2013/2035

Nestrans REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Refresh

nestrans

The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire

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1 Foreword and Introduction

by Councillor Peter Argyle, chair of Nestrans

Nestrans' Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) was approved by Scottish Ministers and published in 2008 and a separate delivery plan published in 2010. Since its initial publication in 2008 there have been a number of changes to the policy and economic context within which the RTS sits and a number of actions and policies emerging in recent years that the RTS needs to take account of.

The most significant of these is the publication of the Structure Plan, the subsequent Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for the North East to 2035, the adoption of Local Development Plans for both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and the adoption of a new Local Transport Strategy by Aberdeenshire Council in January 2012. The 2008 RTS was developed without the context of an up to date Structure Plan or Local Development Plans. These are now all in place and the RTS needs to support the delivery of these. Although the development plans are in line with the objectives of the 2008 RTS, they will have significant implications for the region's transport network which need to be taken into consideration. The 2008 RTS extends to 2021 and it is felt appropriate that the transport strategy is reviewed and better aligned to the timeline of the new SDP to 2035.

The RTS Refresh was approved by the Minister for Transport and Veterans on 16th January 2014 and Nestrans will continue to work with our local authority partners, the private and voluntary sectors as well as the Scottish Government to deliver the actions contained within it.

2 Summary of the Review Process

The purpose of this re-fresh is not to change the direction of the RTS but to incorporate significant developments in policy and better align it with the SDP and the transport implications of this development plan. This document is therefore an addendum to the RTS published in 2008 and updates 'The Preferred Strategy Package'.

A main issues report was produced in late 2012 which summarised the changes in policy, likely future trends and reviewed the objectives and actions of the 2008 RTS. A public and stakeholder consultation was carried out on the main issues report in November 2012 and the results of this have fed into this refresh.

Following consideration of comments on the main issues report a draft strategy was produced for a further period of consultation.

The Main Issues Report, a summary of both consultations and the comments received can be found on the Nestrans website at www.nestrans.org.uk

3 Vision and Objectives

Our vision for transport underpins our objectives and actions and remains unchanged since 2008. Together with the objectives it supports the Scottish Government's overall purpose to increase sustainable economic growth and the objectives of the National Transport Strategy.

"A transport system for the north east of Scotland which enables a more economically competitive, sustainable and socially inclusive society."

The objectives of the strategy are:

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 for all in the north east, 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 casualties 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, noise 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.
- To ensure that all new developments and transport infrastructure improvements give consideration to and make provisions for pedestrians and cyclists as an integral part of the design process.

4 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.

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

Those MTS projects which had secured a certain degree of commitment or had advanced significantly were taken as a given and formed the reference case of the RTS. Since 2008, a number of these projects have either been delivered or have made significant steps forward. Others have been delayed due to external circumstances such as the legal challenge on the AWPR. An update on each of these is provided in the following table.

Table 4.1: reference case Projects (including committed projects contained in the MTS)

Project	Lead agency	Update and 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
Laurencekirk Station Re-opening	Transport Scotland/ Nestrans	Completed in 2008
Guild Street transport interchange – Aberdeen railway station redevelopment	Private sector	Completed in 2009
Committed Projects – Delivery underway		
Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route	Transport Scotland	Construction works due to begin in 2014 with completion expected in 2018
Funding committed by Transport Scotland and the two councils		
A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling	Transport Scotland	Construction works to be carried out alongside the AWPR with completion expected by 2018. Funding committed by Transport Scotland
Local road and traffic management improvements	Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils	Ongoing
Aberdeenshire Towns Interchanges – Inverurie and A93 Banchory park and ride	Aberdeenshire Council	Ongoing

Project	Lead agency	Update and estimated delivery date
Committed Projects – Delivery Not Yet commenced		
Park and ride sites at A96 (including link road from A96 to the Airport) and A90 (south)	Aberdeen City Council	To be delivered in conjunction with the AWPR with construction of both expected by 2018.
Park and ride site on the A947	Aberdeenshire Council	Opportunities for mini park and ride hubs are being explored.
Pedestrianisation within Aberdeen City Centre	Aberdeen City Council	Following construction of the AWPR
Projects at an advanced stage of development		
Aberdeen Crossrail: December 2008 service improvements Enhancement to Sunday services Aberdeen-Inverness line upgrade	First ScotRail/ TS First ScotRail/ TS Transport Scotland	Completed 20/08/2013 Phase 1: 2014-2019 Phase 2: 2019-2024
Other projects Promoted by Nestrans		
Kintore Station re-opening	Nestrans and rail partners	As part of Phase 1 of Aberdeen-Inverness improvements above with estimated completion in the period 2014-19.

A large number of other infrastructure schemes have been delivered since the RTS was published in 2008 and these are summarised in the Main Issues Report that was published prior to this refresh (available on the Nestrans website).

5 The Preferred Strategy Package

Introduction

The Regional Transport Strategy sets out an integrated approach to meet future transport needs and bring sustainable improvements to transport across the region between 2008 and 2035. This strategy refresh 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 Future's (ACSEF) Economic Development Strategy and integrate with the development plan framework set out in the North East Structure Plan, emerging Strategic Development Plan and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire's Local Development Plans.

The preferred strategy package sets out a strategic framework of integrated measures and interventions and represents 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 its delivery and action plans.

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.

Mitigating the cumulative impacts of development

The planned growth in population and households detailed in the Structure Plan will have a significant impact on the transport network as the number and pattern of trips increases and changes. In order to fully understand the impact of this planned level of growth on the transport network, Nestrans and the Strategic Development Planning Authority (SDPA) commissioned an appraisal to consider the planned changes in land use and the cumulative transport impacts associated with the scale and distribution of development proposals.

The Cumulative Transport Appraisal (CTA) was undertaken in 2010. As its baseline, the CTA took account of anticipated changes in the proportion of the working and non-working age population and changing trends in car ownership, vehicle fuels and technology as well as the completion of the following transport infrastructure schemes which it is assumed will be delivered by 2023. Many of these are also included in the RTS reference case, as detailed in Table 4.1.

Table 5.1 Cumulative Transport Appraisal base case schemes

Improved central belt – Aberdeen & Aberdeen-Inverness rail services	Under active consideration by Transport Scotland & Network Rail
Laurencekirk rail station & rail service changes	Completed
Grade separation on the A90 at Findon	Completed
A956 dual carriageway upgrade	Completed
Union Street pedestrianisation and traffic management schemes	Currently being considered by ACC as part of City Centre regeneration
An A96 to Aberdeen Airport link road	Under consideration for construction by 2015
A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling	To be constructed as part of AWPR
Aberdeen Western Peripheral Road	Going through the tender process
Park and Ride sites at A96, A947 & A90(S) and associated bus services	A96 being considered for construction by 2015, A90(S) at planning application
Haudagain roundabout improvements	To be delivered on completion of AWPR
The Third Don crossing	Planned for construction and opening by end of 2015

The cumulative transport appraisal enabled, for the first time, a strategic overview of the impact of the development plan proposals. It identified how the development plan is predicted to impact on the operation of key areas of the road and public transport network including the A90 south, A956, Bridge of Dee, A944, Lang Stracht, Haudagain, Third Don Crossing, Bridge of Don, A96 and A947 and shows that at many locations, congestion levels are anticipated to be in excess of present day conditions, including sections of the A90 south corridor, A96 corridor and A944 corridors even with the already committed projects in place.

The analysis identified the 'hot spots' on the strategic transport network where congestion is likely to increase significantly as a result of new development and the likely scale of intervention required to mitigate this impact. A high level package of interventions was identified and tested and is detailed in the table below. These projects are over and above the already committed transport schemes listed in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: Strategic transport cumulative impact requirements

Public transport
• New station at Kintore • Bus priority measures • Bus frequency improvements • Additional bus services linking new development sites to city centre and other key employment destinations
Road network (over and above local road infrastructure requirements)
• North Aberdeen • Parkway, Persley Bridge & Parkhill junction and capacity improvements • A96 corridor • Capacity improvements & upgrade AWPR Kingswells north junction • A944 corridor • Upgrade to A944 junctions and safety / limited capacity improvements on access to A93 • A956 / A90 corridor • Junction capacity improvements • River Dee link

The intervention areas in table 5.1 have not previously been identified in the RTS but will be key to enabling the scale of development identified in the Structure Plan and the growth and success of the region as a whole. As with all other potential interventions of this scale, a full appraisal and assessment, detailed engineering design and environmental assessment of each location will be required in order to progress these interventions and identify the most appropriate solution for each.

These interventions have therefore been incorporated into RTS under actions IC1 (Rail) IC2 (Road Improvements) and IC3 (Bus Improvements) and will be funded through developer contributions via the Strategic Transport Fund (STF). The STF is the subject of supplementary planning guidance to the Structure Plan, adopted in 2012 and provides a mechanism for securing contributions from development to fund the delivery of this strategic infrastructure. The supplementary guidance also commits Nestrans and the SDPA to a five year review which will re-run the cumulative transport appraisal using the ASAM model and include the most up to date information available regarding population, travel to work patterns and development allocations. The priorities of the STF will then be reviewed and re-assessed on the basis of the analysis to ensure that they remain valid.

The supplementary guidance 'Delivering Identified Projects through a Strategic Transport Fund' provides the details of this mechanism and can be viewed at www.aberdeencityandshire-sdpa.gov.uk.

The Cumulative Transport Appraisal will be reviewed and re-run using ASAM every five years and will re-assess the required interventions based on up to date planning data and information regarding population, travel to work patterns and development allocations.

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. Better and faster rail services will provide an alternative to car and air travel, which will encourage mode shift, have environmental benefits, and enhance the productivity of business travel, which is beneficial to the economy.

The sleeper service to London will continue to provide an important option for longer distance journeys and an alternative to air with the UK and Scottish Government commitment to a new franchise and rolling stock. Commitments by the Department for Transport to secure new bi-fuelled trains will ensure the long term continuation of through trains from the north east to London.

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 electrification of rail routes would provide improved reliability and connections to the national rail network and Nestrans will press the Scottish Government for the Edinburgh and Glasgow to Aberdeen rail line to be promoted as a high Scottish Government priority for electrification following completion of the Edinburgh Glasgow Improvement Programme (EGIP).

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 are supported and would bring about a step-change in journey times and accessibility, which would rival the speed of air travel. 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. This requires preserving access to London Heathrow from Aberdeen International Airport and upgrading the conventional rail service between Aberdeen and central Scotland.

The benefits of high speed rail between Edinburgh and Glasgow still need to be fully demonstrated and the costs justified. Commitment to investment in the rail infrastructure throughout Scotland remains the priority.

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 continue to press for inclusion of priority schemes within the north east to be included in the National Infrastructure Investment Plan and National Planning Framework and for measures to address constraints between the north east and central Scotland and Inverness which can directly affect north east businesses, for example through or around Dundee and the A96. Dualling of the A96 to Inverness has now been included in the Scottish Government's Infrastructure Investment Plan and has been put forward for consideration as a national development as part of NPF3. Nestrans cautions however 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 and there are now also two departures a week to Poland.

Nestrans will support the continuation and development of regular inter-city coach services, to provide travel choices and a competitive alternative to the car. 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.

Since 2008 Aberdeen Harbour has seen the first phase of the Torry Quay redevelopment with upstream quays replaced by 300m of deepwater berthing and creation of additional room in the River Dee. Deepening and resurfacing of Commercial Quay East has also been completed and Point Law peninsula further developed. The Port Authority at Peterhead has also completed £33.5m of improvements for a new quay, embankment and breakwater at Albert Quay. Options for expansion of Aberdeen Harbour are being considered with expansion into Nigg Bay being taken forward as the preferred option.

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 delivery of the North East Freight Action Plan.

Aberdeen and Peterhead Harbours have been put forward for consideration as candidate national developments as part of the review of the National Planning Framework. They are also identified in the National Renewables Infrastructure Plan as having capacity to contribute towards distributed manufacturing and operation / maintenance of the renewables industry. The reference to the region's harbours in these nationally important documents illustrates the importance of the region being well connected and accessible. Plans for expansion will however have significant implications for the region's transport network, particularly in the

immediate vicinity of the harbours. Both Aberdeen and Peterhead Harbours will continue to be of national importance and vital gateways for the regional economy. Nestrans supports the continued investment in developing these facilities to meet the future needs of the region and will work with partners to ensure the transport needs and implications of such developments are fully considered.

The Strategic Environmental Assessment of the RTS has highlighted the potential negative environmental impacts of expansion and improvement at the harbours, particularly on the marine and coastal environments, and these impacts will need to be fully considered in the development of options to be taken forward.

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 to ensure continuing services from Aberdeen.

Nestrans and its partners will also seek to promote passenger and freight movements by short sea shipping routes through relevant EU programmes, 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. 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.

Connections by Air (EC5)

Aberdeen International 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 International Airport Masterplan, published by BAA in December 2006 was revised in 2012 and has been through a public consultation exercise. The revised masterplan sets out the strategy for the airport's development to 2040 and focuses on expanding the airport infrastructure, upgrades to the terminals, the potential for further runway extension 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. Levels of Air Passenger Duty, the availability of direct domestic and international services, as well as frequent links to hub airports, particularly London Heathrow, 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.

The airport also plays a key role in the movement of cargo to and from the north east and Nestrans will support Aberdeen International Airport in their masterplan commitment to work with Scottish Enterprise, ACSEF and others to better understand the opportunities in this market.

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 International Airport plays in the north east. This work will focus on the following:

- Maintaining the frequency of services to international hubs, particularly London Heathrow, but also including Amsterdam Schiphol, Frankfurt and Paris Charles de Gaulle.
- Establishing new direct routes to European and international business destinations.
- Establishing links to new and emerging international hub airports such as Madrid.
- 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. Aberdeen International Airport has previously obtained planning permission to extend the existing runway by 300 metres. In 2011, the runway was extended by 124m with the remaining 176m for which they have planning permission currently proposed for the longer term. This will enable airlines to use larger, more fuel-efficient aircraft, and allow aircraft to operate non-stop direct services from Aberdeen International Airport without payload restrictions or costly and inconvenient en-route stops. The recently completed extension provides current benefits with the further extension to be constructed when there is sufficient demand.

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) and will lobby the EU to permit national governments to protect regional access within slot allocation rules.

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 will facilitate 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 Infrastructure Investment Plan. This would enable regular, reliable services from towns such as Inverurie and Insch as well as offering the opportunity to develop additional services and open a new station at Kintore. This will require investment in passing loops, line speed improvements and new signalling.

Developing the existing passenger rail network in the north east, including improving accessibility for all at stations, will increase accessibility to employment, education and essential services and provide a real alternative to the car. The re-opening of Laurencekirk station in 2008, which was promoted by Aberdeenshire Council and delivered by Transport Scotland with Nestrans' funding support, has provided significant economic and accessibility benefits to the town and the Mearns area. Improvements are also planned to the infrastructure at Dyce station under the Scottish Government's 'Access for All' scheme and will include construction of a new overbridge with lift access, a waiting room and ticket office. Completion is expected by April 2014. The significant rise in rail patronage in recent years illustrates the demand for improved rail services and Nestrans will continue to press for further improvements, including the potential for new stations and improvements at existing stations.

Local Rail Services

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 strategy which is showing significant success through greatly increased passenger numbers, well in excess of the average improvement across Scotland. A further objective is to widen access to the rail network through opening additional stations.

Detailed feasibility studies into delivering improved services have previously 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 were delivered through the December 2008 timetable change and work is progressing on re-opening Kintore station. The Scottish Government's Aberdeen to Inverness rail study indicates that improvements to the line will be delivered in two phases. Phase 1 is increased

commuter opportunities at both ends (including a station at Kintore) to be delivered 2014-2019. Phase 2 will increase the frequency between Aberdeen and Inverness to be delivered 2019-2024.

Significant growth in rail passenger numbers has been seen as a result of extending Edinburgh and Glasgow trains through to Inverurie. Nestrans will work with Transport Scotland and Scotrail to look at the possibility of extending Inverness trains through to Montrose in a similar fashion to further increase opportunities for local rail journeys and increase the frequency of trains stopping at Portlethen, Stonehaven, Laurencekirk and additional new stations. The aim of these improvements is to create an improved local rail service by extending inter-urban services through Aberdeen (i.e. Edinburgh/Glasgow to Inverurie and Inverness to Montrose) which we will now describe as Aberdeen Crossrail.

In developing the strategy in 2008, the merits of re-opening former railway lines to Peterhead and Banchory were considered, and supported by some respondents. At the time however it was considered more cost effective to focus on bus-based solutions for these corridors. While this is still the case, these aspirations have been raised again during consultation on the refresh and, although they remain long term aspirations in terms of delivery, Nestrans will, in the short term, consider the feasibility, costs and benefits of new railway lines to expand rail provision in the north east. In relation to the Buchan corridor, this would be done in the context of an all modes study in line with the objectives of the Energetica project.

The former rail alignments will continue to be preserved as transport corridors for active travel.

The detail of our approach to improving the rail network in the north east is set out in the North East Rail Action Plan which will also be refreshed following adoption of the RTS refresh.

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. Initially scheduled for completion in 2012, delays to the AWPR resulting from legal challenges taken to the Supreme Court mean that completion is now scheduled for 2018. The result of this delay to the AWPR timetable means that a number of other projects included in the reference case, which are linked to the AWPR for their delivery, have also been delayed, including improvements to the Haudagain roundabout and new park and ride sites on the A90(S) and A96.

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, together with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland has identified a preferred option 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 carried out. Transport Scotland have also committed to upgrading the A96 Aberdeen-Inverness corridor in its Infrastructure Investment Plan, published in 2011.

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.
- Dualling of the A96, as identified in the Scottish Government Infrastructure Investment Plan.
- 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 and safety constraints at trunk and local road junctions, including the A947 and A944.

Since the adoption of the RTS in 2008, a corridor approach has been adopted, which identifies 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 Energetica Corridor has been identified on the A90 between Peterhead-Bridge of Don 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 continue to 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 continue to 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 more detail on 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, addressed by dualling.
- A947, A944, A93, A92, A952 & A98 – further improvements through route actions.

Addressing the Cumulative Impacts of Development Through a Strategic Transport Fund

The Structure Plan and emerging Strategic Development Plan set out a requirement for an additional 67,000 homes between 2011 and 2035 in order to facilitate the growth of the region. A Cumulative Transport Appraisal carried out in 2010 identified the impact that this level of growth will have on the transport network. As a result of this study the Structure Plan has now adopted supplementary guidance that requires developers within specified areas to contribute to a Strategic Transport Fund in order to deliver measures to mitigate their cumulative impact on the transport network.

The Cumulative Transport Appraisal identified a number of areas on the region's strategic road network that will require mitigation through this fund. These interventions have not previously been identified in the RTS but will be key to enabling the scale of development identified in the Structure Plan and the growth and success of the region as a whole. As with all other interventions of this scale, a full appraisal and assessment, detailed engineering design and environmental assessment of each location will be required in order to identify the most appropriate solution. In particular, any intervention required around the River Dee which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation and protected at European level, will need to ensure there are no adverse impacts on its qualifying features. A full environmental appraisal of the options will be undertaken through the STAG process and EIA and a Habitat Regulations Assessment will also be required.

The STF intervention areas on the road network are:

- North Aberdeen – Parkway, Persley Bridge and Parkhill junction and capacity improvements.
- A96 corridor – Capacity improvements and upgrade AWPR Kingswells North junction.
- A944 corridor – upgrade to A944 junctions and safety / limited capacity improvements on access to A93.
- A956 / A90 corridor – junction capacity improvements and River Dee link.

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. Following a study, commissioned by Nestrans in 2008 which looked at a high occupancy vehicle lane on the A90 Stonehaven Road, it was concluded that the introduction of such an initiative should not be introduced until the AWPR has been constructed. Such a lane would be additional to existing bus lanes and would give priority to multiple occupancy vehicles with suitable enforcement measures in place prior to implementation. If successful, this approach could be expanded to other corridors. Nestrans and Aberdeen City Council will progress the delivery of a northbound

High Occupancy Vehicle lane on the A90 Stonehaven Road on the approach to the Bridge of Dee following the completion of the AWPR.

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 Government.

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 maintenance on active travel routes may encourage walking and cycling. Nestrans will also support prioritised maintenance 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, 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. The quality of the vehicle, in terms of its emissions is also important in reducing carbon and air pollution, particularly in towns and cities where there is a greater concentration of buses and where the impacts on human health are greatest.

Nestrans, the local authorities and bus operators continue to work in partnership through the Local Authorities/Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) to deliver improvements on a quality corridor basis. This involves complementing operator investment in services and new vehicles with infrastructure improvements such as new waiting shelters, improved interchange provision, raised kerbs to ease boarding and real-time information. We will encourage further fleet enhancements and greater use of more environmentally-friendly fuels. A new Quality Partnership agreement was signed in 2010 and it is proposed to continue this partnership approach. Priorities for action have been established in the Bus Action Plan, which will continue to be implemented and will be reviewed following the refresh of this 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 to grow, it is essential that the image that the bus currently presents and the performance it delivers are enhanced. This strategy aims to improve the reliability of bus services and reduce their journey times relative to car.

Improving Reliability

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.

A Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership (BPIP) agreement was signed in 2010 between Nestrans, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, First in Aberdeen and Stagecoach. Together with the Bus Action Plan and Quality Partnership Agreement it sets out the necessary measures to maintain and improve levels of bus punctuality and reliability on key routes in the region. The BPIP takes a corridor approach with the first two corridors for implementation being the A90(N) Buchan/King Street corridor and the A96 corridor from Inverurie.

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 and Nestrans 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 review and continue to deliver the bus action plan to improve quality and reliability of services and set out proposals for extending bus priority measures.

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. This will include bus measures identified for delivery by the Strategic Transport Fund to link new development areas with the city centre and key employment destinations to mitigate the cumulative impact of development.

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 and through the Energetica study, although is likely to be a longer term action.

Park and Ride

Bus-based park and ride sites exist at Ellon, Bridge of Don and Kingswells. These facilities have enjoyed varying degrees of success but are an important resource offering travel choice and are an integral part of proposals to reduce congestion. They contribute to reducing traffic in and on approaches to the City, and free up parking demand in the City Centre.

Work is progressing on the completion of a ring of park and ride sites 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. Two new park and ride sites are currently being progressed. A site on the A96 has planning permission and a planning application has been submitted for a site on the A90(S) near Portlethen. These will be constructed alongside the construction of the AWPR and will be operational by 2018.

These park and ride facilities will be complemented by park and ride mini-hubs on other corridors, including the A93 at Banchory and the A947 and through parking at north east rail stations. Park and ride also needs to be supported through ticketing and promotion and Nestrans will continue to promote park and ride through the Getabout brand and its initiatives. 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 fourteen years and electronic journey planning terminals have been introduced at key locations in both the City and towns in Aberdeenshire. Significant work has also been carried out to standardise at-stop bus timetable displays across the region and to introduce QR codes and Near Field Communication (NFC) as well as the introduction of www.realtimebus.com by Nestrans and First and a smartphone app from Traveline Scotland. Aberdeenshire Council are also well advanced in implementing real time information for bus services in the area and this will provide a significant improvement to the provision of accurate and up to date bus information across the region as a whole.

The Bus Action Plan, together with the Council's Bus Information Strategies, will set out how information provision could be further improved, including the development and expansion of real time Information and the development of new technologies where appropriate. 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.

Addressing the Cumulative Impacts of Development Through a Strategic Transport Fund

The Structure Plan and emerging Strategic Development Plan set out a requirement for an additional 67,000 homes between 2011 and 2035 in order to facilitate the growth of the region. The Cumulative Transport Appraisal carried out in 2010 identified the impact that this level of growth will have on the transport network. As a result of this study the Structure Plan has now adopted supplementary guidance that requires developers within specified areas to contribute to a Strategic Transport Fund in order to deliver measures to mitigate their cumulative impact on the transport network. Such measures include strategic bus priority and bus frequency improvements as well as additional bus services linking new development sites to the city centre and key employment destinations to mitigate the cumulative impact of development.

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 services as well as conventional bus networks or park and ride facilities. Existing services such as A2B in Aberdeenshire and community transport services in Aberdeen City are popular and offer travel opportunities to people who would otherwise have limited options.

Since 2008, local authorities have been 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 and in 2013 a transport to health information centre was launched to provide information on access to healthcare opportunities, including demand responsive and community transport services. 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 generally 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 and those unable to access conventional transport. 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 has rested with local authorities and Nestrans will continue to 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. Facilities for taxis, particularly at key interchange points such as the region's bus and rail stations will be reviewed in partnership with the two councils to ensure they continue to meet the needs of passengers.

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 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.

In 2012, Nestrans in partnership with NHS Grampian and Aberdeen City Council undertook work to improve the bus interchange at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. This has significantly improved the capacity and flow of buses through the site and has significantly improved accessibility and information for passengers.

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 in 2009 as part of the Union Square retail and leisure development provided a significantly enhanced travelling experience for bus and rail passengers, additional car parking close to the ferry terminal and railway station and enables easier interchange between these modes. Nestrans will continue to work with the developer, bus and rail operators and the City Council to continue to ensure that the opportunities for creating and maintaining a high quality transport interchange that caters for bus and rail users as well as cyclists, pedestrians and taxis, are fully realised. Areas for further improvement include the provision of high quality information (including real time information) and access to the site for all modes.

Nestrans will work with Aberdeen City Council through its Local Transport Strategy and in the development of its Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) 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.

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. Since 2008, Aberdeenshire Council has developed a new bus station at Peterhead, has upgraded Fraserburgh bus station and carried out significant improvements in information provision through the installation of journey planning kiosks. Nestrans will work with Aberdeenshire Council to deliver an integrated rail/bus/taxi/cycle/pedestrian interchange at Inverurie Station and mini-hubs on key corridors that can facilitate interchange onto the key bus routes from a variety of modes. 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. Notable increases in the number of people cycling to work in the region have been achieved in recent years with an increase in the city from 2% in 2005-06 to 3.5% in 2007-08. Nestrans and the two councils have invested significantly in cycling infrastructure and promotion including the designation of Peterhead as a cycle demonstration town in Aberdeenshire and the Greenbrae cycle project in Aberdeen City.

Since 2008, the Scottish Government have also launched their Cycling Action Plan for Scotland with a vision to increase the proportion of journeys by bike to 10% by 2020 (currently they account for around 1% of journeys). This is a very challenging target and will require support from a range of partners, including Transport Scotland and Local Authorities. It does however emphasise the step change that is expected in the levels of cycling across the country in the coming years. Land use plans will have a significant role to play in this by ensuring that developments are located in areas and with the infrastructure that enables cycling, and walking, to be attractive options. Nestrans will work with the Strategic Development Planning Authority and the two Councils to ensure that provision for pedestrians and cyclists is an integral part of the planning process. Nestrans will continue to offer its Sustainable Travel Grant to organisations to help towards improving facilities at existing locations.

In Aberdeen City Centre, proposals to enhance the city environment, including pedestrianisation schemes, are contained within the City Centre Development Framework. Nestrans will continue to support pedestrianisation in the city centre and will support Local Transport Strategies in both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire and the development of Aberdeen City's Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) in bringing forward proposals for improvements to walking and cycling facilities.

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 Police Scotland to promote speed reduction schemes across the 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, the principles of Scottish Government policy 'Designing Streets, 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 development of a connected network of strategic cycle routes on key routes within Aberdeenshire, across the boundary in Aberdeen and on routes through the city.

Airport Surface Connections (IC7)

As the airport develops, it becomes increasingly important to improve the surface connection between Aberdeen International 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. A number of improvements have been made in recent years to enhance the choices available for passengers including the introduction of a shuttle bus service from Dyce station and the introduction of the Jet service by Stagecoach, direct from Aberdeen railway station. Priority measures for buses and taxis have also been introduced on the approach roads to the airport. Nestrans will continue to work with Aberdeen International Airport and Aberdeen City Council to improve surface connections to the airport including a turning circle at Dyce Station to improve the operation of the shuttle bus.

Bus and Rail Services

As mentioned above, the airport is now served by dedicated airport bus services in the form of the Jet 727 from Aberdeen city centre operated by Stagecoach and the service 80 shuttle bus from Dyce railway station. These services have seen strong patronage growth since their introduction and have resulted in an increase in the mode share of public transport in travel to and from the airport.

Aberdeen International Airport published their draft Masterplan in 2012 and outlined their intention to review and re-issue the Surface Access Strategy for the airport. Nestrans will continue to work with the airport, bus operators and local authorities to increase bus and rail 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 enhanced services, ticketing and effective bus priority measures and will promote the use of innovative and technological advances where appropriate.

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 and 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.

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 businesses, through the Freight Forum, 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 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 has been expanded, and a smaller freight yard also exists at 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 have undertaken a study to investigate the benefit of a southbound Large Vehicle Lane on Wellington Road and implemented measures to benefit southbound HGVs on Wellington Road. A number of junctions in other locations have also been identified where improvements could help the efficient flow of freight and Nestrans will work with partners to deliver these.

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.

The Nestrans Travel Planning Strategy which was reviewed and updated in 2008 identifies three key areas for action; travel plans, direct interventions and travel awareness.

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. 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. Nestrans will also continue to support the take up and expansion of the recently launched Car Clubs in Aberdeen City and the Mearns area.

In developing travel awareness, Nestrans will work with other RTPs, local authorities, the Scottish Government 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.

In 2008, Nestrans launched the Getabout brand in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council, NHS Grampian, Aberdeen University, Robert Gordon University, Energy Savings Trust and Aberdeen College. Working together, the partners aim to promote healthy and sustainable transport choices. Under the banner of Getabout, Nestrans and its partners have delivered a wide range of events and promotions with schools, businesses and the public to promote active and sustainable travel. Nestrans will continue to support and promote this brand with the aim of reducing the number of single occupancy car journeys on the region's road network.

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. Nestrans will also develop an Active Travel Action Plan with the aim of encouraging increased levels of active travel. This will sit alongside action plans that already exist for bus, rail and freight.

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 the Joint Road Safety Plan published in 2011.

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. The Quality Partnership agreement was re-launched in 2010 with a renewed commitment from all partners and a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership agreed at the same time.

Nestrans will continue to support both these partnerships 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 are able to subsidise bus services which are not commercially viable and where there is a social need. Aberdeenshire Council currently subsidise a number of whole or part routes, particularly in more rural areas, evenings and weekends. Aberdeen City currently runs one subsidised service linking the hospital with the crematorium. 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.

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 and Aberdeen City Council has designated Air Quality Management Areas where these standards are being exceeded (City Centre, Wellington Road and Anderson Drive). Nestrans will work in partnership with the Vehicle and Operators Services Agency, Councils and Police Scotland 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.

The potential for a Low Emissions Zone in the city centre has been explored and this will be retained as an option in the future.

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 has been involved in the establishment of a Casualty Reduction Strategy for the north east, supporting the Councils' Joint Road Safety Plan and the North East Safety Camera Partnership's (NESCAMP) activities in enforcing speed limits and reducing speed-related incidents in the north east.

Bus lane enforcement

The Scottish Government has decriminalised bus lane enforcement in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow and from 25th March 2013, Aberdeen City Council became the authority responsible for enforcing bus lanes in the city. This is a key tool in facilitating the efficient movement of buses and taxis and in making bus travel a more attractive option. Nestrans will support measures to enforce bus lanes and where appropriate to expand its coverage.

Parking (IE3)

Parking is a key element of managing demand and is an important strand 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

In 2012, Nestrans published a Regional Parking Strategy which recognises that parking is a key element of managing demand and an important factor in influencing modal choice. The Regional Parking Strategy sets a policy framework under which actions can be delivered at a local level that ensure provision, management and control of parking across the region works towards and supports the wider RTS objectives and the council's Local Transport Strategies.

As the region is such a large and diverse area covering Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire towns, villages and rural areas, management and control of parking needs to play a different role in different areas. Nestrans will work with the two councils to implement the Regional Parking Strategy and ensure parking provision and control is appropriate for its location and purpose.

Enforcement of Parking

Nestrans will work in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council and Police Scotland 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 differential parking charges or regulations for low emission vehicles or car share club cars. The scheme would help optimise the use of existing on street and off street parking capacity (for example eligible vehicles may be able to park in the 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.

Carbon Reduction, Noise and Air Quality (CR1)

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 created a statutory framework for greenhouse gas emission reductions in Scotland and sets challenging targets of a 42% reduction in emissions by 2020 and an 80% reduction by 2050. The transport sector accounts for about 26% of total Scottish carbon emissions and while other sectors have seen a reduction since 1990, transport emissions have continued to rise.

Other emissions from road transport, particularly Nitrogen Dioxide and Particulate Matter also cause concern for the health of the local population. Currently there are three Air Quality Management Areas designated in the city (the City Centre, Wellington Road and Anderson Drive, including the Haudagain roundabout and Auchmill Road). The City Council published an Air Quality Action Plan in 2011 which sets out the measures that will be taken to reduce emissions and improve air quality in these areas and across the city as a whole.

Poor air quality does nothing to support the economy of the city or town centres and can damage the attractiveness of the region as a whole as well as having significant implications for the health of the population. Nestrans will continue to support the City Council in the delivery of the Air Quality Action Plan and measures to reduce congestion and reduce emissions in the city. A recent project has been the participation in the European project Care North which has investigated a number of mechanisms to improve air quality in the city and funded the introduction of the car club in Aberdeen.

There are a number of benefits, including the sharing of best practice that can be gained from partnership working, such as European projects' and this method of working will continue to be supported.

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, electric vehicles and biodiesel, is continuing to gather pace and the north east seeks to be a leading player in the development of new energy sources.

Aberdeen City Council has been awarded funding by the Scottish Government to purchase and trial 10 hydrogen fuel cell buses to operate as part of the cities bus fleet and will see Scotland's first hydrogen re-fuelling hub. Hybrid vehicles have also been introduced by Stagecoach on their service 59 route to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Nestrans will continue to support initiatives to promote and establish Aberdeen City and Shire as an alternative energy capital, including the trial of hydrogen vehicles. We will work with the councils and the Scottish Government to facilitate and encourage the expansion of energy efficient vehicles and charging points across the region and investigate the feasibility of other alternative fuels as appropriate.

Noise

The Environmental Noise Directive requires noise levels from road traffic, railways, major airports and industry to be assessed. The Scottish Government is working with local authorities to identify candidate Noise Management Areas in medium and large cities across Scotland, including Aberdeen. In addition to identifying areas where noise is an issue, there is also a requirement to identify quiet areas for protection. The Scottish Government is leading this in terms of guidance and co-ordination across Scotland however local authorities have a responsibility to identify candidate Noise Management Areas and develop Noise Management Plans. Nestrans will support the local authorities in the development of such a plan if a Noise Management Area is identified in the region.

Consultation and Engagement (E1)

Consultation and engagement with stakeholders and the public was a key part of developing the RTS in 2008 and through this process the North East Transport Consultative Forum (NETCF) was established. NETCF consists of representatives from over 100 stakeholder organisations from a wide cross section of organisations and interest groups and is convened on a regular basis to discuss key issues relevant to the delivery of the RTS, including this refresh.

Nestrans is also a partner to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Community Planning Partnerships and is involved in consultation on transport issues with a range of community planning organisation and stakeholders, including young people.

Nestrans will continue to take an active and inclusive approach to engagement and consultation with communities, relevant sectors of the community and interest groups and stakeholders and will maintain a broad and inclusive membership to NETCF.

PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

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

Table 5.2: 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** **i.** Reduce rail journey times to Edinburgh and Glasgow (and further south) and Inverness. **ii.** Improved train capacity, comfort and reliability. **iii.** Support for High Speed Rail connections to London, which benefit the north east.
EC2	**Strategic roads** **i.** Overcoming constraints on the network that have a direct impact on travel to/from the north east, such as the A90 through or around Dundee and dualling the A96 to Inverness.
EC3	**Inter-regional Bus and Coach travel** **i.** Support further development of inter-regional bus and coach travel between the north east and other Scottish towns and cities and further afield. **ii.** Explore possible links to park and ride sites.
EC4	**Connections by sea** **i.** Closer joint working through the North East Freight Forum. **ii.** Improved access and facilities at ports and interchange with passenger ferries. **iii.** Continue to enhance freight and passenger facilities at north east ports. **iv.** Continue dialogue with the Scottish Government and Northern Isles ferry service operator to ensure continuing services from Aberdeen.

EC5	Connections by air **i.** Support expansion of direct destinations from Aberdeen and frequency of popular services. **ii.** Support runway extension to facilitate wider range of destinations and more efficient, modern aircraft. **iii.** 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** **i.** Seek to secure an increased frequency of services between Inverurie-Aberdeen-Stonehaven and improved services to Inverness. **ii.** Proposed new station at Kintore and further development of the rail system to be set out in the Rail Action Plan, including improvements to the accessibility of existing stations. **iii.** Investigate, in line with the principles of STAG, the potential for further stations in the context of line upgrades to the existing rail lines and assessing future demand for local rail services. **iv.** Investigate, in line with the principles of STAG, the feasibility, costs and benefits of new railway lines to expand rail provision in the north east.

IC2	**Road Improvements** **i.** Strategic roads capacity improvements – tackle constraints on the A90 Ellon – Peterhead, dualling of the A96 (as identified in the IIP), Haudagain junction, Access to Aberdeen from the south, and at other junctions serving Aberdeenshire towns. **ii.** Strategic roads safety improvements – alignment and junction improvements on A90 south including at Laurencekirk. Overtaking, junction and alignment improvements on A90 north and A96. Route Action on A92, A93, A944, A947. **iii.** Car share lanes – trialling priority lanes for cars with multiple occupancy. **iv.** Prioritised maintenance for strategic routes, with particular benefits for public transport and sustainable modes. **v.** 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 2018. **vi.** Strategic road improvements to mitigate the cumulative impact of development: » Parkway, Persely Bridge & Parkhill junction and capacity improvements. » Capacity improvements & upgrade AWPR Kingswells north junction. » Upgrade A944 junctions and safety / limited capacity improvements on access to A93. » A956/A90 junction capacity improvements. » River Dee link.

IC3	**Bus Improvements** **i.** Quality bus corridor improvements to services and facilities. **ii.** Review and continue to deliver the Bus Action Plan to improve quality and reliability of services and set out proposals for extending bus priority measures. **iii.** Explore the options for rapid transit in the longer term through the Bus Action Plan. **iv.** Expand park and ride provision linked to the development of the AWPR and explore the potential for mini-hubs that can be served by existing bus provision. **v.** Improve information provision including expanded real-time information systems across Aberdeen City and Shire. **vi.** Strategic bus priority and bus frequency improvements as well as additional bus services linking new development sites to the city centre and key employment destinations to mitigate the cumulative impact of development.
IC4	**Demand Responsive Transport** **i.** Support extension of 'Dial-a-Bus' and similar services to serve those unable to access conventional buses and to link with scheduled bus services. **ii.** Support community transport providers and encourage development of services. **iii.** Seek to ensure that taxis are provided in an efficient and effective way, which meets the needs of customers.
IC5	**Transport Interchange** **i.** Maximise the interchange potential of the bus and rail station developments, the links between Union Square and Union Street, facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and taxis and support enhancement of other interchange points in Aberdeen. **ii.** Support further improvements to interchange facilities in Aberdeenshire towns catering for bus, rail (where appropriate), cycling, walking and taxis. **iii.** Work with operators to develop integrated and smart ticketing across services and operators in the north east.

IC6	**Walking and Cycling** **i.** Support investment in measures to increase safety and security of walking and in particular to facilitate interchange between different modes of transport. **ii.** Urban realm improvements to improve the pedestrian environment, including pedestrianisation schemes in the City Centre. **iii.** Support the continued extension of low speed zones, particularly where it improves the environment for pedestrians and cyclists and increases safety for children. **iv.** Continued development of a connected network of strategic cycle routes on key routes within Aberdeenshire, across the boundary into Aberdeen and on routes through the City to work towards the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland 10% vision for cycling and lock in the benefits of other infrastructure improvements, including the AWPR. **v.** To ensure that all new developments and transport infrastructure improvements give consideration to and make provisions for pedestrians and cyclists as an integral part of the design process.
IC7	**Airport Surface Connections** **i.** Work with Aberdeen International Airport in implementing and monitoring a Surface Access Strategy to ensure high quality links to the airport by all modes **ii.** Work with partners to develop links to the airport including the upgrade of Dyce railway station and improved access for public transport. **iii.** Support high quality transport links to the airport using innovative and technological advances where appropriate.
IC8	**Port Surface Connections** **i.** Support measures to improve access to port facilities. **ii.** Facilitate improved interchange between Aberdeen ferry terminal and bus and rail stations.
IC9	**Freight** **i.** Retain and develop modern intermodal freight terminals to serve the region and tackle the barriers to mode shift through the Freight Action Plan. **ii.** Investigate potential for measures to provide more reliable journey times for HGVs and identify a trial route for implementation of priority measures.

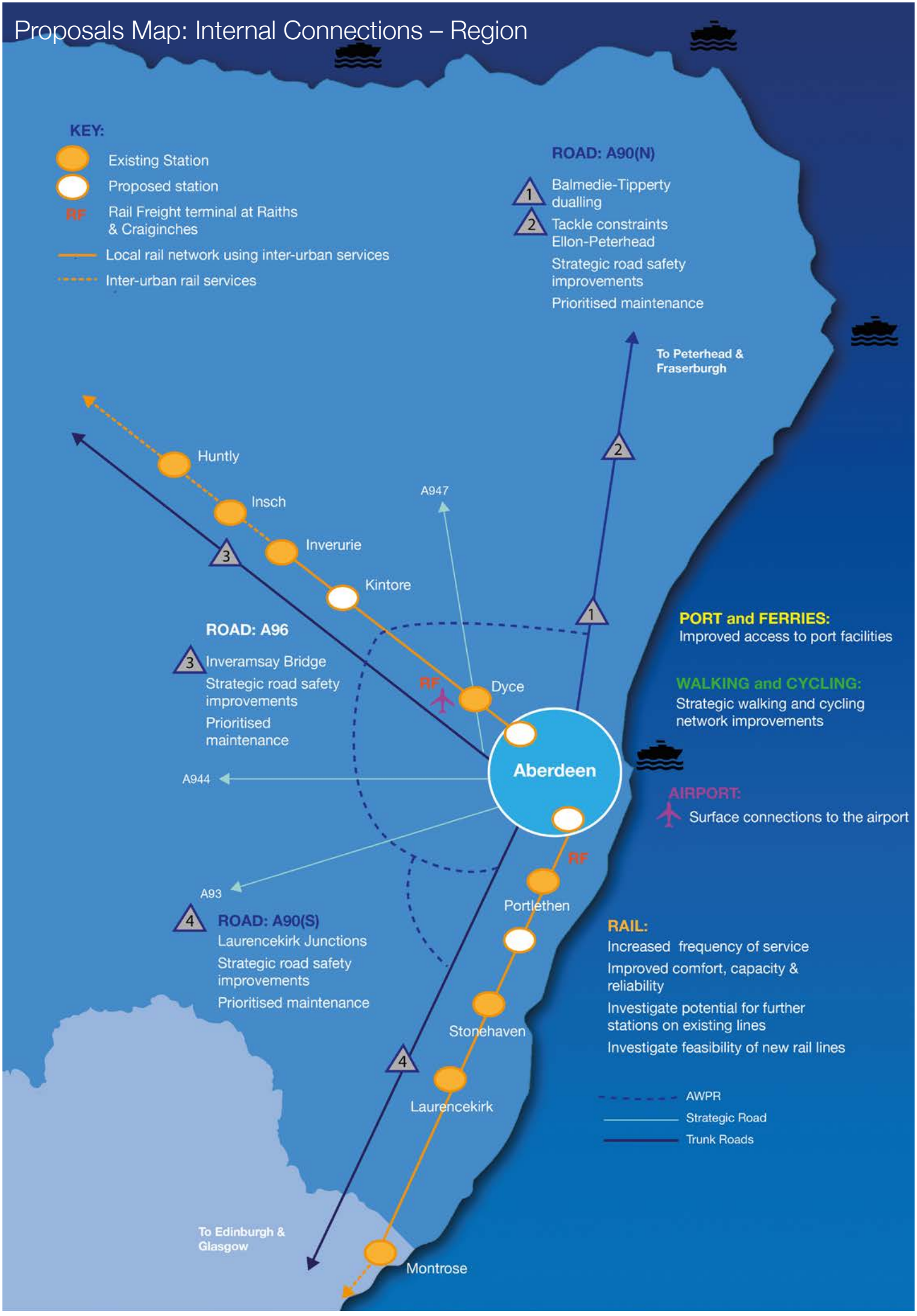
IC10	**Powered two-wheelers** **i.** Support measures to improve safety for users of motorcycles and other powered two-wheelers and provide appropriate parking facilities.
Sub Strategy 3: The strategic policy framework	
Travel Behaviour	
TB1	**Promoting Travel Planning and Travel Awareness** **i.** Implementation and future development of Nestrans' Travel Planning Strategy **ii.** Continue to provide support through the Sustainable Travel Grants Scheme **iii.** Encourage increased up-take of car-sharing and car club schemes. **iv.** Continue to promote and strengthen the Getabout brand.
TB2	**Promoting Active Travel** **i.** Develop an Active Travel Action Plan with the aim of encouraging more people to walk and cycle more often. **ii.** Work with NHS Grampian and Community Planning Partnerships to deliver the Health and Transport Action Plan and achieve objectives for a healthier population.
TB3	**Improving Safety** **i.** 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. **ii.** Improve security for users of public transport services and interchanges.
Incentives and Enforcement	
IE1	**Changing Choices through Incentives & Partnerships** **i.** Work with operators to identify possible fare incentives to encourage increased bus use, particularly where this enables access to employment or training. **ii.** Through the Local Authorities/Bus Operators Forum (LABOF) continue to develop the Quality Partnership for Public Transport and the Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership to achieve improvements in bus provision and increased levels of bus use.

IE2	**Using Enforcement** **i.** Support enforcement of vehicle emission standards to improve air quality, in Aberdeen City Centre and towns across the north east. **ii.** Support measures to enforce speed limits to improve road safety and reduce carbon emissions. **iii.** Continue joint working through the Casualty Reduction Partnership to support NESCAMP's activities and support the trial of average speed cameras. **iv.** Support measures to enforce the operation of bus lanes to ensure the efficient movement of buses and taxis.
IE3	**Parking** **i.** Ensure a coherent approach to parking controls and standards across the north east through the delivery of the Regional Parking Strategy. **ii.** Support enforcement of parking restrictions, particularly where these exist to support strategic traffic movements, bus / pedestrian priority and road safety. **iii.** Investigate the potential for parking incentives to encourage use of small or multi-occupancy vehicles.
CR1	**Carbon Reduction, Noise and Air Quality** **i.** Support measures which encourage uptake of alternative fuels for public transport, private and public sector vehicles, to build on the north east's role as an energy hub and work towards the decarbonisation of transport and improvements in air quality. **ii.** Support the development and trial of technological advances, such as hydrogen fuel and electric vehicles that will reduce carbon emissions from the transport network. **iii.** Support demand management measures, including the re-allocation of road space to public transport, cyclists and pedestrians in order to lock in the benefits of other schemes, including the AWPR, and where it can be demonstrated that this will help the longer term efficient movement of traffic.
E1	**Consultation and Engagement** **i.** Take an active and inclusive approach to engagement and consultation with communities, relevant sectors of the community and interest groups and stakeholders.

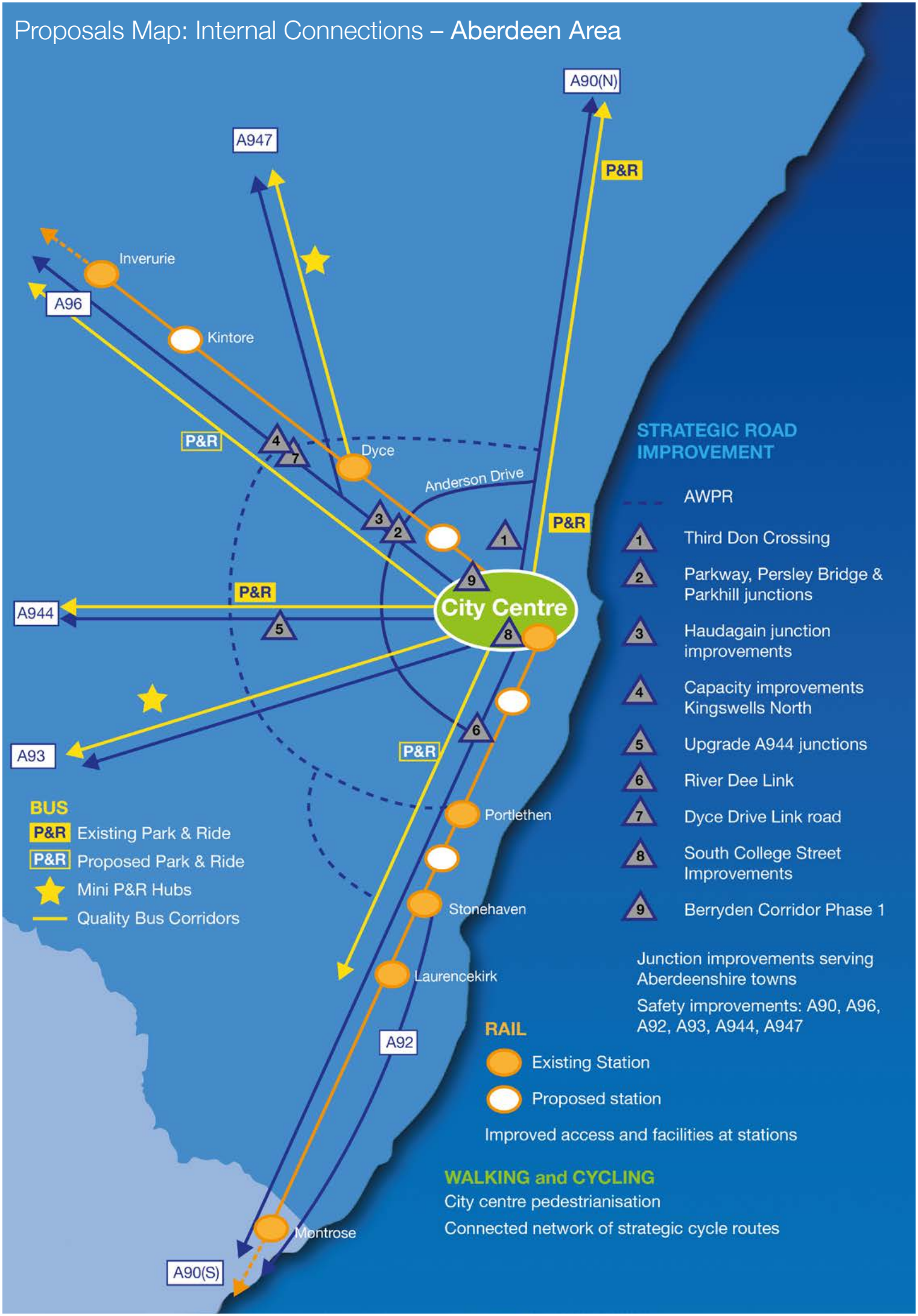
The key infrastructure schemes and projects are indicated in the proposals maps on the following pages.

Proposals Map: External Connections

Proposals Map: Internal Connections – Region



Proposals Map: Internal Connections – Aberdeen Area



6 Achieving the Objectives

As well as performing well against key indicators, each element of the Strategy has been tested to ensure fit with the Strategic Objectives. Table 6.1 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.

Table 6.1: Relationship between Strategic Objectives and elements of the Internal Connections and Strategic Policy Framework

Strategic Objective
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 for all in the north east, 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, noise 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.**

↖ ↖	↖	↖	↖ ↖	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 Enforcemen
↖ ↖ ↖	↖ ↖		↖	IE3 Parking Strategy & incentives
↖ ↖ ↖	↖ ↖ ↖		↖	CR1 Carbon reduction and Air Quality
↖	↖	↖ ↖	↖	E1 Consultation and Engagement

nestrans

The Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire

Archibald Simpson House
27-29 King Street
Aberdeen
AB24 5AA

Tel: 01224 625 524
info@nestrans.org.uk
www.nestrans.org.uk

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