrans fully recognises the important role these play in improving access to essential services, particularly for those living in remote rural areas. The Health and Transport Action Plan recognises that community transport plays an important part in providing formal and informal access to healthcare. It seeks to ensure that community transport providers have the necessary funding to continue to provide and develop these services. From April 2008, funding for community transport projects will rest with local authorities and Nestrans will work with both Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Councils to support community transport in the region.

Taxis

Nestrans also recognises that taxis play an important part in the north east transport network and we will ensure that their role is fully integrated with all the transport initiatives that are promoted in the region. We will seek to ensure that the licensing system enables taxi services to be provided in an efficient and effective way to maximise the accessibility and benefits of the service, with minimum impact on congestion, resources etc.

TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE (IC5)

Effective and seamless interchange between different services and modes has been proven to encourage use of public transport. High quality interchanges, ranging from bus and rail stations to local bus stops, enable people to access public transport and transfer between services and modes. Interchanges act as gateways to the region and play an important role in supporting the place competitiveness of the north east.

Interchanges

Nestrans will support the introduction of high quality transport interchanges throughout the north east, both physically by the development of accessible, secure and welcoming facilities and by ensuring the problems caused by utilising more than one means of transport are minimised. It is important that interchange facilities meet of the needs of older and disabled people in particular. Priorities will be in the key urban centres around the region including Aberdeen, key service centres within Aberdeenshire and transport hubs such as the airport, railway stations and ports.

Aberdeen City Centre Interchange

The rail and bus stations at Guild Street in Aberdeen's city centre act as regional gateways and interchanges. The redevelopment of both rail and bus stations is currently underway as part of the Guild Street transport interchange, retail and leisure development. This will offer an enhanced travelling experience for bus and rail passengers, additional car parking close to the ferry terminal and railway station and enable easy interchange between these modes. Nestrans will work with the developer to ensure that the opportunities for creating a high quality transport interchange are fully realised and that connections to Union Street are improved.

Nestrans will work with Aberdeen City Council through its Local Transport Strategy to seek to enhance interchanges at other locations in the City Centre, particularly where passengers may regularly change from one bus to another. Funding of "interchange" bus shelters, additional information and facilities at identified points will form part of the package of measures. Nestrans has also investigated the feasibility of providing a city centre shuttle bus service in Aberdeen to improve the connection of the bus and rail stations with retail and civic buildings, as well as a link to the ferry terminal.

Aberdeenshire Towns

Interchanges in Aberdeenshire towns play an important role, in particular through enabling people to connect from local to longer-distance services and contributing to the vitality of the town centre. Aberdeenshire Council is currently implementing its Towns Interchanges project, which comprises a range of improvements including a new bus interchange at Peterhead (opened in February 2008), an integrated rail/bus/taxi interchange at Inverurie Station and an inter-urban Park and Ride site on the edge of Banchory. Nestrans will work with Aberdeenshire Council to promote and develop further interchange improvements in support of its Local Transport Strategy.

Ticketing

The development of integrated ticketing is seen as a key contribution to making public transport use easier. Nestrans will work with local authorities, operators and others (utilising the existing Local Authorities Bus Operators Forum) to ensure the introduction of a system of through tickets for public transport use, enabling easier interchange and improving the integration between different public transport operators and modes. We will promote and support new initiatives to enhance transport interchange through integrated ticketing including the development of an integrated smartcard for travel on any public transport within the north east.

WALKING & CYCLING (IC6)

Increasing the proportion of journeys undertaken on foot and by bicycle will make a significant contribution to achieving the strategy's accessibility, health and environmental objectives. Walking and cycling facilities are increasingly incorporated into the design of all transport improvements and new developments and funding is available for improvements. In Aberdeen City Centre, proposals to enhance the City environment include pedestrianisation of Union Street, whilst there may be opportunities to build on the excellent work done through the Aberdeenshire Towns Partnership to improve the retail offer of towns by environmental improvements, including pedestrian priority. Nestrans will support Local Transport Strategies in bringing forward proposals for improvements to walking and cycling facilities. In addition, the following proposals support the encouragement of getting more people walking and cycling within the north east.

Pedestrian environment

Most journeys begin or end with a walk – and for many short journeys it is a quick, simple and healthy way of getting around. Nestrans will continue to promote and support enhancements to the existing pedestrian environment throughout the north east, including investment in pedestrian priorities, pedestrian crossing points, central reserves and pavement build outs to enhance the safety and experience of walking. It is also important to ensure good pedestrian access to public transport services and interchanges.

Low Speed Zones

Nestrans will work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, and Grampian Police to promote speed reduction schemes across north east, particularly at locations where conflicts arise between vulnerable road users and general traffic. Schools have already had 20mph zones implemented and we will work with partners to ensure the effectiveness of such zones, promote the implementation of Homezones or other initiatives which give slower modes a higher degree of belonging and improve safety. Nestrans will support Local Transport Strategies in considering

the opportunities afforded by traffic management and traffic calming to improve safety, this RTS supports the principle of slowing traffic, particularly where this will offer potential for more trips to be made by sustainable modes.

Cycling Network

Nestrans will promote and support major enhancements to the existing cycle network in partnership with local authorities, user groups and Sustrans, with consideration given to creating off road routes where appropriate and minimising potential conflicts with other traffic. Priorities for developing safe, convenient and enjoyable cycling routes will include in and between Aberdeenshire's towns and villages, in and around Aberdeen's city centre, as well as adjacent to the main arterial approaches to and the City.

AIRPORT SURFACE CONNECTIONS (IC7)

As the airport develops, it becomes increasingly important to improve the surface connection between Aberdeen Airport and the key economic centres across the City and Shire. The Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route and associated new link road will significantly improve access to the airport from across the north east. The Airport Surface Access Strategy, which has recently been reviewed, has been implemented over recent years, improving the choices available for passengers. Nestrans, BAA Aberdeen and Aberdeen City Council are also undertaking a study into improving traffic flow on the approach roads to the airport and in particular looking at providing priority measures for buses and taxis.

Bus Services

The airport is served by a number of bus services which pass through the airport, although there is no dedicated airport service. Buses currently account for a very low mode share of travel to or from the airport compared with other airports and Nestrans will work with the airport, bus operators and local authorities to increase bus use to achieve the targets in the airport's Surface Access Strategy. The Bus Action Plan and RTS Delivery Plan will set out more detailed proposals for improving bus services, such as a branded airport service and effective bus priority measures.

Longer term, we will investigate the feasibility of a Bus Rapid Transit link to the airport, which would utilise a dedicated busway for all or part of its route.

Rail Services

Nestrans is working with Transport Scotland and the rail industry to increase the number of trains serving Dyce station, close to Aberdeen Airport. This provides a direct rail connection to Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness, as well as stations in the Nestrans area.

As there is currently no scheduled public transport link between the station and the airport. Nestrans is working with the Dyce TMO and other stakeholders to fill this missing link through the provision of a high quality, low floor, shuttle bus service between Dyce Railway Station and Aberdeen Airport. This service could also provide connections to the business and industrial areas close to the airport. We will look at what might be achieved in the longer term to improve access by rail in the Rail Action Plan.

Nestrans recognises the role of the airport in serving a wide catchment, and will ensure that surface access options are available from key towns and settlements, Park & Ride sites and via interchange to enable better access generally.

PORT SURFACE CONNECTIONS (IC8)

The Strategy recognises the importance of the region's harbours and ports and EC4 identifies opportunities for further maritime improvements towards enhancing external links and economic performance.

The Port Surface Connections section within the Internal Connections Strategy seeks to ensure that the ports are adequately served. Aberdeen Harbour has an intermodal (sea/rail) facility at Waterloo Quay with a rail link to the national rail network.

Nestrans will work with the ports and roads authorities to ensure adequate road links to harbours and ports, and will identify localised traffic engineering improvements in the vicinity of the harbours, particularly Aberdeen, Peterhead and Fraserburgh, which could improve access, linking into measures to promote maritime links.

In addition, as discussed in section IC5 on Interchange, there is a proposal to ensure improved connections between the ferry terminal and Aberdeen City Centre by the provision of a shuttle bus service, which will also offer opportunities for interchange with bus and rail services.

FREIGHT (IC9)

The efficient and effective movement of goods is a key aim of this strategy. In addition to the benefits for freight movement which will be achieved through road improvements such as the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route, we will seek to reduce journey times for goods movement, improve journey time reliability and promote the shift towards environmentally-friendly modes of goods transport (notably sea and rail) wherever possible. Ensuring reliability in freight movement and also maximising the opportunities for moving goods from road to more sustainable modes are key components of the strategy.

Nestrans will work with the haulage industry and business on the development of a detailed north east freight action plan, to identify issues and priorities for action. The following measures are included as examples of freight actions which are proposed.

Rail Freight

Nestrans supports the development of railfreight as a sustainable and environmentally-friendly mode of transport, supporting economic development in the region. In 2005, the North East of Scotland Rail Freight Development Group was successful in gaining Government commitment to remove gauge constraints on the line from Mossend in Central Scotland to Aberdeen and Elgin, enabling maritime-sized container traffic to access the area. This work was completed in autumn 2007.

New rail freight facilities have recently opened at Craiginches and Raiths Farm in Aberdeen to replace the Guild Street yard. There is an intermodal (sea/rail) facility at Waterloo Quay in Aberdeen Harbour, which is being expanded, and smaller freight yards also exist at Inverurie and Huntly.

To maximise the potential of this investment will require adequate capacity and quality of terminals within the region. Through the Freight Action Plan, Nestrans will work in partnership with key stakeholders to ensure that sufficient terminal capacity, of the right quality and in the best locations is available to encourage use of rail freight, including if necessary, promoting the development of new open access freight terminals. In the longer-term, Nestrans will support further development of rail freight, including further gauge enhancements and additional terminal capacity where appropriate.

HGV Priority

The efficient movement of goods and ease of deliveries are key to the operations of many businesses in the north east. Due to the nature of the movement of goods, the majority move by road, and even where the trunk part of a journey is by sea or rail, road movement is normally required to or from terminal facilities. Nestrans will therefore seek to improve the efficient movement of goods traffic by giving consideration to where journey times can be reduced or reliability enhanced, particularly where the benefits afforded by the AWPR can be locked in. To this end, we will give consideration to the appropriateness of affording priority to lorry traffic, where possible without removing part of existing

roads or in conjunction with additional road capacity. In the short term, we will consult with key stakeholders to identify and implement a trial route, where there is potential for strategic HGV traffic to benefit from more reliable journey times. Careful consideration will be given to potential impact on other road users, including public transport and cyclists. In particular it will be important to ensure that there is no detriment to bus services and the safety of cyclists and pedestrians. Consideration will also be given to the need for secure lorry parking facilities. Nestrans and Aberdeen City Council are planning to undertake a study to investigate the benefit of a southbound Large Vehicle Lane on Wellington Road.

POWERED TWO WHEELERS (IC10)

Nestrans recognises the benefits of motorcycling as an efficient use of road space and a relatively environmentally-friendly mode of transport offering great freedom of movement, including for those whose choices may otherwise be limited. This strategy supports safe and responsible motorcycling and will encourage training and support facilities for powered two wheeler users, particularly secure parking in town and city centres.

Secure motorcycle parking within town and city centres will be encouraged and supported, and facilities for Powered Two Wheelers will be implemented as appropriate. Motorcycle training schemes and other marketing to advise drivers of the safety aspects of vulnerable road users will be important in ensuring that any increase in the use of Powered Two Wheelers can be achieved without a corresponding increase in accidents.

THE STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK

The policy framework sets the boundaries and context for all other strategic measures. It is intended to set the key cross cutting themes of the RTS and to define the overall strategic thrust of the RTS. The framework is intended – over the life of the RTS - to change how people travel, how often they travel and how safely they travel.

The Health and Transport Action Plan, jointly produced between Nestrans and NHS Grampian recognises the important role that active travel plays in promoting healthier lifestyles and outlines priorities for action. It also seeks to address negative impacts of the transport system on human health and enable better planning of transport and health services, to improve access to these facilities.

The following are the measures within this element of the RTS:

PROMOTING TRAVEL PLANNING AND TRAVEL AWARENESS (TB1)

How we travel has a big impact on the world around us and Nestrans is committed to promoting Travel Plans and travel awareness. Nestrans is actively encouraging walking, cycling, public transport and car sharing and this strategy recognises the important role this can play in encouraging modal shift, reducing the environmental impact of transport in the region and promoting active and healthy lifestyles.

Nestrans developed a Travel Planning Strategy in 2006, which identifies three key areas for action; Travel Plans, Direct Interventions and Travel Awareness which Nestrans will work to develop. The Travel Planning Strategy will be reviewed later in 2008.

In developing Travel Plans, Nestrans will promote the dissemination of best practice and continue to support the development of both public and private sector Travel Plans by offering free advice and assistance. In developing direct interventions, Nestrans will continue to support the Dyce Transportation Management Organisation (TMO) and work to identify further opportunities to develop TMOs or similar organisations. Nestrans will also support and encourage Travel Plans and travel awareness by continuing the Sustainable Travel Grant Scheme, which provides match funding to organisations to implement sustainable travel measures, and continue to actively support and promote car sharing through the Nestrans car share scheme.

In developing travel awareness, Nestrans will work with other RTPs, local authorities, the Scottish Executive and other stakeholders to support efforts to promote travel awareness, encourage participation in national and international events, and when appropriate publish literature promoting travel awareness. I-kiosks, Variable Message Signing and other forms of improved communications will be supported across the north east.

PROMOTING ACTIVE TRAVEL (TB2)

Research suggests that inactivity has levels of risk to health equivalent to having high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels or smoking. Increasing the proportion of journeys undertaken on foot and by bicycle can make a significant contribution to health and quality of life.

Experts recommend being active for a total of 30 minutes a day, for five or more days a week to benefit health. Walking and cycling can be enjoyed by most people at a pace which suits the individual and can be incorporated into daily journeys, particularly short trips.

The Health and Transport Action Plan sets out a series of actions to be implemented by Nestrans, NHS Grampian, local authorities and others to highlight the health benefits of walking and cycling and encourage active travel.

TOP

IMPROVING SAFETY (TB3)

Improving the safety and security of travel is an important part of this strategy. Nestrans will support measures that promote safety and security for all users of the transport network, including public transport. Local authorities, in partnership with the Police and Fire and Rescue service lead on road safety and there is joint working at a regional level through a Road Safety Forum.

Road safety is promoted through engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement measures. The internal connections strategy includes measures to improve safety for all road users, including pedestrians and cyclists. Enforcement of speed and traffic law is covered in the next section. Recent educational initiatives, such as the “Safe Drive, Stay Alive” events, have proved a very popular and effective means of communicating safety messages to young people. Nestrans will support where appropriate these and other measures to improve road safety.

CHANGING CHOICES THROUGH INCENTIVES AND ENFORCEMENT (IE1)

There are three sub-elements to this part of the framework.

Bus Incentives

In selecting a travel mode, a choice will be made based on perceptions of relative cost, reliability and convenience. Nestrans will work in partnership with stakeholders to identify any opportunities for incentivising bus use through lessening the impact of fare levels. For example, in addition to the national scheme to enable 16 to 18 year olds discounted travel, there may be a case to extend the scheme locally, or job seeker subsidies may be possible. We will also encourage uptake of ‘salary sacrifice’ schemes by major employers, which enable employees to save money on season tickets. By working with operators, the principle of passing on to passengers the benefits (in the form of enhanced bus operation including reducing operating costs) gained by priorities or other measures should be identified and used to encourage a virtuous spiral of investment leading to more passengers, in turn leading to lower fares. This approach will be developed further in the Bus Action Plan.

Bus Partnerships

Bus Partnerships can be used to secure high quality bus services through the establishment of new partnership agreements with bus operators and Punctuality Improvement Partnerships. The existing Quality Partnership for Public Transport, overseen by the Local Authorities Bus Operators Forum, has resulted in improved quality in bus services in the region over the past decade, with bus operators investing in new vehicles to complement local authority investment in shelters, priorities, information and other facilities.

Nestrans will continue to support this partnership with bus operators to ensure the optimum mix of efficient services – co-ordinating commercial and subsidised

bus services with school, health and voluntary transport groups (and others including car share schemes) to ensure effective connections to hospitals, work/ study, and community facilities.

Local authorities currently subsidise bus services which are not commercially viable, and will continue to support socially-necessary services. There will also be scope for Nestrans, local authorities and other partners to help introduce new bus services by providing funding to establish new services where there is currently not considered to be a strong business case for operating a commercial service.

The Bus Action Plan will set out how existing partnership working could further develop.

Alternative Fuels - Incentives

Petrol and diesel fuels dominate the road transport sector and while both these fuels and vehicle engines have become cleaner and more efficient, concern continues to grow over the costs, supply, and environmental damage associated with them. The development of alternative fuels, such as hydrogen fuel cells and biodiesel, is continuing to gather pace and the north east seeks to be a leading player in the development of new energy sources.

Nestrans will investigate the feasibility of promoting the supply and usage of alternative fuels in the north east: subject to Scottish Executive agreement, this may include a range of financial incentives to fuel suppliers and if possible also to users. This would support initiatives to promote establish Aberdeen City and Shire as an alternative energy capital.

USING ENFORCEMENT (IE2)

Legislation already exists whose enforcement would improve safety and reduce transports impacts on the environment. There are three key areas where better enforcement will be especially effective in achieving environmental benefits by ensuring that a higher level of compliance with regulations exists. Enforcement of parking regulations is considered under IE3 Parking.

Enforcement of Vehicle Exhaust Emissions

Only a small proportion of vehicles have non-compliant exhaust emissions but these can have a disproportionate effect on air quality, often in areas where people tend to congregate, such as town and city centres. Local authorities have a statutory duty to deal with air quality where European standards are predicted to be exceeded, but Nestrans will work in partnership with the Vehicle and Operators Services Agency, Councils and Grampian Police to promote the effective and visible enforcement of emissions in city and town centres and elsewhere in the north east to ensure UK and European air quality standards are achieved.

Enforcement of Speed

Stricter adherence to speed limits on all types of road will improve safety for road users and pedestrians, and research suggests this could also significantly reduce carbon emissions. Nestrans will look to promote and support the establishment of a Casualty Reduction Partnership for the north east, supporting the North East Safety Camera Partnership's (NESCAMP) activities in enforcing speed limits and reducing speed-related incidents in the north east. Nestrans also supports the implementation of average speed camera trials (for complete sections of routes with high casualty records) with a view to rolling out successful initiatives across the north east.

PARKING (IE3)

Parking is a key element of managing demand and is an important plank of this strategy. Parking policy will be an important element in considering modal choice and Nestrans will work with local authorities and others to reflect national guidance in terms of national maximum standards and support the other measures contained in this strategy.

Parking Strategy for the North East

Nestrans will work in partnership with Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council to prepare a region-wide parking strategy that will provide consistency in parking policy across the north east while using parking measures to help to achieve safety objectives, support traffic management by removing obstructions and encourage greater use of alternatives to the car. The Parking Strategy will complement the Regional Transport Strategy by considering aspects of parking control which will influence modal choice, such as quality, location and safety of car parks, supply/demand in specific areas and issues relating to costs and enforcement. The Parking Strategy will be agreed by all three parties before implementation and will involve public consultation to ensure community support for the proposals.

Enforcement of Parking

Nestrans will work in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council and Grampian Police to identify prioritised areas for parking enforcement throughout the north east to ensure public transport movements and road safety are not compromised by illegal parking acts. A high priority will be enforcement of parking restrictions which have been introduced to support road safety and strategic traffic movements, such as bus lanes, cycle routes and where inconsiderate parking can cause obstructions.

Small Vehicle and HOV Parking Incentives

Nestrans recognises that the car will continue to be the mode of choice or necessity for many journeys, and will therefore seek to change choices about car use and purchase, so that more use is made of smaller and more fuel efficient vehicles, and that effective, cleaner fuel technologies are rapidly adopted in the region.

Nestrans will initially investigate the potential benefits of establishing a parking club in the north east that offers discounted parking to members with low emission vehicles or car share club agreements. The scheme would help optimise the use of existing on street and off street parking capacity (for example members may be able to park in most convenient locations or to park all-day in areas currently time limited) and contribute towards lowering the levels of emissions in the north east. Nestrans would propose to manage this scheme through the existing www.nestranscarshare.com website.

In the first instance this initiative would take the form of a pilot to test its suitability, with a view to rolling out this initiative across most of the north east during the next 3 – 5 years, as an integral part of the region-wide parking strategy.

PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

The following table summarises the proposals for action discussed in the previous paragraphs.

FIGURE 8.3: PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

SUB STRATEGY 1: THE EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS STRATEGY – WORKING WITH TRANSPORT SCOTLAND, RAIL INDUSTRY, OPERATORS AND OTHERS TO ENHANCE TRAVEL TO/FROM THE NORTH EAST	
EC1	Rail links and services • Reducing journey times to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and further south. • Improved train capacity, comfort and reliability. • Support for High Speed Rail connections to London, which benefit the north east.
EC2	Strategic roads • Overcoming constraints on the network that have a direct impact on travel to/ from the north east, such as the A90 through Dundee.
EC3	Inter-regional Bus and Coach travel • Support further development of inter-regional bus and coach travel between the north east and other Scottish towns and cities and further afield. Explore possible links to Park and Ride sites.
EC4	Connections by sea • Closer joint working through the Freight Action Plan. • Improved access and facilities at ports and interchange with passenger ferries. • Development of new freight and passenger services.
EC5	Connections by air • Support expansion of direct destinations from Aberdeen and frequency of popular services. • Support runway extension to facilitate wider range of destinations and more efficient, modern aircraft. • Ensure protection of slots for Aberdeen services at key hubs such as London Heathrow.

SUB STRATEGY 2: THE INTERNAL CONNECTIONS STRATEGY – WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES, TRANSPORT SCOTLAND, RAIL INDUSTRY, OPERATORS AND OTHERS TO ENHANCE TRAVEL WITHIN THE NORTH EAST

IC1	**Rail** • Increased frequency of services between Inverurie-Aberdeen-Stonehaven through Aberdeen Crossrail and improved services to Inverness. • Proposed new station at Kintore and further development of the rail system to be set out in the Rail Action Plan.
IC2	**Road Improvements** • Strategic Roads Capacity improvements – tackle constraints on the A90 Ellon to Peterhead, A96 west of Inverurie, Haudagain junction, Access to Aberdeen from the south, and at other junctions serving Aberdeenshire towns. • Strategic Roads Safety improvements – alignment and junction improvements on A90 south. Overtaking, junction and alignment improvements on A90 north and A96. Route Action on A92, A93, A944, A947. • Car share lanes – trialling priority lanes for cars with multiple occupancy. • Prioritised maintenance for strategic routes, with particular benefits for public transport and sustainable modes. • Support Local Authorities in bringing forward LTS projects that contribute to strategic objectives • These build on the AWPR and dualling of A90 Balmedie-Tipperty which are being taken forward by Transport Scotland and are due to be completed in 2012.
IC3	**Bus Improvements** • Quality bus corridor improvements to services and facilities. • Develop a Bus Action Plan to improve quality and reliability of services and set out proposals for extending bus priority measures. • Explore Rapid Transit options through the Bus Action Plan. • Expand Park and Ride provision linked to the development of the AWPR. • Improve information provision including expanded real-time information systems across Aberdeen City and Shire.
IC4	**Demand Responsive Transport** • Support extension of 'Dial-a-Bus' and similar services to serve those unable to access conventional buses and to link with scheduled bus services. • Support community transport providers and encourage development of services. • Seek to ensure that taxis are provided in an efficient and effective way, which meets the needs of customers.
IC5	**Transport Interchange** • Maximising interchange potential of Guild Street development and link with Union Street and support enhancement of other interchange points in Aberdeen. • Support further improvements to interchange facilities in Aberdeenshire towns, in particular building on developments at Inverurie, Peterhead and Banchory. • Work with operators to develop integrated ticketing across services and operators in the north east.

IC6	Walking and Cycling • Support investment in measures to increase safety and security of walking and in particular to facilitate interchange between different modes of transport. Urban realm improvements to improve the pedestrian environment. • Support the extension of low speed zones, particularly where it improves the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and increases safety for children. • Continued development of cycle routes on key routes within Aberdeenshire, into Aberdeen and on routes through the City.
IC7	Airport Surface Connections • Encourage enhanced bus services to Aberdeen Airport to be detailed in the Bus Action Plan and Delivery Plan. • Support a shuttle bus between Dyce station and the airport terminal. • In the longer term, explore the potential for Bus Rapid Transit or enhanced rail services to the airport, providing faster, more reliable journey times.
IC8	Port Surface Connections • Support measures to improve access to port facilities. • Facilitate improved interchange between the Aberdeen ferry terminal and bus and rail stations.
IC9	Freight • Support the development of modern intermodal freight terminals to provide future capacity for rail freight expansion. • Investigate potential for measures to provide more reliable journey times for HGVs and identify a trial route for implementation of priority measures.
IC10	Powered two-wheelers • Support measures to improve safety for users of motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers and provide appropriate parking facilities.

SUB STRATEGY 3: THE STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK	
Travel Behaviour	
TB1	Promoting Travel Planning and Travel Awareness • Implementation and future development of Nestrans' Travel Planning Strategy. • Continue to provide support through the Sustainable Travel Grants Scheme • Encourage increased up-take of car-sharing
TB2	Promoting Active Travel • Encourage more people to walk and cycle more often. • Work with NHS Grampian and Community Planning Partnerships to promote the benefits of active travel and achieve objectives for a healthier population.
TB3	Improving Safety • Work with the Councils, Emergency Services and others to promote road safety as part of a comprehensive approach covering Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Encouragement measures. • Improve security for users of public transport services and interchanges.

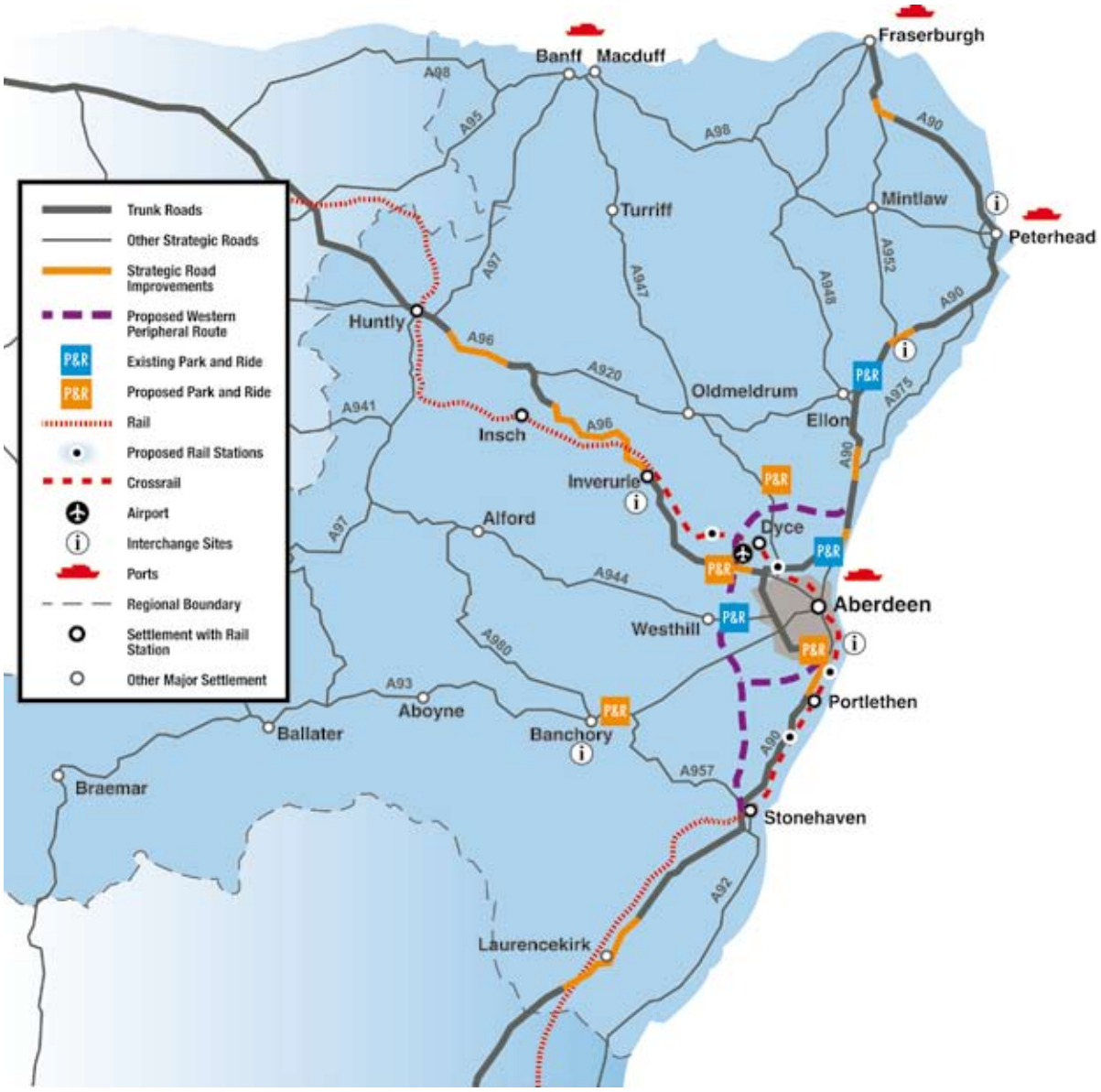
Incentives and Enforcement	
IE1	Changing Choices through Incentives & Partnerships • Work with operators to identify possible fare incentives to encourage increased bus use, particularly where this enables access to employment or training. • Through the Local Authorities/Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) continue to develop the Quality Partnership for Public Transport and consider introducing Punctuality Improvement Partnerships. • Support measures which encourage uptake of alternative fuels, particularly by public transport providers, to build on the north east's role as an energy hub.
IE2	Using Enforcement • Support enforcement of vehicle emission standards to improve air quality, in Aberdeen City Centre and towns across the north east. • Support measures to enforce speed limits to improve road safety and reduce carbon emissions. Promote the establishment of a Casualty Reduction Partnership to support NESCAMP's activities and support the trial of average speed cameras.
IE3	Parking • Develop a Regional Parking Strategy to ensure a coherent approach to parking controls and standards across the north east. • Support enforcement of parking restrictions, particularly where these exist to support strategic traffic movements, bus / pedestrian priority and road safety. • Investigate the potential for parking incentives to encourage use of small or multi-occupancy vehicles.

FROM STRATEGY TO IMPLEMENTATION

The strategy package sets out the proposed regional framework of integrated transport interventions appropriate to a Regional Transport Strategy and designed to address the transport issues and objectives for Aberdeen City & Shire through to 2021. Detailed modelling and assessment against objectives have shown it to be the optimal package. The next section focuses on the required actions to turn the strategy into reality.

The key infrastructure schemes and projects are indicated by geographical location in the map which forms Figure 8.4.

FIGURE 8.4: MAP OF PROPOSALS



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NEXT STEPS

09

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREED REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY IS NOT ONLY FOR NESTRANS BUT WILL RELY UPON THE CONCERTED EFFORTS OF A WIDE VARIETY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE AGENCIES.

Much of the public sector funding to deliver strategic transport enhancements will need to come from central government and the case for this will need to be made and promoted particularly through Transport Scotland's forthcoming Strategic Transport Projects Review. Private sector investment will be vitally important, whether in the form of new buses, an airport runway extension or harbour developments. This will often depend on associated public sector investment and supportive policies. And not least, effective implementation of the strategy will rely upon the actions of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils who are responsible for detailing transport policies and programmes, particularly through their Local Transport Strategies, and are the main local transport implementation and regulatory authorities.

Nestrans' role, currently as a 'Model 1' Regional Transport Partnership is essentially that of promoter, coordinator and facilitator, working with and through other agencies. The Scottish Government expects RTPs to identify any other statutory transport functions that they may need to ensure their Regional Transport Strategy is effectively delivered. This is addressed later in this section, under the heading Roles and Responsibilities.

FROM STRATEGY TO IMPLEMENTATION

The proposals set out in the following paragraphs form a first but important stage in the implementation arrangements for the Regional Transport Strategy. In the first instance a series of Action Plans covering Freight, Buses, Health & Transport and Rail are being created. Along with the output from individual specific feasibility studies, such as the Access to Aberdeen from the South study, they will detail deliverable projects to meet the objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy. The projects will then be compiled in a prioritised and costed (non statutory) Delivery Plan. This will focus on who needs to do what and when to ensure that the strategy is delivered, efficiently and effectively. It is envisaged that the Delivery Plan would be approved by the Nestrans Board later in 2008.

ACTION PLANS

The Regional Transport Strategy sets out a high level strategy for the Nestrans area through to 2021. Many of the elements that form part of the integrated package set out in Section 8 can fairly readily be specified and taken forward through particular projects, road improvements to enhance capacity and improve safety being good examples. In other cases more detailed work is required as to how best the particular objectives can be achieved. Often this will require to be undertaken in liaison with other agencies and transport operators. Whilst awaiting Ministerial approval of its Regional Transport Strategy Nestrans has begun to prepare a series of more detailed strategies/action plans in similar form to its Travel Planning Strategy and Action Plan produced in August 2006. This approach mirrors that adopted by the Scottish Executive itself with its three National Transport Strategy 'daughter' documents setting out more detailed strategies for Rail, Bus and Freight.

It is proposed that the four regional action plans be prepared by late spring 2008. These will cover Freight, Bus, Health and Transport and Rail. Nestrans is also contributing to the North East Scotland Road Casualty Reduction Strategy 2008 – 2010 which is being developed by the North East Scotland Joint Public Sector Group. It may be that it is subsequently seen to be appropriate by Nestrans to develop additional detailed strategies prior to the first formal review of the Regional Transport Strategy in 2011. Possible topics might be walking and cycling, integrated ticketing and parking strategy.

The following paragraphs outline what is proposed in the respective action plans.

FREIGHT ACTION PLAN

The efficient movement of goods to and from, and around the region fulfils a key role in the Regional Transport Strategy. The strategy aims to improve journey time and journey time reliability for freight movements. It also supports the shift of freight from road to other more sustainable modes of transport, and reducing vehicle emissions. Particular interventions proposed in the strategy benefiting freight are; road improvements (capacity and safety), support to rail freight, and measures to provide greater HGV priority in strategic locations.

The National Transport Strategy similarly supports these aims and its Freight Action Plan Preparing for Tomorrow, Delivering Today published along with the National Transport Strategy in December 2006, analyses in more detail the issues for freight in Scotland and sets out a detailed action plan with 20 specific actions. These are grouped around five themes; enhancing competitiveness, supporting the development of the freight industry, maintaining and improving accessibility, minimising the impacts on the environment, and ensuring policy integration. The Scottish Executive also published in April 2006 guidance on establishing Freight Quality Partnerships which the national

Freight Action Plan recommends as an appropriate means of ensuring the central involvement of the freight industry in the identification of issues and the development of solutions.

The Nestrans Freight Action Plan will set out a detailed programme of actions to achieve the freight related aims in the Regional Transport Strategy, and the national Freight Action Plan. It will also build on the previous north east freight initiatives, the pilot North East Freight Quality Partnership, and the Nestrans Freight Working Group (NESFR8). Whilst set in the context of policies through to 2021 the Freight Action Plan will particularly focus upon actions that can be developed and implemented in the short and medium term.

The freight industry itself will be central to the development of the Action Plan, as recommended by the Scottish Executive. Nestrans has held a seminar to develop the Action Plan drawing upon the main freight representative organisations (the Freight Transport Association (FTA) and Road Haulage Association (RHA)), individual freight operators, others in the supply chain, and business organisations, as well as the local authorities and Nestrans itself. One of the expected outputs from the Action Plan would be the establishment of a permanent regional freight group, a possibly restructured North East Freight Quality Partnership.

BUS ACTION PLAN

Bus services are, and will continue over the lifetime of the strategy to be the principal form of public transport in the region. The Regional Transport Strategy aims to further improve bus services throughout the north east, to encourage modal shift from car to buses to utilise road space more effectively, and to reduce carbon emissions and other pollutants. Particular interventions proposed in the strategy include; bus quality improvements, bus priority measures, park and ride, real time information, integrated ticketing, and providing more demand responsive transport services (DRT).

The National Transport Strategy places great emphasis upon enhancing the quality and coverage of bus services to improve accessibility and to encourage increased bus usage. The national Bus Action Plan Moving into the Future published along with the National Transport Strategy in December 2006 sets out 17 actions to achieve a step change in bus service provision and infrastructure. These are grouped under three headings; effective transport planning, development of the bus industry, and effective implementation of the regulatory regime. The Action Plan also advocates the establishment of Bus Forums between bus operators and councils in each local authority area.

The Nestrans Bus Action Plan will set out a detailed programme of actions to achieve the bus proposals set out in the Regional Transport Strategy, and the national Bus Action Plan. It will seek to build on

existing north east initiatives such as the Quality Partnership between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and the two main bus operators in the north east, First Aberdeen and Stagecoach Bluebird, which Nestrans has accepted an invitation to formally join. It will also build on the two studies previously commissioned by Nestrans on the requirements for a 21st century bus network, and a city centre shuttle bus service. Whilst set in the context of policies through to 2021 the Bus Action Plan will particularly focus upon actions that can be developed and implemented in the short and medium term.

The bus industry itself will be central to the development of the Action Plan and a steering group has been formed to oversee development of the Action Plan, building upon the existing north east Local Authority Bus Operator Forum (LABOF) structures, involving the bus representative organisations (Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT)), individual bus operators and other relevant interests as well as the local authorities and Nestrans itself. One of the outputs from the Action Plan might be the establishment of a reshaped North East Bus Forum. It is intended that the final Bus Action Plan will be adopted by the partners of the Quality Partnership for Public Transport for delivery.

HEALTH AND TRANSPORT ACTION PLAN

Health and transport have a close interdependence, both in terms of the particular accessibility requirements to health care facilities, and the generic impacts that transport can have upon community health. The Regional Transport Strategy recognises the need to address the issues of access to hospitals and health services, encouraging active travel to improve health, and addressing the impact of emissions on public health.

At the national level this interdependence is recognised, in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and in the Scottish Executive's Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies which requires that transport provision is planned and developed alongside healthcare provision and that as well as improving access to health facilities, transport strategies should prioritise policies and projects that will improve health. The Act also states that Health Boards will be under a duty so far as possible to perform those of its functions and activities that affect or are affected by transport consistently with the regional transport strategy. The National Transport Strategy endorses these objectives and particularly stresses the need for sustainable travel plans for major hospitals and health facilities, more integrated provision of demand responsive transport services between non-emergency patient transport and other providers.

The Nestrans Health and Transport Action Plan will set out how Nestrans, the two local authorities and NHS Grampian will work together in the planning of health services and transport provision, encouraging more sustainable and healthy travel behaviour, and achieving the aims of the Regional Transport Strategy and Community Health Plan. Particular measures that might be included are; the preparation of travel plans for major health service locations, better public transport provision to health facilities, integration of demand responsive transport services, and coordination of parking policies for hospitals with those of the local authority and Nestrans. Whilst set in the context of policies through to 2021 the Health and Transport Action Plan will particularly focus upon actions that can be developed and implemented in the short and medium term.

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The Health and Transport Action Plan is being jointly prepared by Nestrans and NHS Grampian in close liaison with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. As NHS Grampian also covers Moray, liaison will be required with HITRANS, and also with TACTRAN and the Shetland Transport Partnership as NHS Grampian acts as a regional centre providing services to the wider Highlands and Islands and Tayside. A workshop was jointly hosted by Nestrans, NHS Grampian and the Scottish Ambulance Service to facilitate a common understanding of the links between transport and health in the north east, and to focus on the key issues and actions required. This has helped to inform the preparation of a Health and Transport Action Plan.

RAIL ACTION PLAN

Enhancements to the north east's rail links, both within and to/from the area fulfils a key role in the Regional Transport Strategy. The strategy aims to improve journey times and the reliability and frequency of services along with the opening of new stations.

The national Rail Action Plan Scotland's Railways published along with the National Transport Strategy in December 2006 and analyses in more detail the issues for the rail network and travel in Scotland and sets out the vision for rail in Scotland over the next 20 years. It outlines possible future interventions to achieve the key strategic outcomes identified in the National Transport Strategy of improving journey times and connections, reducing emissions and improving quality, accessibility and affordability.

The Nestrans Rail Action Plan will set out a detailed programme of actions to help achieve the rail proposals in the Regional Transport Strategy and the national Rail Action Plan. This will build on study work already undertaken for Aberdeen Crossrail.

Discussions have been held with Transport Scotland, Network Rail and ScotRail to further explore the rail issues affecting the North East and how projects can be taken forward most effectively to maximise the use of the railway and to secure agreement on which local priorities can be supported nationally. These will then be fed into national programmes and strategic documentation and progressed through the Strategic Transport Projects Review. It is intended to undertake some joint working with Hitrans utilising their resource in terms of expertise and staffing to enable a greater understanding of rail constraints and opportunities, towards preparation of a Rail Action Plan for consideration in late 2008.

DELIVERY PLAN

The projects required to achieve the actions within the 21 strands of the Regional Transport Strategy in addition to those already contained within the Reference Case as detailed in figure 8.1 will be detailed within the Delivery Plan. This Plan will be informed by the various Action Plans and other additional studies and will have information on the proposed lead agency, a prioritised timescale for delivery and the estimated cost for each proposal. It is envisaged that the Delivery Plan would be approved by the Nestrans Board in late 2008.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Whilst Nestrans is tasked with producing and overseeing the implementation of a Regional Transport Strategy, many of the functions which will determine the success or otherwise of that strategy are vested in other bodies, notably the two local authorities, Transport Scotland and private sector transport operators.

In implementing this strategy, Nestrans will seek to work jointly through coordination and facilitation with partners on key projects and the preparation of action plans.

Scottish Executive Guidance on Regional Transport Strategies requires each RTP when submitting their Regional Transport Strategy to identify any other statutory transport functions that the RTP will itself need in order to ensure that the strategy is delivered, this covering transport functions exercised by its constituent councils, the Scottish Executive, Transport Scotland and other public bodies.

Nestrans does not believe that there are any particular functions which at this time require to be transferred to it to ensure the successful delivery of the strategy. It is envisaged that close liaison between Nestrans, its two constituent councils and Transport Scotland should enable the various elements of the Regional Transport Strategy to be delivered. This approach also provides benefits through partnership working and joint commitment between the different agencies.

Nestrans do however recognise that as it matures as an organisation its capabilities will be enhanced and also recognises that there are presently some functions vested in local authorities that might be more effectively delivered at a regional level in the north east in terms of specialism, procurement or policy consistency.. Possible areas for consideration include; strategic roads policy; public transport policy, bus priority measures; freight strategy; travel planning; demand responsive transport and community transport initiatives; safety policy; fiscal and financial policy; and car parking strategy.

Nestrans will initiate further discussion with Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils on the merits and practicalities of regional delivery of some of these transport responsibilities following approval of the Regional Transport Strategy.

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MONITORING AND REVIEW

10

GUIDANCE FROM THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT SPECIFIES THAT REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGIES SHOULD BE FORMALLY REVIEWED AND ROLLED FORWARD EVERY 4 YEARS LINKED TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTORAL CYCLE, WITH THE NEXT REVIEW IN 2011.

In the interim, regular monitoring will be undertaken on the performance of the Regional Transport Strategy. This will take two forms, process evaluation – monitoring the delivery of particular interventions, and outcome evaluation – monitoring the achievement of the objectives of the Regional Transport Strategy.

PROCESS EVALUATION

Process evaluations are required as interventions are implemented in order to check that delivery itself is being implemented economically and efficiently. Process evaluation is undertaken when impacts should have been achieved but generally before all of the outcomes from the intervention may have become apparent.

Because process evaluation is primarily concerned with the delivery of inputs, a process evaluation will be undertaken for each of the larger projects and policy interventions proposed in the strategy. The Delivery Plan will set out a programme of key deliverables and Nestrans will publish regular reports identifying progress towards implementation of schemes.

OUTCOME EVALUATION

Outcome evaluation is required to assess the extent to which the strategy and its principal elements are contributing towards the achievement of the strategic objectives. Because the objectives are very high level, lower level tests – outputs and outcomes will be developed in order to make the evaluation process transparent and also to help identify how well the links between inputs and outcomes are working.

The RTS will be supported by a Baseline Report and Annual Monitoring Reports identifying indicators and measurables. Targets will be set and agreed by the Board and performance against these will be the main focus of the Monitoring Report. This will be developed in partnership with the local authorities to ensure effective

monitoring arrangements and consistency of reporting across the region, linking to Local Transport Strategies and Single Outcome Agreements.

REPORTING EVALUATION RESULTS

Process evaluation results will be reported to the Nestrans Board at every meeting through a Projects Progress Summary. This report is set out by project heading within the Regional Transport Strategy and is publicly available through the Nestrans website.

Outcome evaluations are undertaken at determined times, normally annually and reported to the Nestrans Board in a Monitoring Report. Nestrans has set out proposed targets and associated monitoring procedures for each of the four strategic objectives and twelve operational objectives set out in section 6 of the strategy. This will be submitted to the Scottish Executive in association with the Delivery Plan for the Regional Transport Strategy in summer 2007.

Both forms of evaluation will input to the annual monitoring report on the Regional Transport Strategy which will form part of the Nestrans Annual Report required by the Scottish Government.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

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ACSEF	Aberdeen City and Shire Economic Forum, a partnership of economic development agencies and associated partners in the north east.
AWPR	Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route - one of the schemes proposed in the MTS, being delivered by Transport Scotland.
Greenhouse Gases	Emissions which can contribute to global damage, including climate change, predominantly Carbon Dioxide (CO2).
GVA	Gross Value Added - a measure of relative economic performance, normally expressed as an average per person in an area.
LABOF	Local Authorities/Bus Operators' Forum – the body in the north east which oversees the Quality Partnership for public transport consisting of Nestrans, the two local authorities and the two principal bus operators.
LTS	Local Transport Strategies - both Aberdeen City Council and Aberdeenshire Council have produced LTSs.
MTS	Modern Transport System, the previous Regional Transport Strategy for the north east, covering the period up to 2011.
NESCAMP	North East Safety Camera Partnership
NEST	North East Scotland Together, the Structure Plan covering Aberdeen City and Shire.
Nestrans	The North East of Scotland Transport Partnership
NETCF	North East Transport Consultative Forum – a stakeholders group used by Nestrans in formulating early consultation on the RTS.
NTS	National Transport Strategy, published in December 2006.
Pollutants	Emissions which can contribute to local air quality concerns. Most significant in the north east are particulates (PM10) and Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx), especially Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2).
Reference Case	Projects that are being delivered or have a certain level of commitment which form the foundation of the strategy. New projects/measures have been tested against the Reference Case.
RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
STAG	Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance
TMO	Transport Management Organisation - Nestrans has helped to establish a TMO in Dyce, encouraging companies to work together towards sustainable transport solutions.
Urban and Rural Benchmarks	The Scottish Household Survey publishes data by local authority area and for summarised areas. Aberdeen is benchmarked against "large urban areas" and Aberdeenshire against a combination of "small towns, remote small towns and accessible rural areas".

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION 12

THIS REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOLLOWS SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE GUIDANCE AND HAS BEEN PRODUCED IN LINE WITH "SCOTLAND'S TRANSPORT FUTURE: GUIDANCE ON REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGIES" PRODUCED IN MARCH 2006.

A number of other documents, indicating the process or supporting the finalised strategy are available for inspection and four Action Plans will be produced in the coming months to provide further detailed strategic consideration.

The following documents are available from the Nestrans website or through the contact details at the foot of the page:

PROCESS

Issues and Objectives Report, July 2006
Option Generation Report, September 2006
Draft Regional Transport Strategy for Consultation, December 2006
Finalised Regional Transport Strategy as submitted to Scottish Ministers, March 2007

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Strategic Environmental Assessment, March 2007
Report on Consultation, March 2007
Modelling Report and Outputs, April 2007
Survey and Findings Report, April 2007
Initial Monitoring/Baseline Report, April 2007
First Annual Monitoring Report, summer 2008
Delivery Plan, to follow autumn 2008

FORTHCOMING ACTION PLANS

Health and Transport Action Plan, March 2008
Travel Planning Strategy, Dec 2006
Bus Action Plan, summer 2008
Car Parking Strategy, autumn 2008
Freight Action Plan, summer 2008
Rail Action Plan, summer 2008
Casualty Reduction Strategy (produced by NESJPSG), 2008

NESTRANS REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY - LINKS TO THE LOCAL OBJECTIVES (ABERDEEN CITY AND SHIRE'S COMMUNITY PLANS) AND NATIONAL OUTCOMES.

This paper describes how the Regional Transport Strategy supports the national outcomes and Local Objectives within our area. It will show how the detail of the RTS "fits" with the Local Objectives and National Outcomes.

RTS SUB STRATEGY STRANDS

The Nestrans Regional Transport Strategy has 21 sub strategy strands. These sub strategy strands are used to provide a level of detail and description on what the Strategy intends to do to achieve its 4 Strategic Objectives. Spending on budget items (projects) is aligned within the Budget to these 21 strands to provide an indication of how the Regional Transport Partnership is allocating its funding across the range of strands within the Strategy.

The 21 strands are:

EXTERNAL CONNECTIONS – WORKING WITH TRANSPORT SCOTLAND, RAIL INDUSTRY, OPERATORS AND OTHERS TO ENHANCE TRAVEL TO/FROM THE NORTH EAST

EC1 - Rail links and services

- Reducing journey times to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and further south.
- Improved train capacity, comfort and reliability.
- Support for High Speed Rail connections to London, which benefit the north east.

EC2 - Strategic roads

- Overcoming constraints on the network that have a direct impact on travel to/from the north east, such as the A90 through Dundee.

EC3 - Inter-regional Bus and Coach travel

- Support further development of inter-regional bus and coach travel between the north east and other Scottish towns and cities and further afield. Explore possible links to Park and Ride sites.

EC4 - Connections by sea

- Closer joint working through the Freight Action Plan.
- Improved access and facilities at ports and interchange with passenger ferries.
- Development of new freight and passenger services.

EC5 - Connections by air

- Support expansion of direct destinations from Aberdeen and frequency of popular services.
- Support runway extension to facilitate wider range of destinations and more efficient, modern aircraft.
- Ensure protection of slots for Aberdeen services at key hubs such as London Heathrow.

INTERNAL CONNECTIONS – WORKING WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES, TRANSPORT SCOTLAND, RAIL INDUSTRY, OPERATORS AND OTHERS TO ENHANCE TRAVEL WITHIN THE NORTH EAST

IC1 - Rail

- Increased frequency of services between Inverurie-Aberdeen-Stonehaven through Aberdeen Crossrail and improved services to Inverness.
- Proposed new station at Kintore and further development of the rail system to be set out in the Rail Action Plan.

IC2 - Road Improvements

- Strategic Roads Capacity improvements – tackling constraints at A90 Ellon - Peterhead, A96 west of Inverurie, Haudagain junction, Access to Aberdeen from the south, and at other junctions serving Aberdeenshire towns.
- Strategic Roads Safety improvements – alignment and junction improvements on A90 south. Overtaking, junction and alignment improvements on A90 north and A96. Route Action on A92, A93, A944, A947.
- Car share lanes – trialling priority lanes for cars with multiple occupancy.
- Prioritised maintenance for strategic routes, with particular benefits for public transport and sustainable modes.
- Support Local Authorities in bringing forward LTS projects that contribute to strategic objectives

IC3 - Bus Improvements

- Quality bus corridor improvements to services and facilities.
- Develop a Bus Action Plan to improve quality and reliability of services and set out proposals for extending bus priority measures.
- Explore Rapid Transit options through the Bus Action Plan
- Expand Park and Ride provision linked to the development of the AWPR.
- Improve information provision including expanded real-time information systems across Aberdeen City and Shire.

IC4 - Demand Responsive Transport

- Support extension of 'Dial-a-Bus' and similar services to serve those unable to access conventional buses and to link with scheduled bus services.
- Support community transport providers and encourage development of services.
- Seek to ensure that taxis are provided in an efficient and effective way, which meets the needs of customers.

IC5 - Transport Interchange

- Maximising interchange potential of Guild Street development and link with Union Street and support enhancement of other interchange points in Aberdeen.
- Support further improvements to interchange facilities in Aberdeenshire towns, in particular building on developments at Inverurie, Peterhead and Banchory.
- Work with operators to develop integrated ticketing across services and operators in the north east.

IC6 - Walking and Cycling

- Support investment in measures to increase safety and security of walking and in particular to facilitate interchange between different modes of transport. Urban realm improvements to improve the pedestrian environment.
- Support the extension of low speed zones, particularly where it improves the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and increases safety for children.
- Continued development of cycle routes on key routes within Aberdeenshire, into Aberdeen and on routes through the City.

IC7 - Airport Surface Connections

- Encourage enhanced bus services to Aberdeen Airport to be detailed in the Bus Action Plan and Delivery Plan.
- Support a shuttle bus between Dyce station and the airport terminal.
- In the longer term, explore the potential for Bus Rapid Transit or enhanced rail services to the airport, providing faster, more reliable journey times.

IC8 - Port Surface Connections

- Support measures to improve access to port facilities.
- Facilitate improved interchange between the Aberdeen ferry terminal and bus and rail stations.

IC9 - Freight

- Support the development of modern intermodal freight terminals to provide future capacity for rail freight expansion.
- Investigate potential for measures to provide more reliable journey times for HGVs and identify a trial route for implementation of priority measures.

IC10 - Powered two-wheelers

- Support measures to improve safety for users of motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers and provide appropriate parking facilities.

THE STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK TRAVEL BEHAVIOUR

TB1 - Promoting Travel Planning and Travel Awareness

- Implementation and future development of Nestrans' Travel Planning Strategy.
- Continue to provide support through the Sustainable Travel Grants Scheme
- Encourage increased up-take of car-sharing

TB2 - Promoting Active Travel

- Encourage more people to walk and cycle more often.
- Work with NHS Grampian and Community Planning Partnerships to promote the benefits of active travel and achieve objectives for a healthier population.

TB3 - Improving Safety

- Work with the Councils, Emergency Services and others to promote road safety as part of a comprehensive approach covering Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Encouragement measures.
- Improve security for users of public transport services and interchanges.

INCENTIVES AND ENFORCEMENT

IE1 - Changing Choices through Incentives & Partnerships

- Work with operators to identify possible fare incentives to encourage increased bus use, particularly where this enables access to employment or training.
- Through the Local Authorities/Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) continue to develop the Quality Partnership for Public Transport and consider introducing Punctuality Improvement Partnerships.
- Support measures which encourage uptake of alternative fuels, particularly by public transport providers, to build on the north east's role as an energy hub.

IE2 - Using Enforcement

- Support enforcement of vehicle emission standards to improve air quality, in Aberdeen City Centre and towns across the north east.
- Support measures to enforce speed limits to improve road safety and reduce carbon emissions. Promote the establishment of a Casualty Reduction Partnership to support NESCAMP's activities and support the trial of average speed cameras.

IE3 - Parking

- Develop a Regional Parking Strategy to ensure a coherent approach to parking controls and standards across the north east.
- Support enforcement of parking restrictions, particularly where these exist to support strategic traffic movements, bus / pedestrian priority and road safety.
- Investigate the potential for parking incentives to encourage use of small or multi-occupancy vehicles.

RTS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

The above 21 sub strategy strands link to the 4 RTS Strategic Objectives, which are:

1: ECONOMY

TO ENHANCE AND EXPLOIT THE NORTH EAST'S COMPETITIVE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES, AND REDUCE THE IMPACTS OF PERIPHERALITY.

- To make the movement of goods and people within the north east and to/from the area more efficient and reliable.
- To improve the range and quality of transport to/from the north east to key business destinations.
- To improve connectivity within the north east, particularly between residential and employment areas.

2: ACCESSIBILITY, SAFETY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

TO ENHANCE CHOICE, ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY OF TRANSPORT, PARTICULARLY FOR DISADVANTAGED AND VULNERABLE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY AND THOSE LIVING IN AREAS WHERE TRANSPORT OPTIONS ARE LIMITED.

- To enhance travel opportunities and achieve sustained cost and quality advantages for public transport relative to the car.
- To reduce the number and severity of traffic related accidents and improve personal safety and security for all users of transport.
- To achieve increased use of active travel and improve air quality as part of wider strategies to improve the health of north east residents.

3: ENVIRONMENT

TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE NORTH EAST'S NATURAL AND BUILT ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE AND REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF TRANSPORT ON CLIMATE AND AIR QUALITY.

- To reduce the proportion of journeys made by cars and especially by single occupant cars.
- To reduce the environmental impacts of transport, in line with national targets.
- To reduce growth in vehicle kilometres travelled.

4: SPATIAL PLANNING

TO SUPPORT TRANSPORT INTEGRATION AND A STRONG, VIBRANT AND DYNAMIC CITY CENTRE AND TOWN CENTRES ACROSS THE NORTH EAST.

- To improve connectivity to and within Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire towns, especially by public transport, walking and cycling.
- To encourage integration of transport and spatial planning and improve connections between transport modes and services.
- To enhance public transport opportunities and reduce barriers to use across the north east, especially rural areas.

NATIONAL OUTCOMES AND LOCAL OBJECTIVES

The Regional Transport Strategy needs to be seen in the context of supporting both the National Outcomes as described by Scottish Government and the Local Objectives as set out in the Aberdeen City and Shire Community Plans. These are as follows:

NATIONAL OUTCOMES

1. We live in a Scotland that is the most attractive place for doing business in Europe
2. We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people
3. We are better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation
4. Our young people are successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens
5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
6. We live longer, healthier lives
7. We have tackled the significant inequalities in Scottish society
8. We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
9. We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger
10. We live in well-designed, sustainable places where we are able to access the amenities and services we need
11. We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others
12. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations
13. We take pride in a strong and inclusive national identity
14. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production
15. Our public services are high in quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL – ABERDEEN*FUTURES*

KEY AIMS

Leading the City

LC1 To reach agreement on a shared vision for the City, which is informed by views of the people and organisations of Aberdeen

LC2 To listen to the expressed views of different communities of Aberdeen and debate the issues that are important for the future of our City. This will inform the people who make the decisions

LC3 To bring people together to determine what is needed and harness the skills and resources available to us to achieve it.

LC4 To make sure that decision-makers can be held accountable.

LC5 To promote Aberdeen locally, nationally and internationally

LC6 To measure our success, review our progress and make changes needed to achieve our vision.

Being Informed

BI1 To improve the quality and accessibility of information provided by partner organisations addressing issues such as the use of Plain English; the location of information; the affordability of information; friendly and approachable contact with staff, and the provision of information in community languages and formats suitable for those with disabilities

BI2 To ensure that the people of Aberdeen know how and where to get information on issues and topics of interest to them

Getting Involved

GI1 To encourage and support communities to be more involved in identifying their needs and sustaining their communities

GI2 City partners to work together with citizens and communities to improve community well being

Locality Planning

LP1 To provide a framework for planning which places the needs and aspirations of local people at the heart of the planning process where local participation is intrinsically valued

LP2 To develop the discipline of local involvement in decision making which prioritises local need and target budgets accordingly

LP3 To develop an information network across partner organisations which can provide accurate information/ data at a localised level.

Health and Social Care, Homes and Safety

HS1 Together we will improve the health of the people of Aberdeen and reduce health inequalities

HS2 To deliver a comprehensive programme of care to those who need support and their carers

HS3 To improve the quality of housing and environment for individuals and the community

HS4 To make Aberdeen a safer place in which to live and work

Land Use and the Environment and Clean City – work in partnership with communities, businesses and organisations to:

LU1 Achieve a clean and pollution free city
LU2 Reduce, reuse and recover waste before disposal
LU3 Reduce unnecessary energy use and promote efficiency and renewable energy
LU4 Protect our heritage, history and landscape and ensure an attractive and useful built environment
LU5 Maintain and enhance opportunities for access to the countryside for informal recreation
LU6 Protect and enhance our wildlife, biodiversity, wildlife sites, trees and open spaces
LU7 Ensure that Aberdeen continues to be a city that people enjoy to be in and can gain a livelihood from
LU8 Respond to global environmental threats, such as climate change
LU9 Recognise the need for a sustained economy which respects and supports a quality environment
LU10 Educate and inform, promote change and engender pride in our City
LU11 Help other countries protect their environment by making responsible purchasing and ethical choices

Transport and Connections

TC1 Integration: through land use planning and transport integration, to make sure that the objectives set in the Transport Strategy are met in the most efficient way possible
TC2 Accessibility: to ensure all citizens have access to a range of transport options which reflect differing needs of age, gender, disability and income
TC3 Choice: to maintain and improve the range of transport choices available to, from and within the City
TC4 Partnership: to ensure through partnership working, that strategic transport needs are adequately addressed and that transport operators are encouraged to work in the long-term best interests of the area

Prosperity and Jobs

PJ1 Provide the dynamic infrastructure required for a dynamic economy
PJ2 Empower communities to be socially inclusive, economically viable and fully included in the life of the City

Aberdeen's Image

AI1 Vigorously promote Aberdeen and its businesses locally, nationally and internationally to encourage inward investment, business and trade development and the diversification of the local economy.

Learning

L1 To enable and encourage citizens of all ages across our City, whatever their social background or economic position, to reach the maximum of their potential throughout life. We believe that every child should have the best possible start in life

L2 To actively promote social inclusion and take action to remove the barriers to accessing learning opportunities

L3 To develop learned citizens who can make a full contribution towards a knowledgeable, informed and democratically engaged society

L4 To create seamless lifelong learning and development opportunities for the people of Aberdeen

L5 To create quality learning environments which develop a high level of confidence in and engagement with our institutions

L6 To attract investment in learning and knowledge capacity within our City

Culture (Arts and Heritage)

C1 Cultural Activity will become part of everyday live for citizens of all ages and visitors to our City

C2 To support cultural activities which have a positive impact on the social, economic and cultural development of the City

C3 To foster a strong, diverse and independent creative community

C4 To encourage access to and participation in the City's cultural life

C5 To develop productive and sustainable city partnerships within and beyond the cultural sector

C6 To strengthen support for and ownership of the City's distinctive cultural character

Sports, Leisure and Recreation

S1 To improve opportunities for people of all ages and visitors to our City to become involved in recreational activities, leisure pursuits and a wide variety of sports

S2 To work together with our City partners to plan, develop and enhance sports, leisure and recreational facilities across our City

S3 To work with our City partners to attract investment for sports, leisure and recreation programmes and facilities across our City. We also want to attract investment in people so that we can work together to provide financial assistance for talented athletes to allow them to train and compete

S4 To encourage participation and develop active communities through coaching, leading and volunteering opportunities across our City

ABERDEENSHIRE COMMUNITY PLAN 2006-2010

THEME OBJECTIVES

Community Wellbeing

CW1 To improve health & social care and reduce health inequalities
CW2 To create attractive communities
CW3 To improve the quality of housing, including the use of targeted regeneration initiatives and measures to reduce the number of households who live in fuel poverty
CW4 To increase the supply of affordable housing to meet the range of identified housing and support needs
CW5 To promote community safety and tackle anti-social behaviour

Jobs and the Economy

JE1 Create and sustain jobs in Aberdeenshire
JE2 Developing and training a well-educated and skilled workforce
JE3 Maintaining and growing a robust rural economy in key sectors

Lifelong Learning

LL1 Engaging with communities
LL2 Promoting achievement through learning for adults
LL3 Encouraging achievement through learning for young people
LL4 Ensuring learner support and progression
LL5 Building community capacity
LL6 Developing the partnership

Sustainable Environment

SE1 To raise awareness of sustainability and environmental issues amongst business, organisations and consumers

Developing our Partnership

DP1 To develop an effective partnership monitoring and evaluation system
DP2 To develop a partnership communications strategy
DP3 To ensure that we follow the National Standards for Community Engagement, which aim to ensure inclusion and equality for everyone
DP4 To identify and progress all other partnership-wide issues, such as partnership budgets, data-sharing policy and staff training

LINKAGES

The following table shows how each strand of the RTS contributes to the National Outcomes and Local Objectives.

RTS Sub Strategy Strands	RTS Strategic Objective	Contributes to ACC Key Aims
External Connections		
EC1 - Rail links and services • Reducing journey times to Edinburgh and Glasgow, and further south. • Improved train capacity, comfort and reliability. • Support for High Speed Rail connections to London, which benefit the north east.	1,4 (2,3)	LU7,TC1-4, PJ1, AI1 (LC5,LU1, LU3,LU5, LU8,LU9, L2,C4,S1)
EC2 - Strategic roads • Overcoming constraints on the network that have a direct impact on travel to/from the north east, such as the A90 through Dundee.	1,2 (4)	LU7,TC1-4, PJ1, AI1 (LC5,LU1, LU3,LU5, LU9,L2,C4,S1)
EC3 - Inter-regional Bus and Coach travel • Support further development of inter-regional bus and coach travel between the north east and other Scottish towns and cities and further afield. Explore possible links to Park and Ride sites.	1,2,3,4	LU7,TC1-4, PJ1, AI1 (LC2,LC5, LU1,LU3, LU5,LU7, LU8, LU9, L2,C4,S1)
EC4 - Connections by sea • Closer joint working through North East Ports Forum. • Improved access to ports and interchange with passenger ferries. • Development of new freight and passenger services.	1,3 (4)	LU9,TC1-4, PJ1 (LC5,LU1,LU3,AI1)
EC5 - Connections by air • Support expansion of direct destinations from Aberdeen and frequency of popular services. • Support runway extension to facilitate wider range of destinations and more efficient, modern aircraft. • Ensure protection of slots for Aberdeen services at key hubs such as London Heathrow.	1(3,4)	LU7,TC1-4, PJ1, AI1 (LC5,LU3, LU8, LU9)

Contributes to AC Objectives	Contributes to National Outcome	Comments
SE1 (CW2, JE1, JE3)	1,2 (10,12,14)	All the External Connection strands assist in improving connectivity to and within the North East and thus enhance the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the area by making the movement of goods and people more efficient and reliable and reducing peripherality. Improving the External Connections will increase accessibility and thus promote social inclusion. Those strands that enhance modal choice will also help to reduce the effects of transport on the environment, whilst overcoming the constraints on the strategic road network will also deliver safety benefits.
JE1, JE3 (CW2)	1,2,10	
JE1, SE1 (CW2,JE3)	1,2,10,14 (12)	
JE1, JE3 (SE1)	1,2 (10)	
JE1	1,2 (10)	

RTS Sub Strategy Strands	RTS Strategic Objective	Contributes to ACC Key Aims
INTERNAL CONNECTIONS		
IC1 - Rail • Increased frequency of services between Inverurie-Aberdeen-Stonehaven through Aberdeen Crossrail and improved services to Inverness. • New station openings in the City and Aberdeenshire as part of Aberdeen Crossrail.	1,4 (2,3)	LC5,LU1, LU3,LU5, LU7,LU8, LU9,TC1-4, PJ1,AI1 (L2,C4,S1)
IC2 - Road Improvements • Strategic Roads Capacity improvements – tackling constraints at A90 Ellon - Peterhead, A96 west of Inverurie, Haudagain junction, Access to Aberdeen from the south, and at other junctions serving Aberdeenshire towns. • Strategic Roads Safety improvements – alignment and junction improvements on A90 south. Overtaking, junction and alignment improvements on A90 north and A96. Route Action on A92, A93, A944, A947. • Car share lanes – trialling priority lanes for cars with multiple occupancy. • Prioritised maintenance for strategic routes, with particular benefits for public transport and sustainable modes. • Support Local Authorities in bringing forward LTS projects that contribute to strategic objectives • (These build on the AWPR and dualling of A90 Balmedie – Tipperty which are being taken forward by Transport Scotland and are due to be completed in 2011)	1,2 (4)	LC5,LU1, LU3,LU5, LU7,LU8, LU9,TC1-4, PJ1,AI1 (L2,C4,S1)
IC3 - Bus Improvements • Quality bus corridor improvements to services and facilities. • Extend bus priority measures on key routes to enable buses to beat congestion. • Explore Rapid Transit options such as guided busways and the Super Bus concept. • Expand Park and Ride provision linked to the development of the AWPR. • Further develop real-time information systems to expand coverage across Aberdeen City and Shire.	1,2,3,4	LC5,LU1, LU3,LU5, LU7,LU8, LU9,TC1-4, PJ1,AI1, L2,C4,S1 (LP3)

Contributes to AC Objectives	Contributes to National Outcome	Comments
JE1, JE3, SE1 (CW2)	1,2 (10,12,14)	Developing the existing passenger rail network will increase accessibility to employment, education and services, improve economic competitiveness and encourage sustainable travel
CW2,JE1, JE3, SE1	1,2,9,10	Capacity, safety and quality improvements will bring benefit to all road users. Reducing journey times and increasing safety and reliability will assist the quality of life and economic competitiveness of the north east and bring health benefits through reducing poor air quality resulting from standing traffic and the diversion of traffic to inappropriate routes. High occupancy vehicle lanes could further assist in reducing emissions.
CW2,JE1, JE3, SE1	1,2,10, 14 (7,12)	Bus improvements such as service quality, frequency and reliability will help make this sustainable mode more attractive thus reducing congestion and environmental impact. Increasing accessibility to employment, education and services will promote social inclusion and increase economic benefits and quality of life.

RTS Sub Strategy Strands	RTS Strategic Objective	Contributes to ACC Key Aims
IC4 - Demand Responsive Transport • Support extension of 'Dial-a-Bus' and similar services to serve those unable to access conventional buses and to link with scheduled bus services. • Support community transport providers and encourage development of services. • Seek to ensure that taxis are provided in an efficient and effective way, which meets the needs of customers.	2.3 (1,4)	LU5, LU9, TC1-4, PJ1, PJ2, AI1,L2, C4,S1 (GI2)
IC5 - Transport Interchange • Maximising interchange potential of Guild Street development and link with Union Street and support enhancement of other interchange points in Aberdeen. • Implement city centre shuttle bus and explore potential for future 'Micro-Light' tram. • Support further improvements to interchange facilities in Aberdeenshire towns, in particular building on developments at Inverurie, Peterhead and Banchory. • Work with operators to develop integrated ticketing across services and operators in the north east.	2,3,4 (1)	LU1,LU3, LU5,LU7, LU8,LU9,TC1-4, PJ1 (L2,C4,S1)
IC6 - Walking and Cycling • Support investment in measures to increase safety and security of walking and in particular to facilitate interchange between different modes of transport. Urban realm improvements to improve the pedestrian environment. • Support the extension of low speed zones, particularly where it improves the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and increases safety for children. • Continued development of cycle routes on key routes within Aberdeenshire, into Aberdeen and on routes through the City.	(1,2,3,4)	HS1,HS4, LU1,LU3, LU5,LU7, LU8,LU9, TC1-4, PJ1 (L2,C4,S1)
IC7 - Airport Surface Connections • Facilitate an Express Bus Service to provide a dedicated, high-frequency service between Aberdeen City Centre and other key locations and the airport and enhanced regional connections. • Support a shuttle bus between Dyce station and the airport terminal. • In the longer term, explore a fixed link from Aberdeen City Centre to the airport, providing fast, reliable journey times, either as an addition to Crossrail or as a guided bus route.	1, (3,4)	LU3,LU7, LU8,LU9, TC1-4, PJ1,AI1 (C4,S1)

Contributes to AC Objectives	Contributes to National Outcome	Comments
CW2,JE1, JE3, SE1	10 (1,7,11, 12, 14)	These services promote social inclusion and help improve accessibility to services (including healthcare), particularly for those in rural areas
CW2,JE1, JE3, SE1	(1,10,14)	Effective interchange between different services and modes that is safe and secure can encourage use of public transport and realise the social, accessibility, environmental and active travel health benefits this brings. They can act as gateways to the region and support the place competitiveness of the north east.
CW2,JE1, JE3, SE1	9,10, 12,14 (1,2,5,6)	Encouraging greater walking and cycling through route development and security improvements can help achieve accessibility, health, social inclusion, safety and environmental benefits thus increasing the quality of life and attractiveness of the area.
JE1	1,2 (10)	Improving surface access connections will increase accessibility to the airport by sustainable modes and increase connections to key economic centres improving the competitiveness and attractiveness of the area.

RTS Sub Strategy Strands	RTS Strategic Objective	Contributes to ACC Key Aims
IC8 - Port Surface Connections • Support measures to improve access to port facilities. • Facilitate improved interchange between the Aberdeen ferry terminal and bus and rail stations.	1,3 (4)	LU9,TC1-4, PJ1,AI1 (C4,S1)
IC9 - Freight • Support the development of modern intermodal freight terminals to provide future capacity for rail freight expansion. • Investigate potential for measures to provide more reliable journey times for HGVs and identify a trial route for implementation of priority measures.	1 (4)	LC5,LU1, LU3,LU7, LU8,LU9,TC1,TC3, TC4,PJ1,AI1
IC10 - Powered two-wheelers • Support measures to improve safety for users of motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers and provide appropriate parking facilities.	(1,2,3)	LU3, HS4, TC2, TC3

THE STRATEGIC POLICY FRAMEWORK		
Travel Behaviour		
TB1 - Promoting Travel Planning and Travel Awareness • Implementation and future development of Nestrans' Travel Planning Strategy. • Continue to provide support through the Sustainable Travel Grants Scheme • Encourage increased up-take of car-sharing	2,3,4 (1)	LU1, LU3, LU7,LU8, LU9,LU10,TC1-4, PJ1, L2,C4,S1 (HS1,HS4)
TB2 - Promoting Active Travel • Encourage more people to walk and cycle more often. • Work with NHS Grampian and Community Planning Partnerships to promote the benefits of active travel and achieve objectives for a healthier population.	2,3 (1,4)	GI2,HS1, HS4, LU1, LU3,LU7, LU8,LU9, LU10,TC1-4,PJ1, L2,C4,S1
TB3 - Improving Safety • Work with the Councils, Emergency Services and others to promote road safety as part of a comprehensive approach covering Education, Engineering, Enforcement and Encouragement measures. • Improve security for users of public transport services and interchanges.	2 (1,4)	GI2,HS4, LU7,LU10, TC1-4

Contributes to AC Objectives	Contributes to National Outcome	Comments
JE1,JE3	1,2 (10)	Improving surface access connections will increase accessibility to the harbours and ports within the north east improving the competitiveness and attractiveness of the area.
JE1, JE3, SE1	1,2 (10)	Improving journey times and reliability will enhance the economic comp titive-ness and attractiveness of the area, whilst developing rail freight can also provide environmental benefits.
	10 (9,14)	This can bring safety and accessibility benefits for a relatively sustainable mode.

JE1, JE3, SE1	1 (2,7,10, 11, 12,14)	Encouraging sustainable modes can help achieve accessibility, social inclusion, health and environmental benefits and enhance the quality of life and attractiveness of the area.
CW1, CW2, SE1	6,12,14 (1,5,11)	Increasing active travel can bring both health and environmental benefits, enhancing the quality of life and attrac-tiveness of the area. Indirectly this can aid the economy if less days are lost to ill health and congestion is reduced thus aiding business travel.
CW2, CW5	6,9,15 (1,5)	Working with partners to improve safety and security will help make the North East a safer place to live and travel in and can help encourage sustainable modes.

RTS Sub Strategy Strands	RTS Strategic Objective	Contributes to ACC Key Aims
INCENTIVES AND ENFORCEMENT		
IE1 - Changing Choices through Incentives & Partnerships • Work with operators to identify possible fare incentives to encourage increased bus use, particularly where this enables access to employment or training. • Through the Local Authorities/Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) continue to develop the Quality Partnership for Public Transport and consider introducing Punctuality Improvement Partnerships. • Support measures which encourage uptake of alternative fuels, particularly by public transport providers, to build on the north east's role as an energy hub.	2,3,4 (1)	LU1,LU3, LU7, LU8, LU9, LU10, TC1-4, PJ1, L2, C4,S1 (HS1)
IE2 - Using Enforcement • Support enforcement of vehicle emission standards to improve air quality, in Aberdeen City Centre and towns across the north east. • Support measures to enforce speed limits to improve road safety and reduce carbon emissions. Promote the establishment of a Casualty Reduction Partnership to support NESCAMP's activities and support the trial of average speed cameras.	2,3,4 (1)	HS1, HS4, LU1, LU3, LU7,LU8, LU9, LU10, TC4
IE3 - Parking • Develop a Regional Parking Strategy to ensure a coherent approach to parking controls and standards across the north east. • Support enforcement of parking restrictions, particularly where these exist to support strategic traffic movements, bus / pedestrian priority and road safety. • Investigate the potential for parking incentives to encourage use of small or multi-occupancy vehicles.	3,4 (1)	LU1, TC1, TC2

Contributes to AC Objectives	Contributes to National Outcome	Comments
JE1,SE1	2,15 (1,3,7,8, 10)	Working with partners to encourage use of bus travel can help achieve the accessibility, social inclusion and environmental benefits that greater use of this sustainable mode can bring. Promotion of alternative fuels can also bring environmental benefits and help grow the areas role as an alternative energy capital.
CW1,CW2, CW5, SE1	12,14,15 (6,8,9)	Realising the environmental, health and safety benefits of working with partners to support enforcement of emission standards and speed limits will also increase the quality of life and attractive-ness of the north east
CW2	(10,12)	Working in partnership with local authorities to develop a region wide strategy will provide a consistent policy, the enforcement of which can reduce congestion and improve safety. Encouraging car share and use of smaller, more fuel efficient vehicles can achieve environmental benefits.

NOTES

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The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire