SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Meeting of Friday, 23 September 2022 at 10.30am, Council Hall, Council Offices, English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2DD

Members of the Board

John Campbell (Chair)	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
Karen Jackson (Vice Chair)	- South of Scotland Enterprise
David Bryson	- NHS Dumfries and Galloway
Jim Dempster	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
Maureen Johnstone	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
Keith Walters	- Dumfries and Galloway Council
Andrew Wood	- Dumfries and Galloway Council

<u>Future Meetings</u>

25 November 2022

Douglas Kirkpatrick
Lead Officer, South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Meeting of Friday, 23 September 2022 at 10.30am
Council Hall, Council Offices, English Street, Dumfries, DG1 2DD

1. **SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3. **MINUTE OF MEETING ON 24 JUNE 2022 –** For Approval

4. **COMMUNITY TRANSPORT STRATEGY PRESENTATION**–
   Recommendations – (i) receive the presentation from Graham Dunn, Project Manager Community Transport PSP; and (ii) seek further detail on issues raised from the presentation.

5. **REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY – DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION** –
   Recommendations – (i) note the progress with the new Regional Transport Strategy; and (ii) approve the draft Regional Transport Strategy at the Appendix for public consultation.

6. **LOCAL BUS UPDATE** - Recommendations – (i) note the summary of current local bus network provision in Dumfries and Galloway; (ii) note the update on recent actions in relation to local bus services 101/102 Dumfries to Edinburgh and 502 Castle Douglas to Dumfries; (iii) homologate the decision of the Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to agree the award of contract for SW/22/101/A Dumfries to Edinburgh at a value of £507,940 per year from 15 August 2022 for a period of 20 weeks (with an option to extend for up to a further 13 weeks); (iv) homologate the decision of the Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to agree the award of contract for SW/22/502/C Castle Douglas to Dumfries at a value of £96,987 per year from 8 August 2022 for a period up to 31 March 2023 (with an option to extend for up to a further period until 4 August 2024); (v) consider the information in section 5 of the report in relation to the petition for the reinstatement of evening journeys on local bus service D1 Locharbriggs / Heathhall and determine any action for officers to undertake; (vi) note the update on the proposed new Public Transport model and delivery challenges; and (vii) agree to receive further reports on a review of all current supported local bus services to meet the delivery challenges identified.

7. **RAIL UPDATE** – Recommendations – (i) agree that officers draft a submission to the National Rail Conversation which will be presented at the November Board allowing members the opportunity to feed their views into the paper prior to submission to Transport Scotland; (ii) note the three STAG addendums attached as Appendix 1, 2 and 3 and their submission to Transport Scotland for consideration; and (iii) note the current position with services to/from Lockerbie Station.

8.   **REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 AUGUST 2022**– Recommendation – to note the forecast outturn for the revenue budget as at 31 August 2022.

9.   **CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2022/23 – 2024/25 UPDATE** - Recommendations – (i) note the update on the Capital Programme for 2022/23; and (ii) note the draft design of Lockerbie Rail Station Parking Phase 2 and agree that public and stakeholder engagement on the design as shown at the Appendix is undertaken.

10.   **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS** – Recommendations – (i) agree the Calendar of meetings for 2023 as set out in Table 1; (ii) consider the options concerning Board meeting arrangements presented in Table 2 and determine a preferred option; and (iii) remit the Secretary to update Standing Orders to reflect the agreed meeting arrangements.

11.   **REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES** – Recommendation – to consider nomination of Members to represent SWestrans on: West Coast Rail 250 and South West Scotland Community Rail Partnership.

12.   **ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN MAY DECIDE IS URGENT DUE TO THE NEED FOR A DECISION**

It is recommended that Members of the South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Board agree to consider the following item of business in private and exclude the Press, members of the public and Observers from the meeting given the report contains confidential or exempt information as defined by the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973.

13.   **LOCAL BUS SERVICE - CONTRACT** – Report to follow – For Board Members only

Douglas Kirkpatrick   Claire Rogerson
Lead Officer   Secretary to the Board

Minute   **Minute**

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

Meeting of Friday 24 June 2022
at 11.00am at Dumfries and Galloway Council Headquarters, English Street,
Dumfries and via Microsoft Teams

Present

Members
John Campbell (Chair)	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Karen Jackson (Vice-Chair)	-	South of Scotland Enterprise
Jim Dempster	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Maureen Johnstone	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
Keith Walters	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council

Officials
Douglas Kirkpatrick	-	Lead Officer
Claire Rogerson	-	Secretary to the Board
Kirsty Dunsmore	-	Policy and Projects Officer
Janet Sutton	-	Finance Officer

Apologies
Andrew Wood	-	Dumfries and Galloway Council
David Bryson	-	NHS Dumfries and Galloway

Observers
Alasdair Marshall	-	MSYP
Graham Whiteley		

In Attendance
Ben Dashper	-	Substitute Board Member DGC
Ivor Hyslop	-	Substitute Board Member DGC
Ron McLean	-	Beattock Station Action Group
Sean Marshall	-	Substitute Board Member DGC

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1.   APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF SWESTRANS

PROCEDURE – The Secretary to the Board started the meeting and sought nominations for Chair.

Decision

The Board:-

1.1   **AGREED** the appointment of John Campbell as Chair of the SWestrans Board.

PROCEDURE – John Campbell took the position of Chair of SWestrans and presided over the meeting starting with the appointment of Vice-Chair of the SWestrans Board.

1.2   **AGREED** the appointment of Karen Jackson as Vice-Chair of the SWestrans Board.

2.   SEDERUNT AND APOLOGIES

5 Board Members present and 2 apologies, noting that Jim Dempster and Keith Walters were present via MS Teams as agreed by the Chair.

3.   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE declared.

4.   MINUTES OF MEETING ON 25 MARCH 2022

Decision

The Board **AGREED** to homologate the decision of the Lead Officer to approve the minute following consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair prior to the Local Government elections.

5.   BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Decision

The Board **NOTED** the current membership of the SWestrans Board being**:** John Campbell, Karen Jackson, Jim Dempster, Maureen Johnstone, Keith Walters, Andrew Wood and David Bryson with the five substitutes being Ben Dashper, Richard Brodie, Sean Marshall, Ivor Hyslop and Ian Carruthers.

6. ADOPTION OF STANDING ORDERS

<u>Decision</u>

The Board:-

6.1   **AGREED** adopt the Board's current Standing Orders (Appendix of the report); and

6.2   **NOTED** that a report will be presented to the September 2022 Board on meeting arrangements.

7. CODE OF CONDUCT

<u>Decision</u>

The Board **AGREED** to reaffirm to adopt and comply with the requirements of the Code of Conduct (Appendix of the report).

8. OBSERVERS UPDATE

<u>Decision</u>

The Board:-

8.1   **NOTED** the Observers appointed to the Board being: June Hay (Outdoor Access Forum), Emma Watson (Network Rail), Hugh McCreadie (Lochside and Woodlands Community Council), Frazer Smith (Stagecoach Scotland), Graham Whiteley, Christopher Craig (Thornhill Station Action Group) and Rhian Davies (Sustrans); and

8.2   **APPROVED** the appointment of Alasdair Marshall MSYP on behalf of Dumfries and Galloway Youth Council as an Observer to the Board for 4 years.

9. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

<u>Decision</u>

The Board **AGREED** :-

9.1   to appoint John Campbell to the Dumfries and Galloway Community Planning Board; and

9.2   to request further information at the next board in order to consider appointments to West Coast 250 and South West Scotland Community Rail Partnership.

10. REVENUE BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT 2021/22

<u>**Decision**</u>

The Board **NOTED** the draft financial outturn for 2021/22 and that a break-even position was achieved.

11.   REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/23 FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 MAY 2022

<u>**Decision**</u>

The Board **NOTED** the forecast outturn for the revenue budget as at 31 May 2022.

12. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2021/22 OUTTURN REPORT

<u>**Decision**</u>

The Board **NOTED** the outturn position on the 2021/22 SWestrans Capital Programme

13. CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2022/23 – 2024/25 UPDATE

<u>**Decision**</u>

The Board **NOTED** the update on the Capital Programme for 2022/23 as outlined in the report.

14. DRAFT ANNUAL (UNAUDITED) ACCOUNTS 2021/22

<u>**Decision**</u>

The Board **NOTED** the unaudited Annual Accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2022 which would be submitted to the Board's external auditors for review.

15. LOCAL BUS UPDATE

Decision

The Board **NOTED** :-

15.1   the final award of contracts to commence 8 August 2022 as presented in Table 2 of the report; and

15.2   that no affordable solution for the replacement of the 101/102 Dumfries to Edinburgh route was available and that the service on this route would terminate on 14 August 2022 when the current contract ends, further noting that alternatives were being explored.

16. RAIL UPDATE

Decision

The Board:-

16.1   **NOTED** the update on the status of the Strategic Business Cases submitted by SWestrans for the potential re-opening of rail stations at Beattock, Eastriggs and Thornhill; and

16.2   **AGREED** the production of an addendum for each of the 3 areas as discussed in paragraph 6.5 of the report.

17. LEVELLING UP FUND

Decision

The Board **AGREED** formal SWestrans support for Dumfries and Galloway Council's proposed Transport Bid to the Levelling Up Fund.

18. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN MAY DECIDE IS URGENT DUE TO THE NEED FOR A DECISION

Decision

The Board **NOTED** that there was one item of urgent business due to the need for a decision being item 18A Commercial Local Bus Service. As it detailed exempt information in respect of paragraphs 6 and 8 of schedule 7A of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 it was **AGREED** that it met the requirements of standing orders 25.3.1 and 25.3.3 for the proposed exclusion of the press and public.

This item was considered as urgent due to a decision being required before the next scheduled board meeting.

It was agreed that this item would be taken after item 19.

ADJOURNMENT – The Board adjourned at 12.13 for a comfort break and reconvened at 12.18 – 5 Board Members present.

PROCEDURE – The Board **AGREED** to consider the following items of business in private and exclude the press, members of the public and Observers from the meeting given that the report contained confidential or exempt information in respect of paragraphs 1,6,8, 9 and 19 of Schedule 7A of the Local Government Scotland Act 1973.

19.   LOCAL BUS SERVICE – CONTRACT

Summary of Report – This report provided the outcome of the procurement exercise by Strathclyde Partnership for Transport for the continued provision of local bus services on service 358/360 Stranraer to Girvan and sought agreement for the SWestrans contribution to this cross-boundary route.

Decision

The Board **AGREED** the contribution indicated in paragraph 3.3 to SPT for the local bus service 358/360 Stranraer to Girvan.

18A COMMERCIAL LOCAL BUS SERVICE

Summary of Report – The report informed the Board of a commercial local bus service withdrawal from 7 August 2022 and sought agreement to procure a replacement service if necessary.

Decision

The Board:-

18A.1 **NOTED** the commercial withdrawal of local bus service; and

18A.2   **AGREED** the process to seek a replacement service as indicated in paragraphs 3.3 to 3.5 of the report.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT STRATEGY PRESENTATION

1.   Reason for Report
To provide further detail on the Dumfries and Galloway Community Transport 2022 to 2025 Strategy – Driving Community Cohesion and Growth.

2.   Background
2.1   The Dumfries and Galloway Community Transport 2022 to 2025 Strategy – Driving Community Cohesion and Growth has been developed by the Community Transport Public Social Partnership (PSP) which is a partnership chaired by the Chief Executive Officer of Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway.

2.2   The PSP wrote to the SWestrans Chair highlighting the new 3-year strategy and requested an opportunity to discuss the way forward for Community Transport and how SWestrans could continue to support Community Transport. The Chair agreed that a presentation to the Board at the earliest opportunity should be offered.

3.   Discussion
3.1   The key points from the correspondence received from the PSP are highlighted in the paragraphs 3.2 to 3.5 below.

3.2   The strategy is attached at the **Appendix** and builds on the work of the PSP that has been operating since 2017. It sets out how Community Transport can transition from the current PSP to a "business as usual" model.

3.3   The delivery of the strategy will be developed around the 4 key pillars of infrastructure and capacity building, environmental impact, community cohesion and sustainable growth. Delivering the strategy will require:
- continued and strengthening partnership working
- buy in from all statutory sector partners
- resources, both financial investment and time
- mainstreaming the PSP and overcome the challenges identified

3.4   The critical role of Community Transport across our region is emphasised and it is highlighted that without the necessary investment and support to deliver the strategy going forward then:
- the survival of Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway is under threat that will have a huge impact on the vulnerable communities it serves.
- it will mean the reduction or ending of vital services such as the transport to health appointments.
- Community Transport will not be able to play a key part in the new Dumfries and Galloway Public Transport Model that is being led by SWestrans. This is at a time where more of the services Community Transport provide will be required as the commercial bus sector reduce services, funding is tight to fill these services and we have a cost of living crisis against an ageing population.

3.5   With the current funding constraints and pressures, it is important that there is a strategic and holistic approach to the investment required to take the Community Transport Strategy forward. Therefore, there is a requirement for:

- A funding model where there are a number of funding partners, including Community Planning Partners, SWestrans, various departments within Dumfries and Galloway Council (e.g. social work, employability, communities), South of Scotland Enterprise, NHS Dumfries and Galloway and Health and Social Care Partnership.

3.6   Graham Dunn, PSP Project Manager will be in attendance to deliver a presentation to the Board. Members will have an opportunity to comment on pertinent issues.

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4.   Recommendations

Members of the Board are asked to:

4.1   receive the presentation from Graham Dunn, Project Manager Community Transport PSP; and

4.2   seek further detail on issues raised from the presentation.

Report Author – Kirsty Dunsmore Date of Report: 05 September 2022 File Ref: SW2/Meetings/2022	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN

Appendix - Dumfries and Galloway Community Transport 2022 to 2025 Strategy – Driving Community Cohesion and Growth

DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

2022 – 2025 STRATEGY

DRIVING COMMUNITY COHESION AND GROWTH

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2022 – 25 Dumfries and Galloway Driving Community Cohesion and Growth Strategy sets out how Community Transport can transition from the current Public Social Partnership to "business as usual" so that it can be a key delivery partner for the new Public Transport Model that will be developed.

This Strategy builds on the successful Community Transport Public Social Partnership that has delivered a number of activities including the flagship project the volunteer car scheme for transporting patients to health appointments. The key statistics are:

- Number of Patients = 2,118
- Number of Journeys = 3,968
- Volunteer Driver Hours = 8,417
- Travelling to out of region (30%) and in region (70%) health appointments

The Strategy sets out the challenges that require to be overcome, a vision and future development required and what resources are needed to implement this strategy including financial investment.   The vision for Community Transport in the region is:

"increased and enhanced social, health and community transport services across the region, which are more frequently used by people isolated through location or circumstance, in order to improve their quality of life; and to widen the social and economic impact of community transport in these same communities."

The way forward for the on-going sustainability and development of Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway, to enable it to grow and be able to play a key role in the new public transport model that is being developed, will require:

- Continued and strengthening partnership working
- Buy in from all statutory and community transport sectors as well as working in partnership with the commercial bus sector
- Resources, both financial investment and time
- Mainstream the Public Social Partnership and overcome the challenges identified

There is a requirement to build on the great work and success of the Public Social Partnership and continue to build the sector around the following 4 key pillars:

- ***Building the Infrastructure and Capacity Building*** – Through the establishment of a Regional Wide Community Transport Social Enterprise.
- ***Environmental Impact*** – Through better transport co-ordination from the establishment of the Transport Hub, transitioning the community transport fleet to low carbon and developing active and sustainable transport initiatives.
- ***Community Cohesion*** – Developing and providing transport solutions for local communities, develop volunteering opportunities and the development of an employability pathway programme.

- *Sustainable Growth* – Through a social enterprising approach to financial sustainability by providing transport and other solutions to local communities and key stakeholders.

To enable the development, and implement this 3 year strategy, will require the following:

- **Mainstream the Community Transport Public Social Partnership** – the volunteer car scheme, the transport hub, employability pathway programme and the volunteer development project.

- **Establish a Regional Community Transport Social Enterprise -** One of the key elements of this strategy is to develop a sustainable infrastructure for Community Transport in the region. To deliver this a Regional Community Transport Social Enterprise will be established. This will be an umbrella organisation, working in partnership with the current community transport operators.
- **Strategic Partnerships –** Building on the success of the PSP, it is important that there is continued buy-in from the current stakeholders as well as widening out the partnerships to Community Planning Partners, Health and Social Care, Integrated Joint Board, South of Scotland Enterprise, other key departments with Dumfries and Galloway Council, the Third Sector and the Commercial Bus Sector.
- **Core Funding for Community Transport Operators -** A annual grant funding pot is required to assist community transport operators in Dumfries and Galloway.

Community Transport assists key stakeholders in meeting the numerous Local, Regional and National Strategies and Policies, including the Regional Transport Strategy, National Transport Strategy, Older People and Social Isolation and Loneliness Strategies and NHS Recovery Plan. This is because Community Transport is not just about transport it is an enabler that has an impact across a number of policy areas such as access to health, preventative measures in relation to health and social care, rural economy, education, employability, social isolation and loneliness and just transition to low carbon.

However, the main opportunity is for Community Transport to be a key delivery partner in the development of a new sustainable public transport model that has been agreed for Dumfries and Galloway. Over the 3 years of this strategy there will be a requirement for approximately £1m investment. This will enable this strategy to be delivered so that Community Transport is:

- Sustainable and able to meet the challenges and opportunities now and in the future.
- Able to assist key stakeholders in meeting their policy aims including access to health and social care, reducing poverty, reducing social isolation and loneliness, rural economy, employability and community cohesion.
- Able to play a key part in the new Public Transport Model that is being developed, with Community Transport outlined as a key delivery partner.

With the current funding constraints on local and regional funding it is important that there is a strategic and holistic approach to the investment required. This should include a funding model where there are a number of funding partners, including Community Planning Partners, various departments within Dumfries and Galloway Council (e.g. social work, employability, communities), South of Scotland Enterprise, NHS Dumfries and Galloway and Health and Social Care Partnership. Funding should be secured as part of wider strategies including spend to save and key stakeholders looking at spending their budgets differently that will achieve efficiencies.

INTRODUCTION

Public transport provides the residents and visitors of Dumfries and Galloway with the opportunity to learn, work, socialise and access key services. A sustainable and connected transport network is critical to the success of the economy by enabling businesses to grow and prosper in the communities.

Community Transport is a crucial, but frequently overlooked, part of the public transport network. It is a means of complementing existing transport provision. By doing so, community transport provides a valued and essential service, often for the most vulnerable in our society. It can provide efficient and effective transport solutions of both a general and specialist nature, whilst combating social and rural isolation.

In Dumfries and Galloway, Community Transport is seen as a key stakeholder and partner in the delivery of the new developing public transport model. This model is being developed over the next couple of years that will look to mitigate the consequences of potentially less commercial bus companies operating in the region and to address the challenges of providing high-quality services across dispersed rural communities to an ageing population.

This Strategy outlines what is required to ensure that community transport is able to assist in any new model. It will build on the success of the Community Transport Public Social Partnership (PSP) to make the PSP activities mainstreamed and sustained as well as embedding the PSP model principles into future developments.

SECTION ONE – OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

1.1.   What is Community Transport?

Community Transport is designed, specified and developed by the communities it services, and which is provided on a not-for-profit basis in direct response to the identified needs of those communities. It is about providing flexible, accessible and responsive solutions to unmet local transport needs, and often represents the only means of transport for certain user groups.

This is likely to include:

- People in rural areas where there is no public transport provision and other options are not practical
- People with reduced mobility who require support/assistance when travelling or to travel in adapted / suitably equipped vehicles.
- People on low incomes for whom alternative transport options are unaffordable

Some key features of community transport include:

- Third Sector, Charitable, Not-for-profit organisations
- Typically use minibuses, people carriers & cars
- Staffed by a mix of volunteer and paid staff
- Organisations vary by scale, size, fleet etc. and services delivered

The social purpose of community transport includes:

- Community Transport is not for profit
- Usually established to provide relief to communities they serve, who are in need due to age, mobility, mental and physical disability, illness and poverty.

This is achieved by operating affordable, reliable, accessible transport solutions to the local communities they serve.

Transport, though a major element of community transport's work, is a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. CT is first and foremost about people and their needs, not transport. This means it has an impact on:

- ❑ Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- ❑ Access to health care
- ❑ Being a preventative measure for health and social care
- ❑ Community cohesion
- ❑ Employability
- ❑ Environment

Community Transport cannot be fully self-sustainable as the non-profit aspect of community transport permit operation prohibits profit-making which creates barriers to sustainability and the complexity of the transport provided is more expensive than passengers can individually afford.

A report produced by the Department for Transport, the Community Transport Association and the Plunkett Foundation on an enterprising approach to rural community transport found that:

> *"Rural Community Transport Operators are already very enterprising, in both the formal and informal senses of the word, and there is opportunity for them to be even more so. But the research also shows that social enterprise is not a silver bullet in the face of a challenging funding environment for the sector. The use of social enterprise approaches can be a way of increasing income streams for the benefit of both operators and customers, but it is not normally a way of eliminating the ongoing need for external support, be that from funders or volunteers."*

Without community transport people within our rural communities would struggle with accessing essential services, may not be able to travel and in some cases may never leave their home. Community transport provision is critical for people to get out and about, improves their mental well-being and also impacts positively on their physical health.

Community Transport offers the following solutions:

Group transport: community transport groups hire out vehicles – often accessible minibuses – and drivers to take the members of voluntary groups on trips. Alternatively, voluntary groups can use their own drivers.

Community bus services: demand responsive or fixed-route transport services, available to the public, operating where commercial bus routes are not viable.

Shopmobility: loan or hire of wheelchairs and mobility scooters to allow disabled travellers to get around the shops when they visit local towns.

Vehicle brokerage: community transport organisations manage the sharing of a number of vehicles owned by several organisations in order to maximise the services that can be delivered.

Wheels to Work: scooters are loaned to geographically isolated people (often young people) to enable them to get to work, apprenticeships or training.

Door-to-door Dial-a-Ride Services: these are services for individuals who can't, or find it difficult to, use or access mainstream transport services. People are usually picked up from their homes and dropped off at their destination such as the doctor or the shopping centre. Each vehicle will carry several passengers going to and from different places.

A large percentage of community transport organisations also provide training especially, MiDAS (Minibus Driver Awareness Scheme) for drivers and PATS (Passenger Assistance Training Scheme) for assistants. This is so that they can provide in-house training to their staff and volunteers and also sell the training to other organisations to help with sustainability.

There are a number of challenges within the sector, including:

Sustainability and Funding – As the sector is not-for-profit it requires an element of subsidy. It is also currently experiencing challenges in relation to increase in costs, particularly fuel and wage increases.

Driver Training – Changes in the driver licensing regulations created by European Legislation means that a driver who obtained their licence after 1 January 1997 is not able to drive a minibus under a Section 19 Permit under the majority of circumstances. This has resulted in drivers under the age of 43 not having D1 as an automatic entitlement on their licences as was the case in the past. Failure to address this issue will result in less people being able to drive minibuses in the future.

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers – Particularly post COVID.

Driver Shortage – There is an overall shortage of qualified drivers in the transport industry in general. This was already an issue prior to COVID but has been impacted during and post COVID.

1.2.   Why Community Transport Matters?

There are four main characteristics of why community transport matters:

Accessible transport: transport services for people with disabilities who find it difficult or impossible to use conventional passenger transport, e.g. dial-a-rides, dial-a-bus and social/health car schemes.

Social deprivation: transport for individuals and groups who may be characterised as socially deprived, e.g. minibus travel for people with low income, wheels to work services for people without cars who would otherwise be excluded from the skills development or jobs market and low cost MPV hire to families.

Geographical isolation: transport services for individuals and groups who are not well served by the conventional passenger transport network, e.g. community buses or car schemes for rural areas, services to remote parts of urban estates and services to areas without services at evenings or weekends.

Community cohesion: transport for community and voluntary groups enabling them to provide services and respond to the needs of the community, e.g. predominately group transport either with their own volunteer driver or a supplied driver, in minibuses or larger vehicles.

This is evidenced in the 2015 Scottish Government Research into the Social and Economic Benefits of Community Transport in Scotland that highlighted:

> *"The extensive cross-cutting nature of CT is perhaps unique amongst transport services. The evidence demonstrates that CT is far more than a point-to-point transport service – the CT services examined show the importance of, for example, social interaction on the bus and the role CT plays*

in encouraging often **vulnerable people to attend medical and other appointments they would not otherwise make."**

The Report also highlighted the following benefits, in the following areas, that outlines why community transport matters:

Economic Benefit: from an economic perspective, the potential cost savings provided to social services, the NHS and local authorities, combined with the unremunerated productive hours offered by volunteers, suggests that CT generates significant economic benefits.

Social Benefits: From a social perspective, the contribution of CT across a wide range of policy areas is clearly beneficial. Moreover, by tackling issues such as poor accessibility, social isolation etc. it can reduce the number of older people who are experiencing social isolation and loneliness. By giving older people access to their communities, enabling them to meet friends and to feel part of their community, CT operators ensure that less older people suffer from isolation. They are, therefore, less likely to develop the negative health consequences that come with those circumstances.

Reducing Inequalities: CT is making an important contribution to reducing inequalities, a key item on the Scottish Government policy agenda.

Poverty: It also plays an important role in tackling accessibility poverty by providing demand responsive and other transport services when mainstream transport is unviable.

Wellbeing: CT services are seen as important in promoting wellbeing, quality of life and mental health

Rural: CT was seen to support rural sustainability, by providing people in rural areas with access to key services.

The report concludes that CT offers a wide range of social, economic & health benefits, The services support the Scottish economy in terms of employment, productivity and rural sustainability. In addition, the cross-cutting nature of CT is perhaps unique amongst transport services.

By offering these benefits, CT is making a positive contribution to the Scottish Government's attempts to reduce inequality.

Therefore, community transport matters because it has an impact on:

- Reducing social isolation and loneliness
- Access to health care
- Being a preventative measure for health and social care
- Community cohesion
- Employability
- Environment

This is going to be vital to the communities of Dumfries and Galloway as the demographics show that:

- Over 60 population will increase by 31% in 20 years
- 286 million unfulfilled trips in Scotland each year – MACS
- 25% of population long-term activity-limiting health problem or disability

1.3. Community Transport Provision in Dumfries and Galloway

There are a total of 12 organisations that either only provide community transport or deliver community transport solutions as part of their activities. These are:

- Annandale Community Transport Services
- Galloway Community Transport
- Wigtownshire Community Transport
- Thornhill and District Community Transport
- Cairn Valley Community Transport
- Dalbeattie Community Minibus
- East Criffel Community Transport
- The Order of St John
- Royal Voluntary Service
- Co-Wheels Car Club CIC
- Upper Nithsdale Minibus Project
- Kirkconnel Parish Heritage Community Minibus

<u>Geographical Coverage</u>
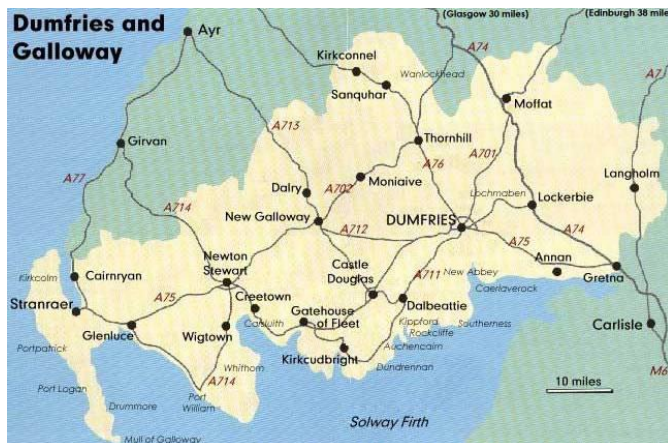
There is a good number of Community Transport organisations in Dumfries and Galloway and although the majority are small, there is a good geographical spread. The one area where there is a lack of community transport presence is in the Dumfries Town area.

<u>What Services does Community Transport provide in Dumfries and Galloway?</u>

Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway provides a wide range of transport solutions to their local communities. These include:

- Volunteer Car Scheme to get patients to health appointments. Both local and out of area health appointments
- Group Transport to the local groups within their community

- Community Bus Services
- School Transport
- Individual Door to Door Transport
- Transport for Day Centres

There are also some of the Community Transport Organisations providing MiDAS and PATS training.

<u>Who Travels on Community Transport?</u>

Community Transport is used by:

- Older People
- People with Disabilities
- Young People
- People on Low Incomes
- Members of the general public who travel on Community Bus Services

<u>Where do Communities that use Community Transport Travel?</u>

Communities use community transport solutions to travel to:

- Social Outings
- Day Care Centres
- Health Appointments
- Shopping
- Education
- Sport
- Employment

<u>Funding</u>

Community Transport is not alone in feeling the effects of the current climate and the challenge of finding sustainable funding is not new, but it remains a significant and complex challenge. The impact of COVID and the subsequent reduction on transport solutions community transport has been able to provide, the current increase in energy, fuel and staff costs, has only intensified these challenges.

The funding issues faced by community transport providers vary according to the size, scope and scale of the organisation. Community transport services cannot operate without some form of investment or public support and funding for the following reasons:

- The cost per trip is higher than in mainstream public transport, owing to the personalised and specialist nature of most community transport services.

- The non-profit aspect of section 19 and 22 permits prohibits profit-making, which creates barriers to sustainability.

- Charging passengers for all the costs would put the services beyond the reach of the very individuals and groups that community transport exists to service.

Funding is therefore a key concern to the sector, especially during this time of uncertainty arising from wider economic pressures. However, Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway is not directly funded by any public sector organisations with most CT providers relying on external grant funding to remain sustainable, where these can be sourced, and income generation through charging.

The Council does provide funding support for the development of the CT Public Social Partnership including funding from Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Policy Development Budget.

SECTION TWO – COMMUNITY TRANSPORT PUBLIC SOCIAL PARTNERSHIP
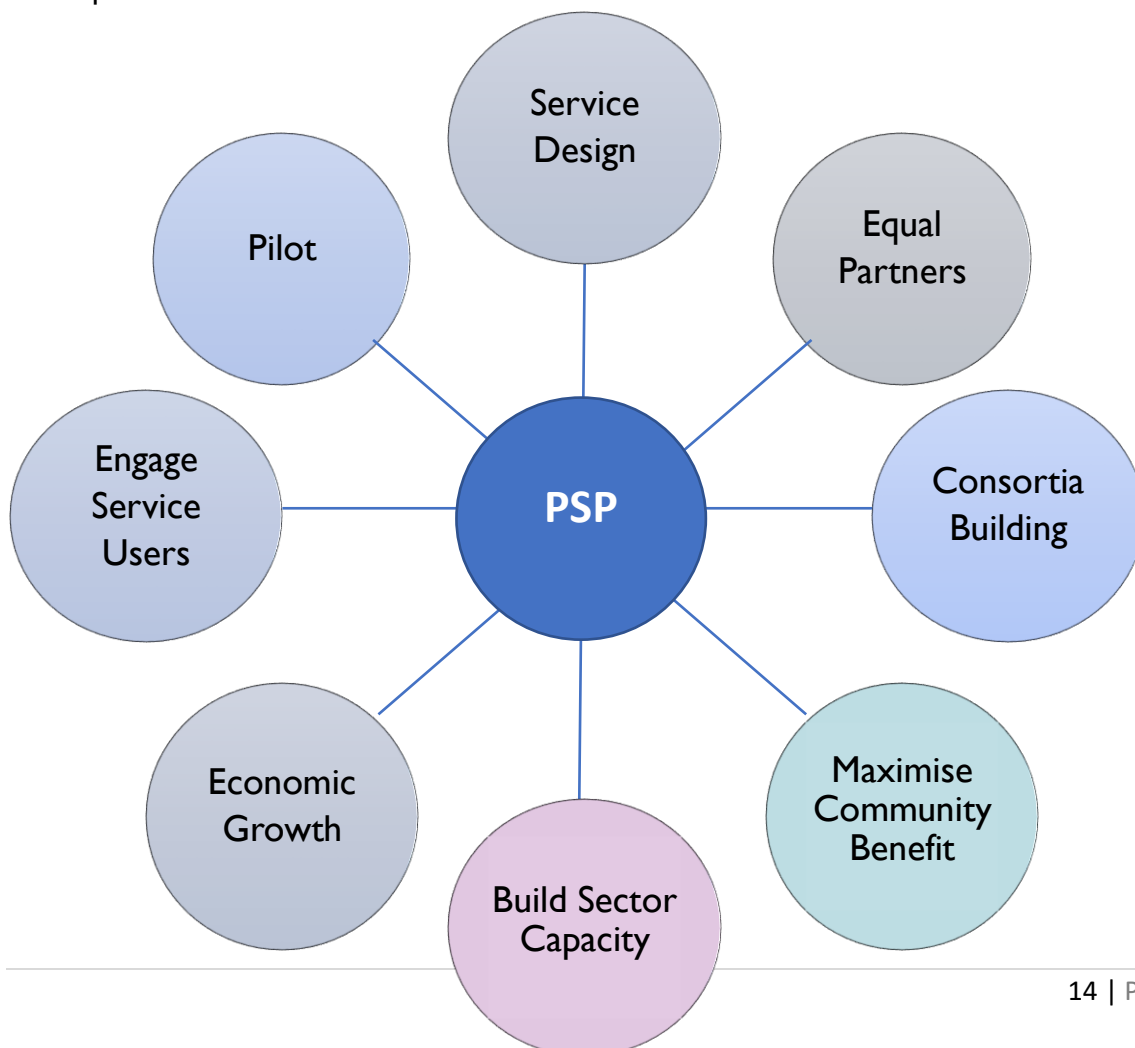
2.1.   What is a Public Social Partnership?

A Public Social Partnership (PSP) is a strategic partnering arrangement that involves the third sector more deeply in the commissioning and design process.

The key features:

❑ Voluntary partnerships involving one or more organisation from both the public and third sectors, and potentially from the private sector
❑ Applicable to a range of services
❑ Based on co-planning approach where organisations jointly design services based on service user needs, with the model building in an opportunity to pilot services to ensure effectiveness
❑ Requires resources (financial and/or people) to be contributed by all parties
❑ The public and third sector organisations share responsibility for managing the PSP, designing and piloting the services
❑ Once piloted, any new service, that has been successful, can be competitively tendered

PSPs are about innovative engagement between the public and third sectors, focused on enhancing the social value and community benefit derived from the delivery of public services. The below diagram outlines the key themes a PSP is expected to reflect.

2.2. Dumfries and Galloway Public Social Partnership

Background

In 2016, the Community Planning Executive Group invited a proposal for the improvement of community transport in Dumfries and Galloway.

Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway produced a Report - Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway *A State of the Sector Report and Improvement Plan* in April 2016. This Report recommended that Community Planning Partners should:

- Investigate the potential of a Public Social Partnership approach
- Recognise the need for strategic funding for Community Transport with funding periods of at least 3 years.
- Explore the provision of support for training and recruitment of both paid and volunteer drivers and investigate the possibility of linking to the employment agenda.
- Continue to work with The Health and Social Care Partnership to embed transport in their planning to assist solving the problems people have in accessing health and social care services.
- Develop co-ordinated sub-regional trip knowledge and increased communication between Community Transport providers and partners, sharing of vehicles to use our capital assets to their full benefit by sharing vehicles during downtime

In November 2016 the Community Planning Executive Group approved the development of a Community Transport Public Social Partnership

Overview

Since 2017, partners in Dumfries and Galloway have been developing and operating a Community Transport Public Social Partnership (PSP). The PSP model builds on the opportunity to pilot innovative services and ensure effectiveness. It develops clear sustainable routes for procurement and service delivery contracts and ensures that wider social benefits, such as assistance for passengers who are frail, are factored into the equation.

The Dumfries and Galloway Community Transport PSP is a partnership between the Statutory Sector (Dumfries and Galloway Council, SWestrans, NHS Dumfries and Galloway) and the Third Sector (Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway and the Community Transport Sector in Dumfries and Galloway).

The aims of the PSP are to:

> *"Develop and design transport services to maximise the benefits to the community and develop the capacity of the community transport sector"*

There are three key work streams to take forward the aims:

WS1 - Delivery of Community, Demand Responsive and Social Transport Services - Focus on the design and development of innovative transport solutions that can be tested and piloted.

WS2 – Health and Social Care Transport Hub - Focus on the non-emergency patient transport (NEPT) provided for NHS Dumfries and Galloway (NHSD&G)

WS3 - Community Transport Capacity Growth - Focus on mitigating an impending gap in skills provision through driver training, volunteering and employment development and implementation of a Quality Assurance Framework, fleet renewal, sustainability and procurement opportunities

Progress to End of March 2022

The PSP has been a huge success as outlined at the Dumfries and Galloway Council's Risk and Scrutiny Committee in January 2022:

> ***"Members noted that the PSP has been highly successful in supporting community transport across the region"***

It has:
- Built up good partnership working between the Statutory and Third Sector. Developing knowledge, trust and understanding between each sector.

- Raised the profile of Community Transport and its importance with Statutory Sector Partners.

- It has assisted with the on-going sustainability and growth of Community Transport

- Has increased the knowledge, expertise and capacity of Community Transport to deliver various transport solutions.

- Has delivered much needed services to local communities, involving users in service design – car scheme, 517 service.

- Has delivered a number of activities, including:
  - D1 Training Programme – 3 volunteers securing employment.
  - Development of a Quality Framework.
  - Delivered transport solutions – Volunteer Car Scheme(s), Bus Service.
  - Brought the CT providers together through the CT Network.
  - Built the foundations for the establishment of a Social Enterprise Organisation.
  - Beginning to look at low carbon vehicle solutions and volunteer recruitment marketing.
  - Developed an Employability Pathway Pilot ready to implement.

- Scoped out a pilot Transport Hub with NHS Dumfries and Galloway that is ready to implement.

The Volunteer Car Scheme for transporting patients to health appointments, both within Dumfries and Galloway and out with Dumfries and Galloway to appointments in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Ayrshire, has been the flagship project. This service has been operated by Annandale Community Transport Service and Galloway Community Transport.

The key statistics since the project started in 2018 up to December 2021 are:

- Patients = 2,118
- Journeys = 3,968
- Volunteer Driver Hours = 8,417
- Travelling to out of region (30%) and in region (70%) health appointments
- 75% of patients over 65 with 65% of the over 65 are aged 75+

The impact the scheme has can be illustrated by the following case study:

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CASE STUDY – PATIENT EXPERIENCE

</div>

"I am 86 years of age and live in Langholm with my wife. I have some trouble hearing but I have kept good health for most of his life.

Due to recent problems with my hip I had to travel to the Golden Jubilee Hospital in Glasgow. On their first visit there my wife and I took the car but got stuck in bad weather, spent 11 hours travelling in total. I arrived at the hospital with high blood pressure which was unusual for me and I believe it was caused by the stress of the journey.

When it was time for the actual operation, I was fortunate enough to be able to use the ACTS Out of Region Patient Transport Pilot which was a big relief for my wife and I following our previous ordeal.

It enabled me to avoid an increase in blood pressure by having to travel to the Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank"

PSP Challenges

Although the PSP has been hugely successful and beneficial in Dumfries and Galloway there are a number of challenges that are required to be resolved. These include:

Overall Investment – If the progress and development that has been built under the PSP to date is to lead to a long-term sustainable transport provision then there will be a requirement for investment (time, resources and funding). This will be required to enable the Community Transport Sector to continue to deliver the services to its local communities, play a key role in any new public transport model, continue to build a holistic approach to transport through better co-ordination, employment and training for various transport roles and ensure that services are designed with the PSP model

around user engagement at its core. The main challenge with this is the financial squeeze on budgets and the lack of time and resources.

Strategic Engagement – One of the major successes of the PSP is the partnership built up with D&G Council, SWestrans, NHS D&G and recently the engagement with SOSE. Periodically the PSP has reported progress to Community Planning and the IJB. As recommended by the recent Audit and Risk Committee Review, *"it is important that engagement with CP Partners around future funding to be taken forward"*. There requires to be an overall strategic engagement plan going forward. However, this is difficult to achieve within the current resources available.

CT Core Funding – With budgets and finances under extreme pressure securing core funding for CT is challenging. It should not be down to just one partner, or a department within that partner (e.g. transport), to contribute to funding. However, without core funding that underpins the CT organisations their ability to play a larger part in any new public transport model could be impacted.

Mainstream a Sustainable Volunteer Car Scheme – This has been funded by Dumfries and Galloway Council over the last 5 years. However, there is a requirement for other key stakeholders to financially support this vital and successful scheme. Without this the long-term sustainability of the current services and any potential wider roll out will not happen.

Implementation of Transport Hub Pilot - has been scoped out with NHS Dumfries and Galloway that is ready to implement. However, to date this has not been able to be implemented mainly due to the challenges faced by NHS during COVID. However, this was an important work stream of the PSP and as such the implementation of the pilot requires to be taken forward. This will not only be important to NHS but will assist with Dumfries and Galloway Council's new public transport model with a key component being the development of a transport hub.

Future of Dumfries and Galloway Community Transport PSP

The work of the PSP to date has established a foundation, particularly through the partnership development, for Community Transport. However, over the next year there is a requirement to develop a sustainable way forward beyond the PSP. There is a huge opportunity for community transport to be a key stakeholder in the new Public Transport Model being developed.

Therefore, there is a requirement to scope out and implement a strategy beyond the PSP, which this Strategy, under Section's 4, 5 and 6, looks to address. The key requirement to take forward beyond the PSP are:

- Mainstream some of the successful activities
- Overcome the identified PSP challenges
- Continue to develop the capacity building projects, including the establishment of a Social Enterprise
- Embed the PSP Model of designing/redesigning services around service user engagement.

SECTION THREE – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1. Some Key Statistics about Dumfries and Galloway:

- The population of Dumfries and Galloway is 149,200. 84% (124,700) of people live in the 150 settlements across the region with 30 or more residents.
- There are 3 types of local bus services in Dumfries and Galloway, providing 93 bus routes covering 11.1 million Km per annum. These are split:
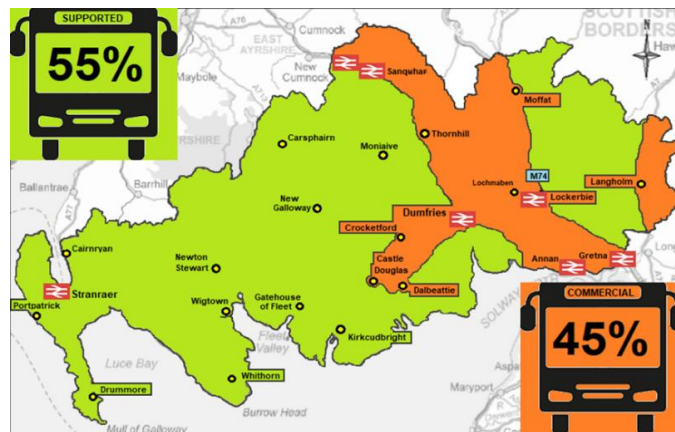
- The socially necessary local bus services (supported) are at an annual net cost of some £3.2M
- Overall Dumfries and Galloway has 19 data zones4 considered to be in the 20% most deprived in Scotland
- There are 37,880 people aged 65 years or older living in Dumfries and Galloway. This is 26% of the region's population (National Records Scotland, mid 2018 population estimate)
- The number of people in the region over the age of 65 is expected to grow by 29% 48,800 people by 2039. Within this, the number of people aged 85 and older is expected to grow by 108% from 4,480 people in 2018 to 9,340 people in 2039.
- Currently there are 48,500 people living with long term conditions of which, 12,500 people are living with 2 or more long term conditions. The number of people with a long term condition is increasing by an estimated 100 people per year.
- It is expected that 12,000 people aged 75 and older will be living alone by 2037

3.2. Local Strategies

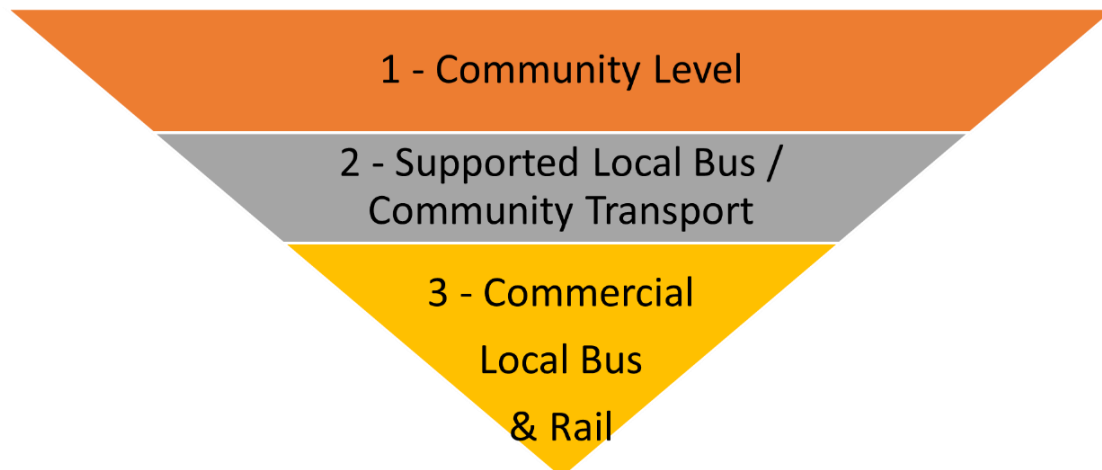**The Dumfries and Galloway Anti-poverty Strategy** outlined the following in relation to travel and transport:

"Our transport system must deliver the internal and external connectivity required to sustain and enhance the region's economy and communities. It is about delivering genuine travel choices for our residents; providing access to jobs and public services; enabling goods to reach their markets; and providing the links that promote social inclusion and support quality of life. The cost of

rural living can be higher than urban areas with costs of transport, such as the need for vehicle ownership, to lead a more independent life and/or costs of public transport to access services not available locally. Transport is also a particular issue for our disabled citizens and we need to ensure that our services and fares are suitable for their needs."

The updated Tackling Poverty and Inequalities Strategy's vision is for "A Dumfries and Galloway in which local action has driven poverty as low as possible; and has mitigated as far as possible the impact of poverty when experienced".

New Sustainable Public Transport Model Development – In June 2021, the Dumfries and Galloway Communities Committee agreed to the development of a sustainable delivery model utilising the opportunities available to provide our residents with a needs-based, coordinated, affordable and integrated network that allows easy transitions across modes.

This model sets out a draft 3 tier framework for delivering a public transport network for the region which incorporates all journey needs, outlined in the diagram below:

Tier 1 – Community Level Provision: made up of a number of tailored and flexible services providing travel opportunities at community level linking directly to amenities/services or to a more structured/timetabled public transport option. This tier will take the learning and structures developed through the Community Transport Public Social Partnership (PSP) and expand across the region. This 'mainstreaming' of the PSP learnings will be a critical building block for the delivery of needs based transport.

*Tier 2 – Supported Local Bus and Community Transport Services***:** made up of supported bus services provided by bus operators, DGC Buses and Community Transport. This would include fixed or semi-fixed bus routes along with Demand Responsive Transport services that would either complement the current supported routes or be an alternative to these routes. One of the major aims of Tier 2 services would be to increase patronage of Tier 3 services through the development of Hub and Spoke feeder services to assist with the overall sustainability of commercial routes.

Tier 3 – Commercial Local Bus and Rail Services: made up of commercial bus routes and ScotRail services. They would operate on the main corridors where there is high passenger demand for these services. Tier 3 services would be operated, in the main, by the commercial bus sector and Train Operating Companies

A vital element of this new model will be co-ordinating, scheduling and planning resources more effectively particularly in Tier 1 but also across Tier 2 to ensure that these resources are used efficiently whilst delivering high quality and appropriate services to the travelling public. It will be key that journeys are integrated, with all key partners working collaboratively and that passengers have a simple and flexible way to book transport if needed. Therefore, development and establishment of a Transport Hub which creates an integrated single booking and scheduling point of contact will be an essential part of the new model.

3.3.   Regional Strategies

The Community Planning Partnership's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan for 2017- 2027 - is the highest level document setting the direction for the region. It sets out a number of outcomes including:

- Learning opportunities are available to those who need them most.
- Health and wellbeing inequalities are reduced.
- People are safe and feel safe.
- People are well connected.
- Individuals and communities are empowered

Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) – SWestrans are currently developing their new Regional Transport Strategy. A key development stage of this is the Case for Change Report that has been published and will shortly being going out to consultation. A set of six draft RTS Strategic Objectives have been developed as follows:

- To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs.
- To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region.
- To widen access to and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region.
- To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region.
- To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan.
- To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region.

South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy Delivery Plan (2022 – 2025) – Delivering a Greener, Fairer and Flourishing South of Scotland – Published in November 2021, a key action under the Thriving and District Communities theme is that *"the region to rapidly enhance transport connectivity within key locations, establish*

new and innovative models of public transport delivery and build on road and rail investments, to improve connections within and out with the South of Scotland."

One of the key challenges and barriers in the South of Scotland is the lack of good transport connectivity. We will undertake a strategic high level review of transport proposals including potential public transport improvements; and active travel.

Other major themes outlined in the strategy are:

- A low carbon society, increasingly resilient to the effects of climate change.
- Vibrant, growing and connected places shaped by empowered communities
- Significant percentage of spending power being retained locally.
- Greater equality of opportunity for all, with people reaching their full potential
- Improving the health and welfare of those who are most disadvantaged within the region
- Building the capability and capacity of social enterprises and the Third Sector
- Investing in social infrastructure and education to enhance life prospects
- Activating Communities & Social Enterprise - Communities have a key role to play in shaping places, tackling local challenges and developing social and economic equity, by harnessing local expertise, capacity and self-subsidiarity and need greater and more sustained support to enable this to happen. · There are significant imbalances between the opportunity and ability for social enterprises and the Third Sector to build capacity and make a difference which requires targeted action, systemic change and greater flexibilities introduced within public procurement.

3.4. National Strategies

The National Transport Strategy (NTS2) published in February 2020 sets out an ambitious and compelling vision for Scotland's transport system for the next 20 years. There are four priorities to support that vision:

- reduces inequalities
- takes climate action
- helps deliver inclusive economic growth
- improves our health and wellbeing.

The overall Vision is:

The NTS2 establishes a 'Sustainable Travel Hierarchy" that defines the principles upon which future transport investment decision making and services should be planned. It defines the priority which will be given to each mode of transport in future investment planning and is shown below that prioritises walking & wheeling and cycling, with investment to support the single occupant private car being the lowest priority.

Prioritising Sustainable Transport
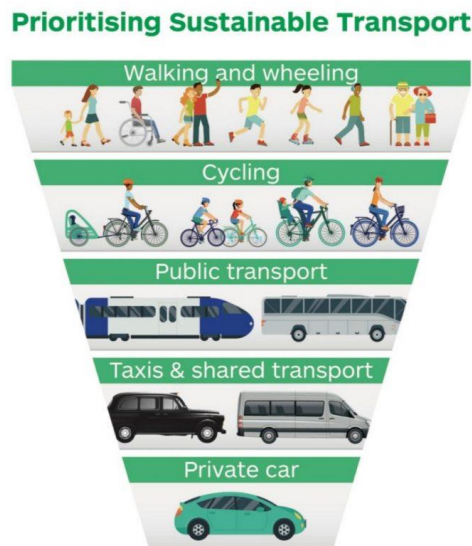
There are a number of other strategies, policies and innovations around transport including:
- A Just Transition to move to low carbon transport
- 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030
- 20 Minute Neighbourhoods
- Mobility As A Service
- Active and Sustainable Transport

NHS Recovery Plan 2021 – 2026 – This Plan sets out key headline ambitions and actions to be developed and delivered now and over the next 5 years. The impact of addressing the Covid-19 pandemic meant many health and care services had to be suspended or reduced in scope and scale. This affected almost all aspects of NHS care.

As a result, there are many people who are waiting longer for the care they need. Addressing this backlog of care, while continuing to meet the ongoing urgent health and care needs of the country, is the central aim of this recovery plan. Whilst the NHS has sought to prioritise and maintain essential services, such as urgent, emergency, mental health, maternity and vital cancer care throughout the pandemic, we know that many people have had treatment delayed. The pausing of non-urgent elective procedures and screening, while unavoidable as part of our pandemic response, has resulted in delays to routine treatment and it has significantly lengthened waiting times for many patients.

Primary and community care services, such as general practice, pharmacy, dentistry and eye care, have also been greatly impacted and are under significant pressure. Getting services back on track and tackling backlogs of care for patients as quickly as

possible is essential, and this Plan sets out how this will be done that safely and effectively, while being open and transparent about the scale of the challenge the NHS faces over the next few years.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission "Is Scotland Fairer Report on the State of Equality and Human Rights in Scotland" (2018) – Found that disabled and older people continue to face problems accessing all forms of public transport. One priority aim was "public transport supports the economic and social inclusion of disabled and older people."

A Fairer Scotland for Older People: Framework for Action – "Community transport plays an important role in providing flexible and accessible community-led solutions in response to unmet local transport needs, and often represents the only means of transport for many vulnerable and isolated people, often older people or people with disabilities." "Tackling social isolation and loneliness - remaining active and engaged in communities is a clear priority for older people, and there is much the Government and partners can do to make this possible. Issues as diverse as making public spaces safe and welcoming, ensuring availability of transport at affordable prices…"

A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Delivery Plan – "Action - Increased availability of accessible and inclusive transport and services"

The Key to Life – Learning Disabilities Scottish Government Strategy – "Public transport and buses are very important for people with learning disabilities." "try to make public transport easier for people with learning disabilities to use".

3.5. Summary

Community Transport can assist key stakeholders in meeting the numerous Local, Regional and National Strategies and Policies outlined above. It, as an enabler, has an impact across a number of policy areas such access to health, preventative measures in relation to health and social care, rural economy, education, employability, social isolation and loneliness, active and sustainable travel and just transition to low carbon.

There can be little doubt that in Dumfries and Galloway the ability of people and communities to access transport is a major cause of disadvantage. This report is concerned with tackling that disadvantage and proposing the means by which we might achieve an improvement in public transport services, specifically those provide by Community Transport providers.

Community transport can mitigate the cost of loneliness and isolation through providing older people with access to health and other services, and to social opportunities.

The work of Community Transport, particularly access to affordable, reliable, accessible transport solutions, will contribute to a number of Scottish Government's equality and human rights action plans and strategies.

SECTION FOUR – COMMUNITY TRANSPORT…. FUTURE JOURNEY

The way forward for the on-going sustainability and development of Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway to enable it to grow and play a key role in the new public transport model that is being developed will require:

- Continued and strengthening partnership working
- Buy in from all statutory and community transport sectors as well as working in partnership with commercial bus sector
- Resources, both financial investment and time
- Mainstream the Public Social Partnership and overcome the challenges identified

4.1.   Four Key Pillars

There is a requirement to build on the great work and success of the Public Social Partnership and continue to build the sector around the following 4 key pillars:

- ***Building the Infrastructure and Capacity Building*** – Through the establishment of a Regional Wide Community Transport Social Enterprise. In August 2019, an event was held with the Community Transport Sector in Dumfries and Galloway which was attended by 8 CT Organisations. The outcome of the event was a recommendation to establish an umbrella Social Enterprise using the 'hub and spoke' model with the new organisation being the hub and the CT providers the spokes. It was agreed that this was the best model to assist the sustainability of the CT Sector as well as assisting with the significant transport challenges that communities face.

- ***Environmental Impact*** – Through better transport co-ordination from the establishment of the Transport Hub. transitioning the community transport fleet to low carbon and developing active and sustainable transport initiatives.

- ***Community Cohesion*** – Developing and providing transport solutions for local communities, develop volunteering opportunities and the development of an employability pathway programme that will look at key areas in relation to developing skills for drivers, schedulers, transport managers and mechanics. This will assist the whole transport sector in the region to build capacity of transport staff where there is a shortage.

- ***Sustainable Growth*** – Through a social enterprising approach to financial sustainability by providing transport and other solutions to local communities and key stakeholders such as SWestrans, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Health and Social Care Partnership and NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

4.2. Vision for Community Transport

The vision for Community Transport in the region is:

"increased and enhanced social, health and community transport services across the region, which are more frequently used by people isolated through location or circumstance, in order to improve their quality of life; and to widen the social and economic impact of community transport in these same communities."

4.3. Mission of Community Transport

The Mission is to operate a quality, sustainable, and consistent Demand Responsive, Social and Community Transport network across the region to those that need it. This will be achieved by:

a) Maintaining and setting standards within the Network.
b) Providing comprehensive support and capacity building training from operational to management issues.
c) Integrating the community transport sector to deliver transport solutions across the South West of Scotland.
d) Being a key partner in the designing of transport solutions for communities, building on the Public Social Partnership, integrating the model into any design.
e) Deliver transport solutions on behalf of commissioning organisations including SWestrans, NHS Dumfries and Galloway and Dumfries and Galloway Council.
f) Being a key partner in assisting in the development and operation of the Integrated Transport Hub.

4.4. Approach

A human rights-based approach will be at the centre of this strategy. This approach is as follows:

- *Participation:* Transport plays a vital role in all our lives. It enables us to get to work, education or training; to see friends and family; to take part in leisure activities; to access health appointments and so much more. The transport solutions that will be provided aim to ensure that our local communities are able to participate in everyday activities, especially where mainstream public transport does not meet people's requirements. Our transport will be affordable as it is important that no matter what level of income people should not have to make trade-offs between spending on transport and spending on other essential items such as food or fuel.

- *Accountability:* Any transport service should be accountable, with people and communities able to influence the delivery of services. It should be clear who people need to contact when transport is not meeting their needs and who is accountable for making sure that standards are met. Using the Public Social Partnership Model, as a community based sector, our ethos is designing and delivering transport solutions with the heart of the local communities needs instrumental in what we deliver.

- ***Non-discrimination and equality:*** Transport should be explicitly designed to be inclusive, taking into account the different needs of older and disabled people, particularly in relation to issues such as caring responsibilities, access to health services and participation in public life. Using the Public Social Partnership Model, these groups of transport users will be part of the design process.

- ***Empowerment and Legality:*** Access to suitable transport is not in itself set out as a human right in international conventions, but it is a necessary requirement in order to achieve other human rights such as the right to work, right to education, right to take part in cultural and public life and the right to the highest standard of physical and mental health. A huge impact on empowering people to life their lives and be able to access vital services and activities can be the barrier of accessing transport. We aim to provide access to suitable transport solutions, whether passenger or non-passenger, to meet the needs of our community. Access to suitable transport, no matter your level of income or where you live, should be seen as a necessary requirement in order to achieve other human rights.

SECTION FIVE – WHAT IS REQUIRED?

To enable the development, and implement this 3 year strategy, will require the following:

5.1.   Mainstream the Community Transport Public Social Partnership

The work of the PSP to date has established a foundation, particularly through the partnership development, for Community Transport. However, over the next year there is a requirement to develop a sustainable way forward beyond the PSP.

During the first year of this strategy, it will be important to transition the successful Community Transport Public Social Partnership into "business as usual". However, to be able to do this, will require a number of the following activities to be mainstreamed:

A Sustainable Volunteer Car Scheme

The Volunteer Car Scheme for transporting patients to health appointments, both within Dumfries and Galloway and out with Dumfries and Galloway to appointments in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Ayrshire, has been the flagship project.

However, without sustainable funding then the continuation and expansion of this service will not be possible and will have to end. This has been a vital service to over 2,000 patients since the service commenced and it has highlighted the importance and value of volunteers with over 8,400 volunteer hours to date.

The Annual funding required to continue and expand the service is £50,000 per annum and £150,000 over the 3 years of this strategy.

Implementation of the Transport Hub

Over the next year it is important to implement the pilot of the Transport Hub in partnership with NHS Dumfries and Galloway.

The development of the Hub will create an integrated single booking and scheduling point of contact through the establishment of a Transport Hub. This will assist in addressing the transport needs of passengers. This will be achieved by using the collaborative economy model by working with a number of transport providers, including Dumfries and Galloway Council, Community Transport Operators and NHS Dumfries and Galloway, to make better use of their transport fleet downtime.

The idea is to make use of a collaborative digital platform that will:

- Assist with transport needs of communities to access employment, training, leisure activities and health and social care
- Schedule and book transport matching supply with demand
- Ability to allocate journeys in real-time
- Make better use of resources from Local Authorities, Community Transport and NHS by utilising their spare vehicle capacity and downtime
- Design transport solutions to meet the needs of communities.

The overall vision of the project is to make use of the collaborative economy model by working with key transport providers. The interactive web based scheduling and booking solution will enable us to match up supply, resources available from Local Authorities, Community Transport Operators and NHS, to demand, transport requirements of communities to enable them to access employability and training, health, social care services and leisure activities.

It will reduce unnecessary duplicate journeys and provide efficiencies for key stakeholders through economies of scale. This will see:

- The establishment of an integrated transport hub that will be a single point of contact for booking, scheduling, planning and designing transport solutions
- Make use of a web based interactive digital solution to co-ordinate, schedule, plan and allocate resources and journeys of partners to make more efficient use of these, reduce duplicate journeys and free up capacity to deliver innovative and bespoke transport solutions to the region's communities.
- Provide the facility for real time allocation of journeys and resources to meet demand.
- Provide passengers with digital apps to book and schedule transport that is linked to the scheduling system.

As the project develops, particularly with the establishment of the new proposed Public Transport Model, it will allow for the flexibility to create a "virtual hub" in the future through a 'trip broker' facility as outlined in the below diagram:
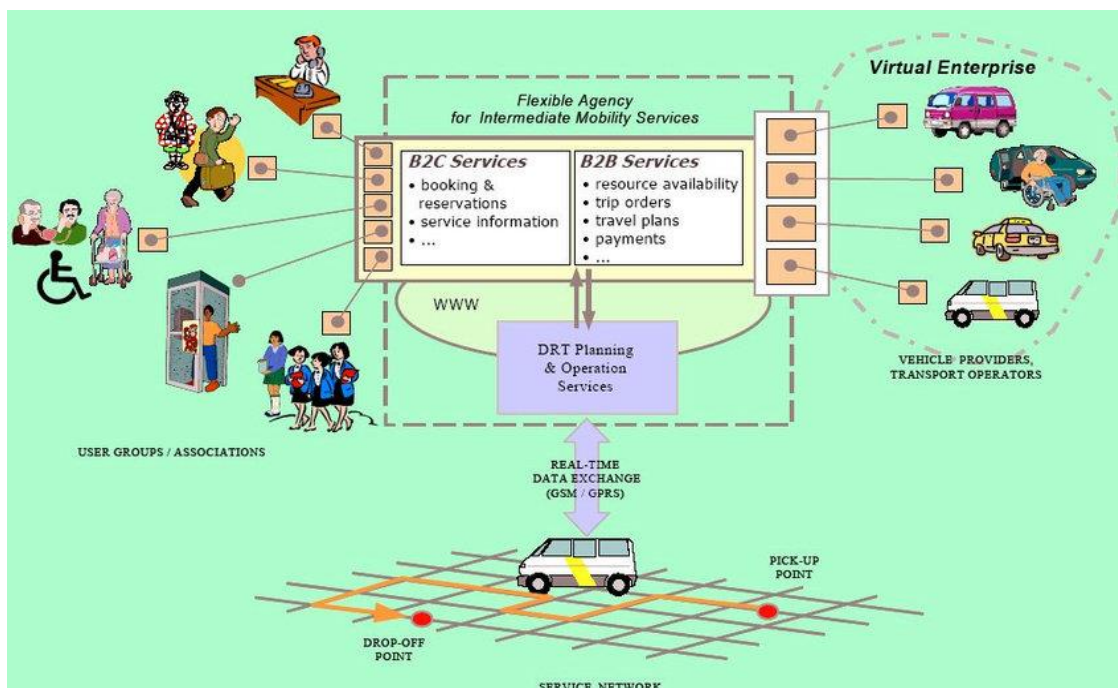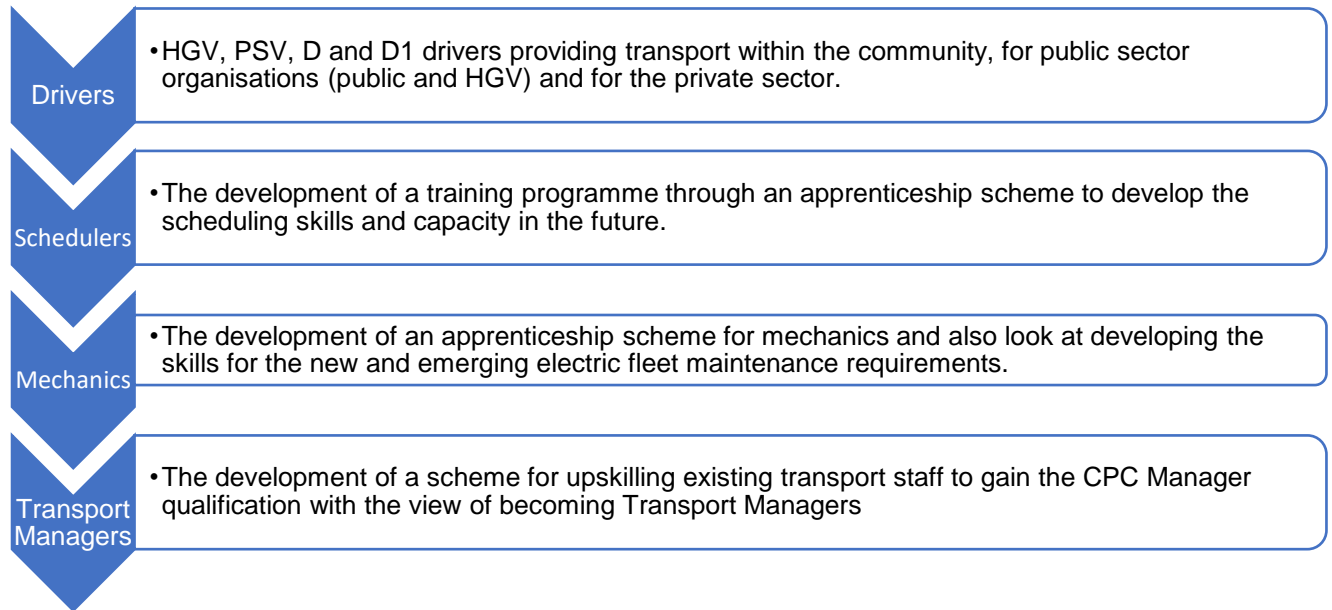

There is an initial £40,000 capital funding required for the initial set up of the Hub. The annual expenditure funding required to operate the Hub for NHS Dumfries and Galloway activity will be £50,000 per annum and £150,000 over the 3 years of this strategy.

Employability Pathway Programme

The Public Social Partnership will be implementing an employability pathway programme pilot over the next year. If this is successful, it is envisaged that this will be mainstreamed over the 2nd and 3rd year of this strategy.

This overall project will look at four key areas in relation to developing skills:

Drivers • HGV, PSV, D and D1 drivers providing transport within the community, for public sector organisations (public and HGV) and for the private sector.

Schedulers • The development of a training programme through an apprenticeship scheme to develop the scheduling skills and capacity in the future.

Mechanics • The development of an apprenticeship scheme for mechanics and also look at developing the skills for the new and emerging electric fleet maintenance requirements.

Transport Managers • The development of a scheme for upskilling existing transport staff to gain the CPC Manager qualification with the view of becoming Transport Managers

The Annual funding required is £50,000 per annum and £150,000 over the 3 years of this strategy.

Volunteering Development Project

The Public Social Partnership will be scoping out the development of a pilot volunteering project over the next year. If the project is successful, it is envisaged that this will be mainstreamed over the 2nd and 3rd year of this strategy.

The majority of community transport providers in the region rely heavily on volunteers, particularly drivers, to provide their services. The demographics of people driving for community transport throughout Scotland is male, retired and over 65.

Therefore, the pilot project will scope out, develop and implement a volunteer strategy for community transport. This will include recruitment, marketing and training of volunteers and will look at widening the demographics and diversify the people volunteering for community transport, including the recruitment of more young people and women.

The Annual funding required is £25,000 per annum and £75,000 over the 3 years of this strategy.

5.2.   Establish a Regional Community Transport Social Enterprise

One of the key elements of this strategy is to develop a sustainable infrastructure for Community Transport in the region.

To deliver this a Regional Community Transport Social Enterprise will be established. This will be an umbrella organisation, working in partnership with the current community transport operators. The diagram below outlines the potential services that the social enterprise would aim to deliver.

The Strategic Goals will be to:

1.   Increase the use of community transport services across Dumfries and Galloway.
2.   Support the Community Transport Organisations across Dumfries and Galloway through a CT Network.
3.   Increase the productivity and cost-effectiveness of Community Transport
4.   Raise and maintain the community transport-related skills and qualifications of the staff and volunteers of member organisations through the development of a Training and Learning Centre.
5.   Transition to a low carbon fleet, where possible.

6. Develop a Hub and Spoke Model for the delivery of transport solutions for the communities of Dumfries and Galloway.
7. Be a key partner in the delivery of the new Public Transport Model
8. Develop commercial opportunities as part of the long term social enterprise sustainability strategy.

This "hub and spoke" model will provide:

- economies of scale - shared resources.
- commissioners, stakeholders and service users one point of contact.
- development of transport focused on social inclusion and need throughout the region allowing providers to concentrate on service delivery.
- cross area/region projects.
- a joined-up sector.
- monitoring of the sector to improve quality and availability.
- a solid and sustainable volunteer base.
- opportunities for innovation and piloting – e.g. electric fleets.
- development of community programmes - e.g. employability pathways for transport – drivers, schedulers, mechanics, transport managers.
- delivery of transport solutions.
- the CT Sector in Dumfries and Galloway opportunity to:
  - capacity build through key programmes such as volunteering and employability.
  - administer and provide core funding to the Sector.
  - provide opportunities to deliver commissioned transport solutions in their local area through the "Hub and Spoke" model
  - develop innovative projects - car clubs, e-bikes, electric vehicles.
- transport solutions for key stakeholders such as the Council and NHS.
- a key delivery partner for the Integrated Transport Hub.

It will seek to achieve a range of social impacts including, but not exclusively:

- Improved access to places and public services for disadvantaged groups.
- Increased feeling and experience of travelling safely.
- Improved mental and physical health and wellbeing.
- Reduced isolation for disadvantaged groups.
- Reduction in CO2 emissions through the operation of a low carbon fleet.
- People feeling more connected to and within their community.
- Better use of community assets (places, transport, services).
- Increased employability for trainees and volunteers.
- Increased sustainability in other CT operators and third sector non-CT organisations.
- Increased impact and value for money in the delivery of public services.

The Annual funding required is £100,000 per annum and £300,000 over the 3 years of this strategy.

5.3. Strategic Partnerships

One of the major successes of the PSP is the partnership built up with Dumfries and Galloway Council, SWestrans, NHS Dumfries and Galloway, the Community Transport Sector, Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway and recently the engagement with South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE).

Throughout the lifespan of the Public Social Partnership, it has reported progress to Community Planning and the IJB and regularly reports to SWestrans. Going forward, particularly as we transition the PSP into becoming "business as usual" and we look at delivering this strategy, it is vital that there is continued buy-in from the current stakeholders.

However, it will be equally important to look to widen out discussions and have input from more key stakeholders including Community Planning Partners, Health and Social Care, Integrated Joint Board, South of Scotland Enterprise and other key departments with Dumfries and Galloway Council where community transport can assist with meeting policy objectives such as access to health and social care, community cohesion, employability, active and sustainable travel and social isolation and loneliness.

As recommended by the recent Audit and Risk Committee Review into the Public Social Partnership *"it is important that engagement with CP Partners around future funding to be taken forward."*

Therefore, it is important that as part of transitioning from the PSP and to ensure that this strategy is taken forward strategically, that the current PSP Steering Group is revised with a new Steering Group, involving all key stakeholders, is established. The remit of this Group should be to have overall responsibility for implementing this strategy, scope out where community transport can assist with meeting their own organisation's strategic objectives and developing an overall strategic engagement plan going forward.

5.4. Core Funding for Community Transport Organisations

Due to being not-for-profit and having to adhere to the Section 19 and 22 Permit legislation for operating which prohibits profit making, community transport services cannot operate without some form of investment or public support and funding.

Dumfries and Galloway Council have been a great financial supporter of the PSP, but Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway is not directly funded by any public sector organisations with most CT providers relying on external grant funding to remain sustainable, where these can be sourced.

One of the recommendations of the Community Transport in Dumfries and Galloway A State of the Sector Report and Improvement Plan in 2016 was to recognise the need for strategic funding for community transport with funding periods of at least 3 years.

This is even more important than ever, particularly the impact of COVID and the subsequent reduction on transport solutions community transport has been able to

provide, the current increase in energy, fuel and wage costs, that has only intensified the need.

Therefore, an annual grant funding pot is required to assist community transport operators in Dumfries and Galloway. Without core funding to underpin Community transport organisations their ability to play a larger part in any new public transport model will be impacted.

The Annual core grant funding required is £50,000 per annum and £150,000 over the 3 years of this strategy.

5.5. South of Scotland Wide Community Transport Development

Dumfries and Galloway borders Ayrshire, South Lanarkshire and the Borders areas. Transport does not recognise borders and therefore it will be important that as this strategy is developed that we look to scope out how the development in Dumfries and Galloway can link into the wider South of Scotland community transport development.

Therefore, we will look to work with key stakeholders such as South of Scotland Enterprise, Local Authorities. NHS and Community Transport Providers to explore any future regional wide community transport development.

SECTION SIX – INVESTMENT AND FUNDING

6.1. Investment Required

The below tables outlines the 3 year investment required to deliver this strategy.

Development	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Mainstream Volunteer Car Scheme	£ 50,000	£ 50,000	£ 50,000
Transport Hub:			
Set up Capital Costs	£ 40,000	£ 0	£ 0
Annual Running Costs	£ 50,000	£ 50,000	£ 50,000
Employability Pathway Programme	£ 50,000	£ 50,000	£ 50,000
Volunteer Development	£ 25,000	£ 25,000	£ 25,000
Social Enterprise Operating Costs	£100,000	£100,000	£100,000
Core Grant Funding for Community Transport Operators	£ 50,000	£ 50,000	£ 50,000
Total	**£365,000**	**£325,000**	**£325,000**

The 3 year funding outlined above does not cover any capital funding required to transition the Community Transport Sector to low carbon vehicles. This will have to be developed as part of a low carbon replacement strategy.

6.2. Investment Strategy

It will be important that the investment required is secured to enable this strategy to be delivered so that community transport is:

- Sustainable and able to meet the challenges and opportunities now and in the future.
- Able to assist key stakeholders in meeting their policy aims including access to health and social care, reducing poverty, reducing social isolation and loneliness, rural economy, employability and community cohesion.
- Able to play a key part in the new Public Transport Model that is being developed, with Community Transport outlined as a key delivery partner.

With the current funding constraints on local and regional funding it is important that there is a strategic and holistic approach to the investment required. As outlined in this strategy community transport is not about the transport itself. Therefore, there is a requirement for:

- A funding model where there are a number of funding partners, including Community Planning Partners, various departments within Dumfries and Galloway Council (e.g. social work, employability, communities), South of Scotland Enterprise, NHS Dumfries and Galloway and Health and Social Care Partnership.

- Funding should be secured as part of wider strategies:

  - Spend to Save – With a sustainable infrastructure for Community Transport through initial investment will be able to deliver services on behalf of stakeholders that will be more cost effective in the long term.

  - Within the context of current funding constraints, key stakeholders look to spend their budgets differently e.g. transport.

Without investment, the Community Transport Sector will not be able to:

- Continue to deliver the services to its local communities.
- Play a key role in any new public transport model.
- Continue to build a holistic approach to transport through better co-ordination, employment and training for various transport roles.

SECTION SEVEN – CONCLUSION

The 2022 – 25 Dumfries and Galloway Driving Community Cohesion and Growth Strategy sets out how Community Transport can transition from the current Public Social Partnership to "business as usual" so that it can be a key delivery partner for the new Public Transport Model that will be developed.

The Strategy sets out the challenges that require to be overcome, a vision and future development required and what resources are needed to implement this strategy including financial investment.

As outlined in Section Three, Community Transport assists key stakeholders in meeting the numerous Local, Regional and National Strategies and Policies including the Regional Transport Strategy, National Transport Strategy, Older People and Social Isolation and Loneliness Strategies and NHS Recovery Plan.

This is because Community Transport is not just about transport it is an enabler that has an impact across a number of policy areas such as access to health, preventative measures in relation to health and social care, rural economy, education, employability, social isolation and loneliness, active and sustainable transport and just transition to low carbon fleets.

There can be little doubt that in Dumfries and Galloway the ability of our people and communities to access transport is a major cause of disadvantage. This strategy is concerned with tackling that disadvantage and proposing the means by which we might achieve an improvement in public transport services, specifically those provided by Community Transport providers.

5

REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY - DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

1.   Reason for Report
To inform the Board of progress with a new Regional Transport Strategy and to recommend approval of the draft Regional Transport Strategy for public consultation.

2.   Background
2.1   SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) was agreed by the SWestrans Board on 25 April 2008 after an extensive consultation exercise and approved by Scottish Ministers in June 2008. The RTS Delivery Plan was agreed by the Board on 27 March 2009. The RTS covers the period up to 2023.

2.2   SWestrans has a statutory duty to draw up a strategy for transport within its region. At its meeting on 26 March 2021, the Board were informed that following the publication of the National Transport Strategy 2 all the Regional Transport Partnerships were undertaking a new RTS and that a new RTS for SWestrans would take a minimum of 18 months to complete.

2.3   The Board, at its meetings in January and March 2022, received updates on the progress to develop a new Regional Transport Strategy including the key milestones and timeline, below:

Milestone	Date
M1 – Inception Report	w/c 13th December 2021
M2 – Initial Appraisal: Case for Change Report	w/c 28th March 2022
M3 – Preliminary Options Appraisal Report	w/c 27th June 2022
M4 – Draft RTS for Consultation	w/c 26th September 2022
M5 – Final RTS	w/c 30th January 2023

3.   Key Points – Draft RTS for Consultation
3.1   The draft RTS is attached at the **Appendix** and a summary of the content is provided in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.11. The preparation of the new RTS has been informed by Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Equalities Impact Assessment processes, each of which has identified key environmental and equalities issues which need to be addressed in the new RTS. The RTS will be accompanied by proportionate SEA and Equalities Duties Assessment Reports which consider how relevant equalities and environmental issues have been taken account of to date and provides recommendations to inform the finalisation of the RTS.

Background and Policy Context
3.2   Explains how the draft RTS has been developed, and the key national, regional and local policy context that have been used to guide the development of the draft RTS.

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South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

Report	**South West of Scotland Transport Partnership**	**23 September 2022**

<u>The SWestrans Region</u>
3.3   A short summary of the region's demographics, existing transport provision, transport trends and the spatial context within which the draft RTS has been developed.

<u>Transport Problems</u>
3.4   A set of transport problems and issues which have been identified from a range of sources. These transport problems can be thought of as one or more of:

- Something that negatively affects a journey which is still made (people and freight) by that mode of travel – in the main this makes a trip less efficient, more expensive or less comfortable.
- Something that stops people or goods travelling by (generally) more sustainable and policy friendly modes – this primarily leads to more car use.
- Something that stops people making the trips they'd like to make, or goods being moved – impacting on peoples' life chances and business opportunities.

3.5   A problems framework was used to break the identified problems into categories which broadly align with the National Transport Strategy's sustainable travel hierarchy and provided the basic building blocks for the RTS Strategic Objectives. This also provided the basis for development of a series of RTS Themes that provide the structure of the strategy.

<u>Vision, Strategy Objectives and RTS Themes</u>
3.6   The RTS vision outlines what type of region we want Dumfries and Galloway to be along with how transport can help to facilitate that. It draws upon national, regional and local policy aspirations. It also provides an overarching context for the strategy objectives. The vision states:

> 'The South-West of Scotland will be an inclusive, prosperous and attractive place to live, work and visit supported by an integrated and sustainable transport system that is safe, affordable and accessible to all, resilient to climate change, allowing healthier lifestyles and supporting a contribution to net zero emissions targets reflecting the regional circumstances.'

3.7   The Strategy Objectives are defined below but further detail (including sub-objectives) for each is provided in the draft RTS:

- **Strategy Objective 1** – To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs.
- **Strategy Objective 2** – To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region.
- **Strategy Objective 3** – To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region.
- **Strategy Objective 4** – To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region.
- **Strategy Objective 5** – To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan.
- **Strategy Objective 6** – To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region.

3.8   Drawing upon the Strategy Objectives a series of RTS Themes have been identified which ultimately form the foundation of the RTS by providing the outline of its structure. The defined RTS themes are:

1 - Enabling More Sustainable Development: integrating land-use and transport planning, enabling access to developments for all groups by sustainable modes of transport, reducing the need to travel and facilitating an 'infrastructure first' approach to development

2 - Connecting Our Communities: facilitating walking, wheeling and cycling within villages and towns as well as providing active travel connections between them and to regional centres

3 - Transforming Travel in Our Towns: improving the public realm by reducing car dominance and delivering roadspace reallocation to prioritise buses and active travel

4 - Reducing the Impact of Transport on Our Communities: eliminating the negative impacts of through traffic on local settlements and supporting decarbonisation

5 - Enhancing Access to Transport Services: providing safe and equal access to transport for all including vulnerable and minority groups by removing physical and non-physical barriers

6 - Sustainable and Extended Local and Regional Public Transport Connectivity: extending the number of services and stops / stations on the public transport network

7 - Improving the Quality and Affordability of Our Public Transport Offer: delivering affordable public transport solutions, enhancing the public transport infrastructure including accessible vehicles and stops as well as improving integration between services, information and ticketing provision

8 - Supporting Safe, Effective and Resilient Connections to Loch Ryan and Other Strategic Sites: enhancements to the strategic transport network that provides links to key economic destinations, gateways and development locations to increase efficiency and competitiveness

9 - Managing Our Car Traffic: reducing car dependency and contributing to the Scottish Government's target to reduce car km by 20% by 2030 where possible and practical

10 - Making the Most of New Opportunities: capitalising on innovations and new technology to enhance access to more sustainable modes of transport and the efficiency of the transport system

3.9   The draft RTS then provides more discussion and detail on each of the RTS Themes and identifies a set of priorities for each Theme.

Delivery

3.10   The RTS sets out the long-term policy context for transport in Dumfries and Galloway. Its delivery will be dependent on a combination of actions by SWestrans, Dumfries and Galloway Council and close partnership working with other key industry bodies. To guide the implementation of the RTS and the priorities it has identified a Delivery Plan will be prepared which will accompany the strategy. This will set out a series of actions including an ongoing programme of physical and non-physical

interventions. It will include measures which can be delivered by SWestrans and also those where it would look to partners to lead on delivery. These will also include analysis and appraisal work to identify new interventions to support the delivery of the RTS priorities. The Delivery Plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis throughout the lifetime of the strategy as part of the ongoing Monitoring process.

Monitoring

3.11   Monitoring the RTS is important to assess the extent to which it is achieving the Strategy Objectives and Vision. To facilitate this a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified. These are each linked to the defined Strategy Objectives and are closely linked to those defined for monitoring the National Transport Strategy 2. They will be used to measure how the transport system performs over the lifetime of the RTS against an established baseline prior to its implementation. Throughout the lifetime of the strategy monitoring reports will be prepared every two years. These will outline the key regional transport and behavioural trends based upon the KPIs.

4.   Key Points – Consultation

4.1   Consultation on the draft RTS is a requirement set out in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005. The consultation will be open to the general public, partners, and stakeholders, and the draft RTS document, supporting documents (including the EqIA and SEA), and consultation questionnaire will be made available through the SWestrans website and will be provided in paper copies and in other formats or languages upon request. The consultation will be promoted through stakeholder contact lists and social media to generate responses. It is intended to launch the consultation on 3 October 2022, and it will remain open until 6 January 2023.

4.2   The RTS development process remains on track to complete in early 2023, subject to it being approved by the Board, after which it will be submitted to Scottish Ministers for approval and become a statutory document. Officers will update members on the consultation exercise and wider RTS development process as matters progress.

4.3   The Board are asked to approve the draft Regional Transport Strategy at the **Appendix** for public consultation.

5. Implications	
Financial	The RTS is being accommodated within revenue funding across financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23
Policy	Policy implications are included within the report.
Equalities	An EqIA is a critical element of the RTS.
Climate Change	A SEA is a critical element of the RTS. Climate issues will be a focus of the RTS.
Risk Management	The need for a current RTS and Delivery Plan relates to a number of known risks: R03 – Strategic Direction R04 – Capital Funding R05 – RTS Delivery R07 – Revenue Funding

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6.   Recommendations
Members of the Board are asked to: 6.1   note the progress with the new Regional Transport Strategy; and 6.2   approve the draft Regional Transport Strategy at the Appendix for public consultation.

Report Author: Douglas Kirkpatrick Tel: 01387 260136 Date of Report: 13 September 2022 File Ref: SW2/Meetings/2022	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN

Appendix – SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy Consultation Draft September 2022

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South West of Scotland Transport Partnership

SWestrans

REGIONAL

TRANSPORT

STRATEGY

Consultation Draft

September 2022

In partnership with: Stantec

Document Control Sheet

Project Name: SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

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Date: 9th September 2022

	Name	**Position**	**Signature**	**Date**
Prepared by:	Alec Knox	Associate Transport Planner	AK	7th September 2022
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Approved by:	Scott Leitham	Director	SL	9th September 2022
For and on behalf of Stantec UK Limited				

Revision	**Date**	**Description**	**Prepared**	**Reviewed**	**Approved**
1.1	25/08/22	Draft	AK	SL	SL
1.2	09/09/22	Final Draft	AK	SL	SL

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SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

1.1.1 The South West of Scotland Regional Transport Partnership (SWestrans) is established under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 and is required to provide a statutory Regional Transport Strategy (RTS). The RTS aims to provide a strategic framework for transport management and investment for the Partnership area. The region has a boundary contiguous with Dumfries and Galloway Council as shown in Figure 1.1 and it should seek to perform its transport functions in line with the RTS.

1.1.2 This RTS has been prepared to replace the existing Regional Transport Strategy published in April 2008. It has been developed in accordance with the RTS Guidance (2006) and Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG).

1.1.3 The key purpose of the RTS is to identify the transport challenges in Dumfries and Galloway and to set out a long-term approach to address them. This has been informed by an extensive review of policy documentation, data analysis and consultation. This has been evidenced in the STAG Case for Change and Options Appraisal Reports.

1.1.4 The preparation of the new SWestrans RTS has also been informed by Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) processes, each of which has identified key environmental and equalities issues which need to be addressed in the new RTS. This RTS is accompanied by proportionate SEA and Equalities Duties Assessment Reports which consider how relevant equalities and environmental issues have been taken account of to date and provides recommendations to inform the finalisation of the RTS.

Figure 1.1 Map of SWestrans Region

1.2 Policy Context

1.2.1 The RTS is being developed within a policy hierarchy that includes national, regional, and local strategies. These are illustrated in Figure 1.2 which also shows the position of the SWestrans RTS within the hierarchy.

1.2.2 Furthermore, the RTS has been developed within the policy framework set out in the National Transport Strategy 2 which established four strategic priorities. In addition, NTS2 also defined a Sustainable Travel Hierarchy aimed at prioritising the most sustainable modes of transport. Both of these are illustrated in Figure 1.3.

1.2.3 In addition, the Scottish Government has outlined transport specific targets to help achieve its overarching target of net zero emissions by 2045. These were established through the Climate Change Plan Update published in December 2020. It outlined that by 2030:

- our roads will contain no new petrol and diesel cars and vans
- car kilometres will have reduced by 20%

1.2.4 This key policy context has consequently been used to guide the development of this RTS.

National
- National Transport Strategy 2
- Strategic Transport Projects Review 2
- National Planning Framework 4
- Scottish Government Climate Change Plan Update 2020
- Route Map to 20% Reduction in Car KM
- Transport (Scotland) Act 2019
- Union Connectivity Review

Regional
- Borderlands Growth Deal
- Dumfries and Galloway Draft Active Travel Strategy 2
- Dumfries and Galloway Draft indicative Regional Spatial Strategy
- Dumfries and Galloway Regional Economic Strategy
- North Channel Partnership
- **SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy**
- Safer Greener Better: A75 and A77 Upgrades
- South of Scotland Cycling Strategy
- South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy
- SWestrans Equality Outcome Scheme

Local
- Chapelcross Development Framework
- Crichton Development Plans
- Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2
- High Speed 2 – Western Leg Design Refinement Consultation Response

Figure 1.2 Policy Hierarchy

NTS 2 PRIORITIES

- Reduce Inequalities
- Take Climate Action
- Help Deliver Inclusive Economic Growth
- Improve Our Health and Wellbeing

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL HIERARCHY

- Walking and Wheeling
- Cycling
- Public Transport
- Taxis & Shared Transport
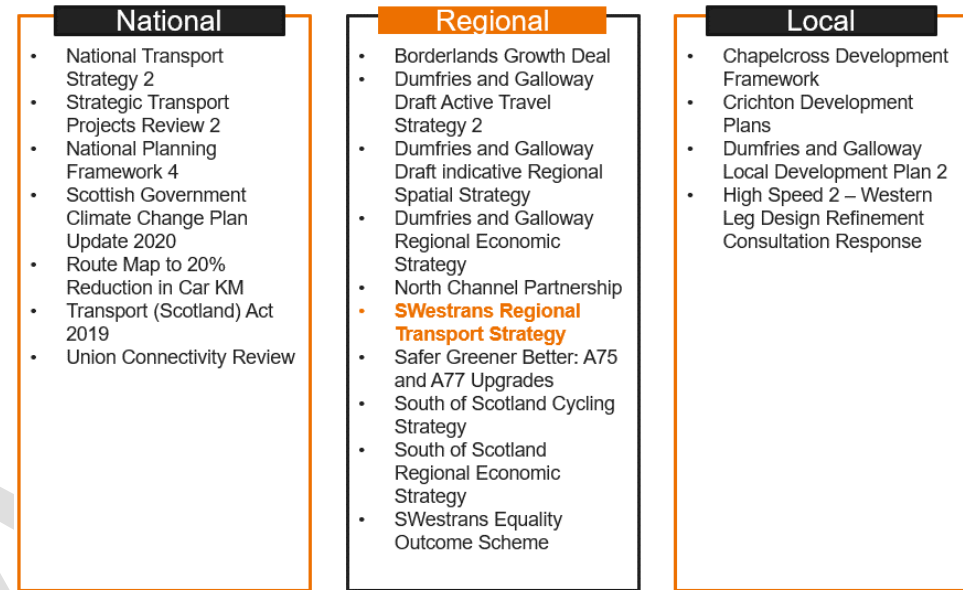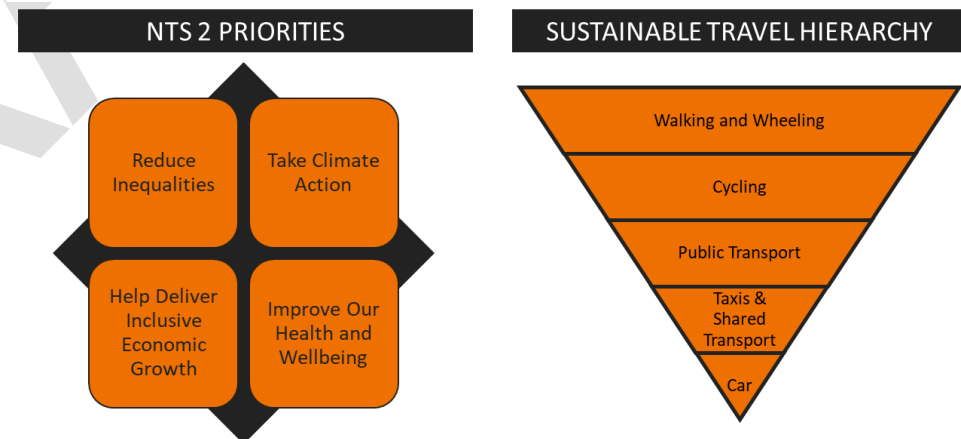- Car

Figure 1.3 National Transport Strategy 2 Policy Framework

The SWestrans Region

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

2   The SWestrans Region

2.1   Demographic

2.1.1   An estimated 148,290 people resided in the SWestrans area in 2020 according to Scottish Government Statistics. This equates to 2.7% of the total population of Scotland which was 5,466,000 in 2020. The SWestrans area covers 6,426 square kilometres which is 8.1% of the total 78,789 square kilometres land mass of Scotland. The population density of the region is just 23 people per square kilometre compared to the national average of 69 people per square kilometre. Dumfries & Locharbriggs is the major centre of population accounting for just under a quarter of total residents.

2.1.2   This low population density in South West Scotland has implications for the provision of effective and efficient transport. In particular, it is difficult to provide commercially viable public transport services in areas with dispersed populations and modes like walking and cycling are generally suited to shorter, local trips in more densely urbanised areas. This is further illustrated by the Scottish Government's Urban – Rural Classification shown here which classifies much of the region as either 'Accessible Rural' or 'Remote Rural'.[1]

2.1.3   The population of the SWestrans area is also projected to decline by 4% between 2018 and 2032. This could have further implications for the viability of public transport and other essential services, with resultant potential implications for people with disabilities, although recent NRS data suggests a small increase in population between 2020 and 2021 potentially linked to out migration from urban areas driven by the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, there is a higher elderly population and lower working age
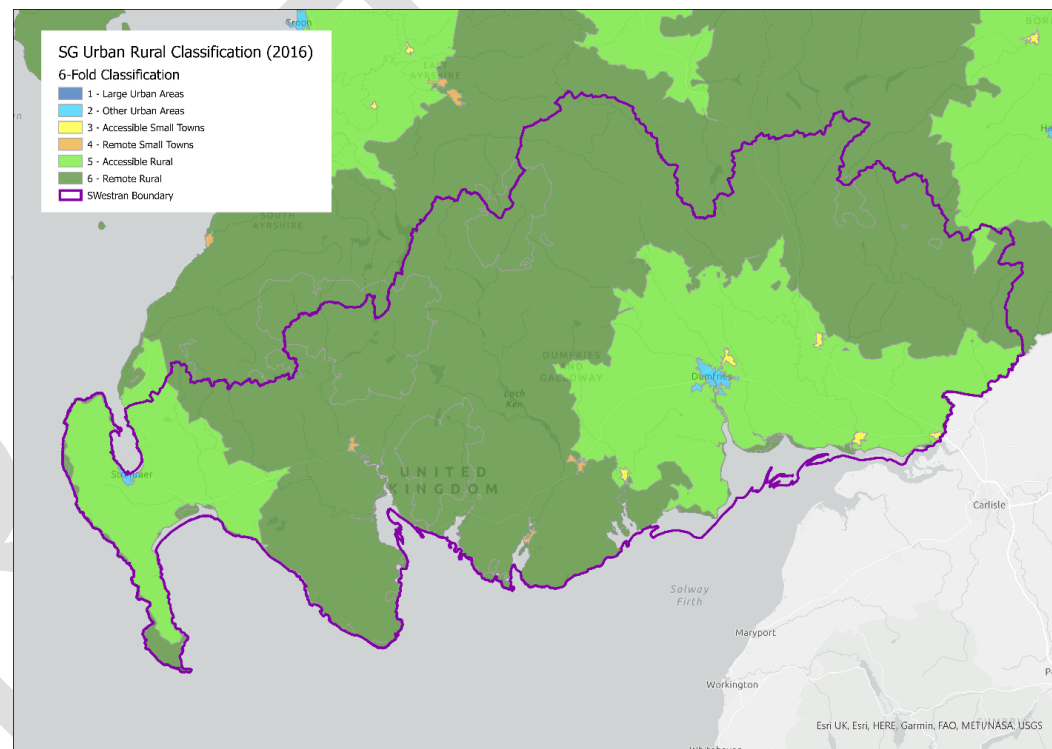

Figure 2.1 Scottish Government Urban – Rural Classification of SWestrans Region

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[1] <u>Accessible Rural</u>: Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and within a 30 minute drive time of a Settlement of 10,000 or more. <u>Remote Rural</u>: Areas with a population of less than 3,000 people, and with a drive time of over 30 minutes to a Settlement of 10,000 or more.

population compared to Scotland as a whole, which could place additional demands on health and social care and the need for access to it. This is likely to be further exacerbated by the fact that the proportion of residents in bad health or very bad health is higher than the Scottish average.

2.2 Transport

Active Travel

2.2.1 The active travel network in the region incorporates several sections of the National Cycle Network (NCN) including:

- **NCN Route 73 (South)** runs from Stranraer to Newton Stewart. The 41-mile stretch is predominantly on-road
- **NCN Route 7** connects Sunderland and Inverness. The Glasgow to Carlisle section runs through Maybole, Newton Stewart, Castle Douglas, Dumfries and Gretna Green. This route is mainly on-road with occasional off-road sections
- **NCN Route 74** connects Gretna and Glasgow following a route very similar to the A74(M). The 70-mile route is predominantly on-road, though there are some traffic free routes

2.2.2 Whilst the majority of these routes are long-distance, analysis of Strava Metro data has shown that functional active travel journeys, as opposed to leisure trips, tend to be undertaken locally within towns. There was limited evidence of inter-town active travel taking place in Dumfries and Galloway which can likely be attributed to its rural nature with dispersed centres of population and the absence of traffic-free routes.

Bus

2.2.3 SWestrans is responsible for providing subsidies to support socially necessary bus services in Dumfries and Galloway with just under half of services being provided by commercial bus operators and the remainder being subsidised. Furthermore, the Council operates DGC buses under S.46 of the Public Passenger Vehicle Act 1981. It determines the routes, times and vehicles which are also considered as part of the supported bus network. Table 2.1 shows the subsidy spent on supported bus services along with bus vehicle kilometres. There has been a 7% cash decrease in subsidy between 2015/16 to 2020/21, while total bus kilometres have reduced by 16.8%. SWestrans has not had a budget increase during this period. Supported services have seen a larger reduction in bus kilometres (-18.6%) when compared to commercial service (-13.9%). The decline has also been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2.4 However, although not shown in the table, there was still a decline in bus usage pre-pandemic, albeit at a slower pace. For commercially run services, their viability is only achievable if passenger numbers are maintained. As such, the bus network across the region is very fragile and even minor changes which have the potential to impact on costs, available funding or affect patronage, can have major consequences for the viability of services. Declining services also have potentially significant equalities implications for people with protected characteristics and groups with socio-economic disadvantage.

Table 2.1 Subsidy Spent on Supported Bus Services and Bus Vehicle KM Per Annum

	2015/16	2016 / 17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Subsidy spent (£'000)[2]	£3,736	£3,531	£3,400	£3,395	£3,400	£3,472
Change in subsidy spent compared to previous year		-5.5%	-3.7%	-0.1%	+0.1%	+2.1%
Commercial Vehicle KM	3,709,195	3,668,843	3,762,063	3,757,383	3,619,269	3,192,425
Change in commercial vehicle km compared to previous year		-1.1%	+2.5%	-0.1%	-3.7%	-11.8%
Supported Vehicle KM	5,372,340	4,855,325	5,167,167	5,004,795	5,091,427	4,371,526
Change in supported vehicle km compared to previous year		-9.6%	6.4%	-3.1%	1.7%	-14.1%
Total Vehicle KM	9,091,535	8,524,168	8,929,230	8,762,178	8,710,696	7,563,951
Change in total vehicle km compared to previous year		-6.2%	4.7%	-1.9%	-0.6%	-13.1%
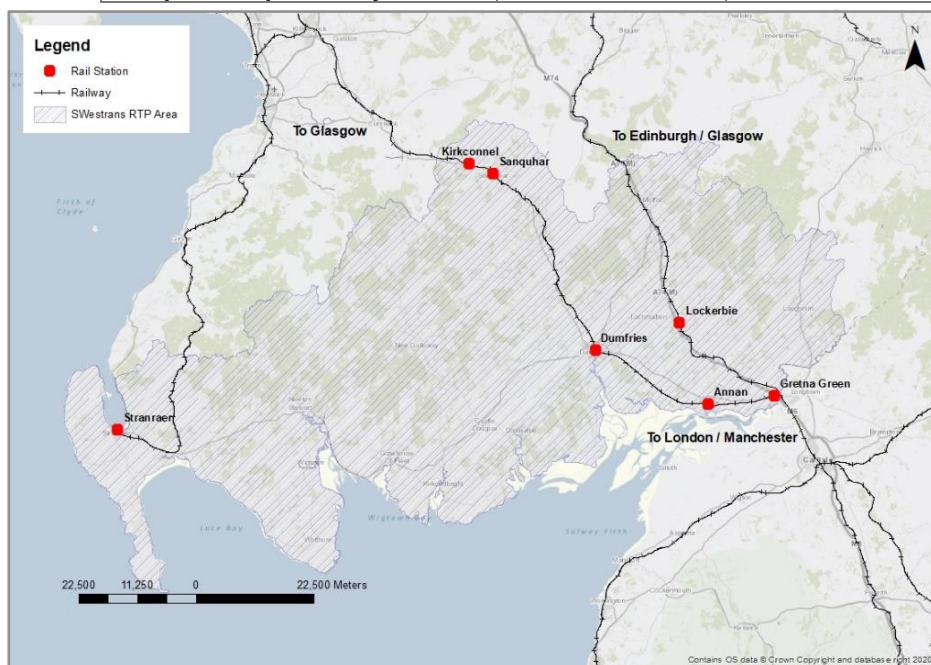
Figure 2.2 Rail Network in SWestrans Region

Rail

2.2.5   The railway lines and stations serving South West Scotland, as shown in Figure 2.2, are:

- **Glasgow & South West Line (GSWL)**
  – Glasgow to Stranraer
  – Glasgow to Carlisle / Newcastle via Dumfries
- **West Coast Mainline (WCML)**
  – London / Birmingham to Glasgow / Edinburgh

2.2.6   The services from the majority of the stations are better to Carlisle than to Glasgow, Edinburgh and the rest of Scotland. Lockerbie is the exception, with a two hourly service to both Edinburgh and Glasgow. This has made it an important hub for northwards travel and has a large catchment area.

2.2.7   Stranraer is not well connected by rail, with only one train per day travelling directly to Glasgow, with the remaining three terminating at Kilmarnock. On Sundays, there are more services but only to Ayr.

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[2] Note that figures are nominal values so not adjusted for inflation

2.2.8   Most smaller stations see high levels of access by walking, suggesting mainly local catchments. However, Dumfries and Lockerbie have high levels of driving to the station suggesting they serve wider catchment areas.

2.2.9   Demand at all stations has been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic with the largest declines between 2019/20 and 2020/21 being 94% at Kirkconnel and 93% at Sanquhar.

Ferry

2.2.10   The region is also home to Scotland's only Irish Sea Ro-Ro (Roll-on Roll-off) ferry routes which operate out of the ports of Loch Ryan and Cairnryan.

2.2.11   P&O Ferries operates between Cairnryan Port and Larne (around 20 miles north of Belfast) with a crossing time of around two hours. There are six departures from Cairnryan per weekday with five on a Saturday, and four departures on a Sunday.

2.2.12   Stena Line operates between Loch Ryan Port and Belfast with a crossing time of around 2 hours 15 minutes. There are six departures from Loch Ryan with five departures on a Sunday and Monday. In 2011, Stena Line moved from Stranraer to a new site on Loch Ryan, roughly 1.5 miles north of the Cairnryan Port where P&O ferry services are based. The site of the previous terminal in Stranraer remains derelict and this is also the site of Stranraer railway station.

2.2.13   These services provided by P&O and Stena Line are wholly commercial and generate a significant amount of traffic to and from the ports. Approximately £26 million worth of goods per day is estimated to use the A75 East of Dumfries, £20 million on the A75 West of Dumfries with approximately £10 million moving on the A77 south of Ayr much of which is linked to the ports. As well as a source of local employment, the future viability and success of these ferry routes is of key importance to Scotland as a society and an economy. The transport links to the ports have a key role to play in supporting the competitive position of South West Scotland's ferry ports in relation to other ports offering Irish Sea services. As such,

the area around the ports is subject to proposals to create an enterprise area which would involve streamlining planning processes, non-domestic rates relief and support from Skills Development Scotland in order to encourage more economic development.

Strategic Road Network

2.2.14   The trunk roads within the SWestrans area include the A74(M), A75, A77, A76, A7 and A701. In addition, the A709 is a key route which, while not a trunk road, is one of the busiest routes in the network as it is the primary link between Dumfries and Lockerbie whilst also providing access to the A74(M).

2.2.15   There is significant car and HGV demand on the A75 and A77 linked to the ports at Cairnryan and Loch Ryan. Neither of these routes are dual carriageway and as a result both have relatively low average speeds with long and unreliable journey times due in part to the reduced speed and platooning of HGVs (the latter a particular factor when ferries dock). In addition, the A75 passes through the two communities of Crocketford and Springholm negatively impacting on them and extending journey times.
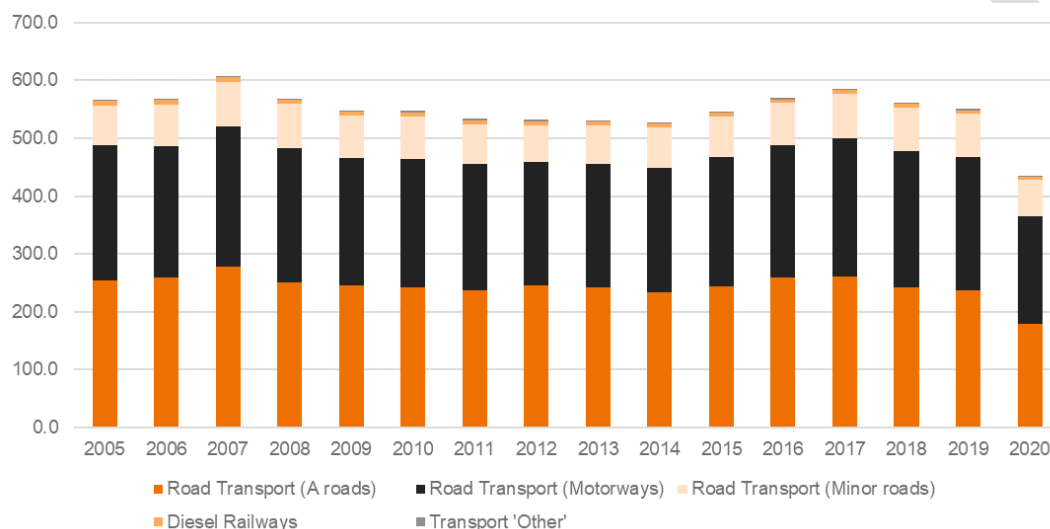
2.2.16   The A76 is a single carriageway road running between Dumfries and Kilmarnock. It is mainly rural in nature and passes through numerous settlements including Closeburn, Thornhill, Carronbridge, Mennock, Sanquhar and Kirkconnel.

2.2.17   The A7 is a single carriageway road as well which runs between Carlisle and Edinburgh. It is also mainly rural in nature and passes through Langholm.

2.2.18   These all have implications for transport emissions as shown in Figure 2.3. Road transport is responsible for the majority of transport emissions in the region. Whilst there has been no definitive trend between 2005 and 2019 it is noticeable that emissions declined in 2020 as a result of the pandemic.

Figure 2.3 Transport Greenhouse Gas Emissions Estimates in Dumfries and Galloway (kt CO₂e)

2.2.19   A shift to Electric Vehicles (EV) will be critical to reducing road related emissions which will depend on provision of adequate charging infrastructure. In Dumfries and Galloway there are currently 76.2 EV charging devices per 100,000 people according to the DfT. The number of chargers ultimately required is very uncertain at this stage. However, the DfT expects there to be around 300,000 public charge points as a minimum by 2030[3], which would equate to around 450 per

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[3] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065576/taking-charge-the-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy.pdf

100,000 population. The DfT suggests that this number could more than double though. This implies an almost sixfold increase in provision in the region over the next eight years.

Car Ownership

2.2.20 Car ownership in the SWestrans region is towards the higher end when compared against the six other Regional Transport Partnerships in Scotland as illustrated in Figure 2.4. In particular, the area has the joint highest level of three or more car households. Nonetheless, there are still just under a quarter of households (24%) in South West Scotland without access to a car at all highlighting the importance that active travel and public transport play in the region and the equalities issues associated with a lack of rural accessibility for many.

2.3   Land-use

2.3.1 The land-use planning context in the region is influenced by national, regional and local policy. The Scottish Government is currently in the process of finalising the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) which will set out a plan for Scotland for 2050.

Figure 2.4 Car Ownership by Regional Transport Partnership 2019

2.3.2 The draft NPF4 identified a number of 'National Developments' which included the Chapelcross Power Station Redevelopment and Stranraer Gateway.

2.3.3 The Chapelcross development supports the reuse of a significant area of brownfield land in a rural area with economically fragile communities. It will also support the just transition to net zero. NPF4 states 'sustainable access to the site for workers and commercial vehicles will be required'.

2.3.4 At Stranraer, NPF4 seeks to support its regeneration and role as a gateway town. In particular it highlights that relevant 'National Developments' may include sustainable road, rail and freight infrastructure for access to Stranraer and/or Cairnryan as well as new and/or upgraded infrastructure for transportation and use of low carbon fuels.
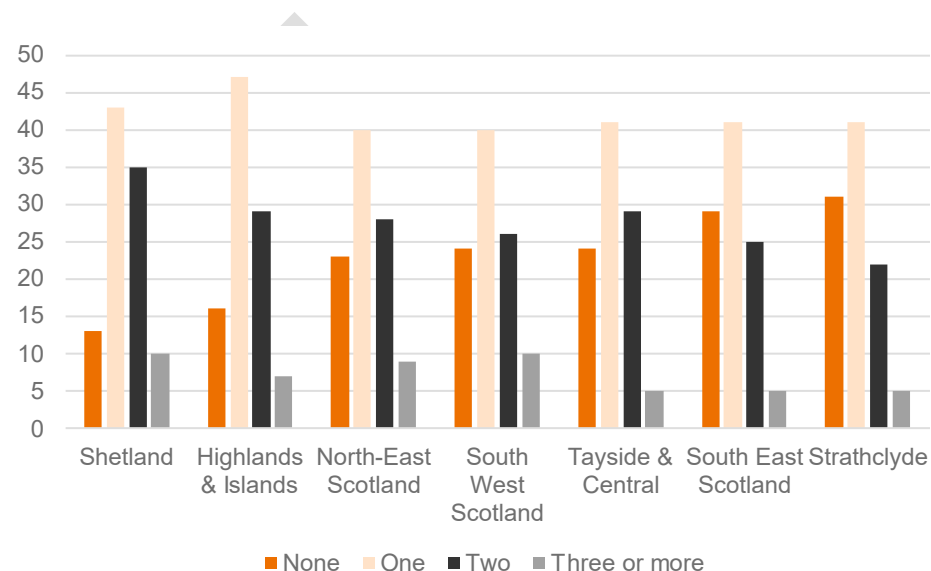
Strategic Development Projects

Climate Change
- Chapelcross Green Energy Park
- Flood Schemes

Economy
- Stranraer Gateway Project
- Strategic Growth Corridors and Freeport
- Development of Business Parks
- Inclusive Economy Development Zones
- Strategic Growth Corridors Along Existing and Extended Railway Routes
- Tweedbank Expansion
- Dairy Innovation Centre, Dumfries
- Great Tapestry of Scotland, Galashiels
- Crichton Quarter, Dumfries

People
- Mountain Biking Innovation Centre, Innerleithen
- South West Coastal Path Project
- South of Scotland Coast to Coast Cycle Route

Connectivity
- Transport Improvements – A75(T) & A77(T)
- Transport Improvements - A76(T)
- Dualling the A1(T)
- A7(T) Selkirk By-Pass
- Road Enhancements Between Dumfries and the A74(M)
- Improvements to the Local Road Network between Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders
- New Peebles Bridge
- Rail Improvements - Glasgow South Western Line and New Stations
- Rail Improvements – Stranraer/Cairnryan Rail Line and New Stations
- Rail Improvements - West Coast Rail Line and New Rail Station at Beattock
- Extension of Borders Railway to Carlisle New Railway Station at Reston
- New Rail Links Between the Glasgow South Western Line and the West Coast Main line and Between Dumfries and Stranraer

Figure 2.5 South of Scotland Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy

2.3.5 At the regional level, planning authorities are subject to a new duty to produce a Regional Spatial Strategy which overarches the local authority specific Local Development Plans. The Indicative Regional Spatial Strategies (iRSS) have been used to inform the development of the NPF4. Through the development of both the RTS and iRSS, it is imperative that there is closer integration between land-use and transport planning in the region. It is important to understand where growth opportunities will be created and how these can be delivered in a manner that ensures sustainability and inclusivity through equitable access. In addition, there is a need to join up the delivery plans and priorities for transport to support ongoing development. A finalised Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy has been prepared for South of Scotland region, which covers the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway. An overview of the strategy is displayed in Figure 2.5.

2.3.6 The iRSS includes a broad range of interventions to tackle high car usage and to capitalise on the connectivity opportunities High Speed 2 (HS2) will bring to the region in the longer term. Firstly, to improve connectivity there are planned improvements to the internal and external road, rail, bus and active travel network. These improvements include the creation of sustainable transport hubs on strategic routes (at Dumfries, Lockerbie, Castle Douglas, Newton Stewart and Stranraer) and improved railway infrastructure (i.e., new stations and improved rail access to the proposed HS2 rail hub at Carlisle and future rail links).

2.3.7   South West Scotland was also the focus of a number of proposed interventions identified through the draft Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2) which sets out priorities for transport investment by Scottish Ministers to 2042. Key interventions for the region include:

- **18. Supporting integrated journeys at ferry terminals:** improving the connections at ferry terminals to other types of public transport
- **23. Smart, integrated public transport ticketing:** simplifying how people book and pay for tickets with different providers
- **40. Access to Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan:** safety, resilience and reliability improvements on the A75 and A77 strategic road corridors. Consideration would also be given to upgrading or relocating the railway station in Stranraer

- **44. Rail freight terminals and facilities:** provision of rail freight terminals which is critical to achieving a significant shift of freight from road to rail
- **45. High speed and cross border rail enhancements:** infrastructure upgrades to permit higher speeds on cross-border routes

2.3.8   The RTS has been developed during a period of significant change in national and regional policy. Nationally, proposals emerging from STPR2 and NPF4 will fundamentally impact upon land-use and transport with particular implications for South West Scotland. At the regional level, the iRSS will redefine the spatial landscape of the SWestrans area. This strategy has been developed within this context and has sought to ensure consistency with the wider land-use framework whilst taking cognisance of the unique socio-economic and transport characteristics of the area.

Transport Problems

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

3 Transport Problems

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The RTS has been developed based on a set of transport problems and issues which have been identified from a range of sources including evidence and analysis from Transport Scotland's South West Study Report published in January 2020, a review of policy documentation, stakeholder and public engagement, Strategic Environmental Assessment and Equalities Impact Assessment. It primarily focuses on a definition of a transport problem as being *a problem experienced by a user, or potential user of the transport network* (although problems *caused by* the transport system are also considered). These transport problems can be thought of as one or more of:

- Something that **negatively affects a journey which is still made** (people and freight) by that mode of travel – in the main this makes a journey less efficient, more expensive or less comfortable
- Something that **stops people or goods travelling by more sustainable modes** – this primarily leads to more car use
- Something that **stops people making the journeys they'd like to make, or goods being moved** – impacting on peoples' life chances & wellbeing and business opportunities

3.1.2 From a user perspective, these transport problems will impact on individuals and groups, including those with protected characteristics, but are likely to be related to a relatively small number of parameters which define any travel such as:

- Cost of travel (especially relative to disposable income)
- Lack of public transport connectivity
- Personal security / safety
- Physical accessibility of services for those less mobile or with a disability

- Punctuality of travel (public transport punctuality / congestion making road-based journey times unreliable)
- Quality and comfort of journey
- Reliability of travel (cancellation of public transport services)
- Requirement for excessive interchange
- Travel time (relative to other modes)

3.1.3 As shown in the Problems Framework illustrated in Figure 3.1 these transport problems as experienced by the user:

- Can usually be traced back to a root cause, associated with the transport supply-side which in turn informs the identification of Transport Planning Objectives and options
- Can have a travel choice consequence, e.g., use of less sustainable modes, journeys not being made
- Have a wider societal consequence arising from these travel choices, e.g., economic (e.g., wasted time), environmental (e.g., emissions), health & wellbeing (e.g., reduced levels of walking and cycling), social (e.g., exclusion from employment, education and social opportunities)
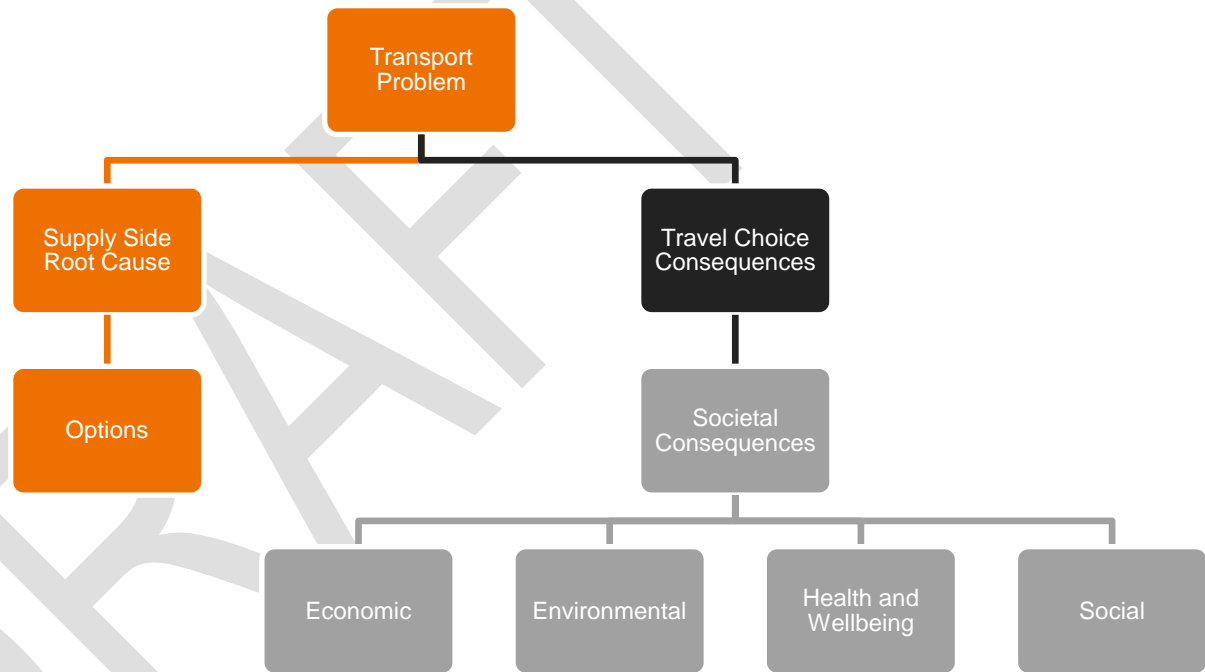

Figure 3.1 Problems Framework

3.2 Identifying Transport Problems

3.2.1 This framework was subsequently used as the basis for setting out the transport problems in the SWestrans region. The transport problems were broken down into categories which broadly align with the National Transport Strategy's sustainable travel hierarchy and are outlined in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Transport Problems

Problem Theme	Transport Problem
Walking And Wheeling	
Integration	Walking and wheeling links to my local bus stops / train stations are poor
Journey quality	I don't think my local environment is suitable for walking and wheeling
Journey times	Walking takes too long
Lack of awareness of travel options	I do not know where walking routes are / do not feel confident using them
Personal accessibility	Walking is not a realistic option for me because of a disability
Personal security	I sometimes don't think it's secure enough for me to walk
Travel safety	I sometimes don't think it's safe enough for me to walk
Cycling	
Cost of travel and affordability	I can't afford to own / maintain / use a bike
Integration of travel	Cycling links to my local train station are poor
	I can't use my bike to take the bus
	I can't always take my bike on the train
	Cycle parking options at the stations I use are poor
Journey quality	I don't think my local environment is suitable for cycling
	There is nowhere for me to securely park a bicycle
	I don't like cycling up hills
	I need to be presentable at work
Journey times	Journey times by bike are too long
Lack of awareness of travel options	I am not aware of cycling opportunities in Dumfries and Galloway
Personal Accessibility	I cannot use a standard bicycle due to disability
Personal security	I don't think it's secure enough for me to travel by bike
Travel safety	I don't think it's safe enough for me to travel by bike
Bus	
Concern over environmental impact of travel	I am concerned about the environmental impact of travelling by bus
Cost of travel and affordability	I can't afford to travel regularly by bus
	Travelling by bus uses a high proportion of my disposable income

Problem Theme	Transport Problem
Integration of travel between modes	I cannot realistically take a bus to catch the train
	I have to buy two tickets to travel by bus and rail
	Integration between my local bus and train services is poor
	Integration between buses and ferries at Cairnryan is poor
	Switching between modes is difficult for me due to disability
Journey information	I do not know if my bus is going to be on time
Journey quality	I am exposed to weather at bus stops
	Travelling by bus does not feel like a high-quality experience
Journey times	It takes a long time to travel by bus, particularly compared to travel by car
	I have to change buses or between bus and train which makes my journey long
Journey time reliability	Journey times by bus are not reliable
	The bus is sometimes late to arrive, and I have a longer wait at the stop
Lack of awareness of travel options	I am not aware of the bus services available
Personal Accessibility	I find it difficult to, or am unable to travel on the bus due to a disability
Personal security	I do not feel secure travelling on the bus
	I do not feel secure waiting at bus stops
Travel safety	The walking route to my bus stop does not feel safe
Comfort	I do not find bus travel comfortable
Connectivity and network coverage	There are no bus services where I live
	There are bus services but they do not go where I want to go
Integration between services	I have to change buses to get where I want to go
	I have to buy two tickets to travel by different bus operators
	Integration between my local and long-distance bus is poor
Service reliability	The bus sometimes does not show up
	The school bus sometimes doesn't show up
Timetables	The bus service is not frequent enough
	There is no bus at the time I want to travel
	I can't travel by bus for a regular working day

Problem Theme	Transport Problem
	I can't get to early morning appointments / shift work or attend late night social events / shift work by bus
	I cannot travel by bus on a Sunday
Train	
Concern over environmental impact of travel	I am concerned about environmental impacts when I travel by train
Cost of travel and affordability	I can't afford to travel regularly by train
	Travelling by train uses a high proportion of my disposable income
Journey quality	Travelling by train does not feel like a high-quality experience
	My local station has poor facilities
Journey times	I find journey times by train across the region to be too long with the exception of services from Lockerbie
	I have to change trains or between train and bus which makes my journey long
Journey time reliability	Journey times by train are not reliable
	The train sometimes leaves and arrives late
Personal Accessibility	I find it difficult to, or am unable to travel by train due to a disability
Personal security	I do not feel secure travelling by train
	I do not feel secure at railway stations
Comfort	I don't find train travel comfortable
Connectivity and network coverage	There are no railway stations near where I live
	There are train services, but they do not go where I want to go
Service reliability	The train is sometimes cancelled
Timetables	The train service is not frequent enough
	I can't travel by train for a regular working day
	I can't get to early morning appointments / shift work or attend late night social events / shift work by train
	I cannot travel by train on a Sunday
Other Road-Based Travel	
Concern over environmental impact of travel	I am concerned about the environmental impact when I travel by car or taxi
	I am concerned about environmental impacts when I move freight by road
Cost of travel and affordability	The cost of driving is too high for me
	I can't afford an electric vehicle

Problem Theme	Transport Problem
	The cost of using a taxi is too high for me
Fuel / power issues	I can't charge an electric vehicle
	I have no alternative but to use petrol / diesel vehicles
Integration of travel between modes	I cannot park easily and regularly at the stations I want to use
	It is not convenient to switch freight between road and rail
Journey information	I do not know if there are incidents on the road when I set off
Journey quality	I can't park where I want to park
	I find the quality of the road surfaces poor
	I do not think there are enough rest areas on the roads I use
Journey times	Journey times by road are long across the region with low average speeds
Journey time reliability	Journey times by road are variable even when there are no incidents
	Journey times by road can be longer when there is an incident / road works that require a diversion
Personal accessibility	I am unable to access taxi services due to disability
Personal security	I don't feel secure travelling by taxi
Travel safety	I am concerned about the risk of road accidents
	I find driving on the region's roads intimidating
Connectivity and network coverage	There is a lack of taxis where I live / want to travel
Non-User Problems	
-	The operation and development of the region's transport networks impacts or may impact on biodiversity, geodiversity, flora & fauna, soil, water, cultural heritage, and landscape
-	Traffic is a blight on my home / work / local community
-	Development patterns can lead to car dependency
-	People may feel they cannot rely on my local bus service in the long term

These transport problems were then used as the foundation for the development of Strategy Objectives and for a series of RTS Themes that provide the structure of the strategy. These RTS Themes were also used for the purposes of option development and appraisal to ensure that these processes were closely related to the strategy itself.

Vision & Strategy Objectives

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

4 Vision & Strategy Objectives

4.1 Vision

4.1.1 The Regional Transport Strategy vision outlines what type of region we want Dumfries and Galloway to be along with how transport can help to facilitate that. It draws upon national, regional and local policy aspirations. It also provides an overarching context for the strategy objectives.

> The South-West of Scotland will be an inclusive, prosperous and attractive place to live, work and visit supported by an integrated and sustainable transport system that is safe, affordable and accessible to all, resilient to climate change, allowing healthier lifestyles and supporting a contribution to net zero emissions targets reflecting the regional circumstances.

4.2 Strategy Objectives

Strategy Objective 1 – To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs

4.2.1 This strategy objective encompasses **sub-objectives** covering:

- Improvements to the physical environment for active travel for all groups
- New connections, improved, safer and better maintained routes between settlements and linking transport hubs and communities
- Promotion of walking, wheeling and cycling for travel and leisure
- Wider access to bicycles and potentially micro-mobility

4.2.2 Meeting this Strategy Objective would lead to the following main **societal outcomes**:

- Improved public health due to increased levels of physical activity
- People taking advantage of new employment / training, educational and social / leisure opportunities provided by improved connectivity
- Reductions in car travel as people switch from car to active travel, reducing emissions (carbon and pollutants), reducing noise etc.
- Additional walking and cycle-based tourism
- Support to delivery of 20-minute neighbourhoods

Strategy Objective 2 – To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region

4.2.3 This strategy objective encompasses **sub-objectives** covering:

- Quality (actual and perceived), accessibility and comfort of vehicles
- Information provided to passengers
- Punctuality and reliability of services
- Facilities at halts and stations and passenger access for all groups
- The sustainability of the services in terms of human resources and financial support

4.2.4 Meeting this Strategy Objective would lead to the following main **societal outcomes**:

- People making long-term decisions around public transport usage reflecting a greater confidence in the permanence and reliability of the services

- Reductions in car travel as people switch from car to the higher quality public transport, reducing emissions (carbon and pollutants), reducing noise etc.

Strategy Objective 3 – To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region
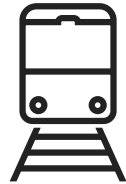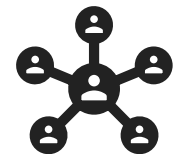
4.2.5   This strategy objective encompasses **sub-objectives** covering:

- Barriers to the use of public transport such as cost, physical access, personal security fears, safe access etc.
- Coverage of bus and rail services and infrastructure across the area
- Times of first and last services / days of the week operated
- Service frequencies
- Shorter, more reliable journey times
- Inclusive growth, access to education and employment as well as facilitating economic development

4.2.6   Meeting this Strategy Objective would lead to the following main **societal outcomes**:

- New travel opportunities for those without access to a car, those who would prefer not to use a car, or those that have been affected by barriers which have prevented them using public transport in full or in part
- Improved health and wellbeing
- Increased tourism
- People taking advantage of new employment / training, educational and social / leisure opportunities provided by improved connectivity
- Reductions in car travel as people switch from car to public transport, reducing emissions (carbon and pollutants), reducing noise etc.

Strategy Objective 4 – To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region

4.2.7   This strategy objective encompasses **sub-objectives** covering:

- Timetable integration between buses, and buses and trains
- Information provided to the public, planning and real time
- Ticketing arrangements and cost implications
- Bike / bus and bike / train travel

- Accessibility for all users to both transport infrastructure and vehicles
- Parking at stations
- Intermodal freight

4.2.8 Meeting this Strategy Objective would lead to the following main **societal outcomes**:

- New and improved travel opportunities for those without access to a car, those who would prefer not to use a car, or those that have been affected by barriers which have prevented them using public transport in full or in part
- People taking advantage of new employment / training, educational and social / leisure opportunities provided by improved connectivity
- Reductions in car travel as people switch from car to public transport in full or in part, improving air quality, reducing noise etc.

Strategy Objective 5 – To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan

4.2.9 This strategy objective encompasses **sub-objectives** covering:

- Journey times
- Journey time reliability
- Network resilience to extreme weather / climate change adaptation and diversionary routes
- Road safety and perceptions of safety for all users
- Rest areas and secure parking for freight

4.2.10 Meeting this Strategy Objective would lead to the following main **societal outcomes**:

- Inclusive growth and facilitating economic development (including Cairnryan , Chapelcross etc.)
- Labour market efficiencies
- Supply chain efficiencies – Cairnryan and other traffic
- Will address perceptions of peripherality which will boost tourism, business investment and in-migration

- Reduced personal injury accidents (number and severity)

Strategy Objective 6 – To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region

4.2.11 This strategy objective encompasses **sub-objectives** covering:

- Decarbonisation of the transport system
- Traffic reduction
- Reduced effect on communities affected by through traffic
- The delivery of transport projects in a more sustainable way in terms of the physical environment
- Protect and enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services

4.2.12 Meeting this Strategy Objective would lead to the following main **societal outcomes**:

- Reduced carbon emissions and other atmospheric and non-atmospheric pollutants
- Reduced noise and vibration in affected communities
- Improved human health and wellbeing for all groups and ages
- Improved road safety
- A sustainable transport system interconnected with a resilient and diverse natural environment
- Reductions in car travel as people switch from a car to active travel, reducing emissions (carbon and pollutants), reducing noise etc.

4.3 Links to National Policy

4.3.1 It is essential that the Strategy Objectives are aligned with the national policy context. Table 4.1 below maps the Strategy Objectives to the four National Transport Strategy 'Priorities' and highlights a close correlation between them.

Table 4.1 Mapping of Strategy Objectives to NTS priorities

RTS Objective	NTS2 Priorities			
	Reduces inequalities	Takes climate action	Helps deliver inclusive economic growth	Improves our health and wellbeing
To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and transport hubs	✓	✓	✓	✓

RTS Objective	NTS2 Priorities			
	Reduces inequalities	Takes climate action	Helps deliver inclusive economic growth	Improves our health and wellbeing
To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport across the region	✓	✓	✓	✓
To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport across the area	✓	✓	✓	✓
To improve integration between all modes of travel and transport in the region	✓	✓	✓	
To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity within the region, and to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan			✓	✓
To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region	✓	✓		✓

4.4   RTS Themes

4.4.1   Drawing upon the Strategy Objectives a series of RTS Themes have been identified which ultimately form the foundation of the RTS by providing the outline of its structure. These are also closely related to the identified problems set out in Chapter 3. The defined RTS themes are:

- **1 - Enabling More Sustainable Development:** integrating land-use and transport planning, enabling access to developments for all groups by sustainable modes of transport, reducing the need to travel and facilitating an 'infrastructure first' approach to development
- **2 - Connecting Our Communities:** facilitating walking, wheeling and cycling within villages and towns as well as providing active travel connections between them and to regional centres
- **3 - Transforming Travel in Our Towns:** improving the public realm by reducing car dominance and delivering roadspace reallocation to prioritise buses and active travel
- **4 - Reducing the Impact of Transport on Our Communities:** eliminating the negative impacts of through traffic on local settlements and supporting decarbonisation
- **5 - Enhancing Access to Transport Services:** providing safe and equal access to transport for all including vulnerable and minority groups by removing physical and non-physical barriers
- **6 - Sustainable and Extended Local and Regional Public Transport Connectivity:** extending the number of services and stops / stations on the public transport network

4.4.2   The key linkages between each of the RTS Themes and the Strategy Objectives are illustrated in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2 Mapping of RTS Themes to Strategy Objectives

RTS Theme	To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs	To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region	To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region	To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region	To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan	To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region
1 Enabling More Sustainable Development	✓			✓		✓
2 Connecting Our Communities	✓			✓		
3 Transforming Travel in Our Towns	✓	✓			✓	
4 Reducing the Impact of Transport on Our Communities	✓				✓	✓
5 Enhancing Access to Transport Services	✓		✓	✓		
6 Sustainable and Extended Local and Regional Public Transport Connectivity		✓	✓			

RTS Theme	To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs	To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region	To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region	To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region	To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan	To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region
7 Improving the Quality and Affordability of Our Public Transport Offer		✓	✓			
8 Supporting Safe, Effective and Resilient Connections to Strategic Sites and Locations				✓	✓	
9 Managing Our Car Traffic	✓	✓	✓			✓
10 Making the Most of New Opportunities		✓	✓	✓		✓

4.4.3 These themes have therefore been used to structure the remainder of the RTS and were also used for the purposes of the options appraisal. This provides a clear linkage between the options appraisal process and strategy itself.

Enabling More Sustainable Development

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

5 Enabling More Sustainable Development

5.1 Context

5.1.1 Integrating land-use and transport planning is essential to ensure that people can access employment, education, healthcare and other essential services in a sustainable manner. In an area like Dumfries and Galloway, with a dispersed population and service centres, facilitating sustainable access to developments can present additional challenges. Enabling people to choose sustainable travel options for their journeys therefore depends upon two key factors:

- Provision of more sustainable transport and ancillary facilities (e.g. showers, changing areas, etc.) in new developments
- Provision of more sustainable transport and ancillary facilities (e.g. showers, changing areas, etc.) in existing developments

5.1.2 Firstly, this focuses on ensuring that new development is located near to existing services to reduce the need to travel. All new developments should then be constructed in a manner that enables it to be served by more sustainable transport and prevents car dependency from becoming entrenched. This can be achieved by situating developments close to existing or proposed active travel and public transport networks. In addition, the planning process can be used to deliver sustainable transport measures to support new developments through mechanisms such as Section 75 agreements. These might not just be limited to transport infrastructure and could include contributions to supporting new bus services or ancillary on-site facilities such as showers and changing areas to enable people to get ready for work after walking, wheeling or cycling to the development.

5.1.3 It would also incorporate the '20-minute neighbourhood' model which allows people to live, work and learn within 20 minutes of their home using active and public transport modes. This is consistent with living well locally and by designing with this concept in mind, planning focuses on walking, cycling and wheeling rather than car-travel, helping to align spatial planning and transport planning at a local scale. This approach to land-use and transport planning also helps to reduce the need to travel by enabling people to fulfil their needs locally which contributes to reductions in emissions.

5.1.4 Finally, this approach seeks to mitigate and, if possible, eliminate the environmental impacts of any infrastructure projects (e.g., embodied carbon) to reduce environmental impacts of both transport and development.

5.1.5 These concepts should be applied to the major developments proposed for the region as outlined in the Interim Regional Spatial Strategy prepared for the South of Scotland region, which covers the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway. This is illustrated in Figure 2.5. A key consideration will be the National Development sites at the former Chapelcross Power Station and Stranraer Gateway as identified in the Draft National Planning Framework 4. It will be essential that these are taken forward in tandem with sustainable transport solutions. In particular, these, and other major development sites, should apply an 'infrastructure first' approach that considers the infrastructure needs of development at the outset, makes better use of existing assets first and foremost as well as prioritising low-carbon infrastructure required to support the transition to net zero.

5.1.6 However, some land-use developments have previously been taken forward without giving suitable consideration to how best they can accommodate access by sustainable modes of transport. On this basis, they are often highly dependent on access by car. In these locations it may be necessary to seek to provide new services and infrastructure that make travel by active travel and public transport more viable. This may include working with

existing employers to introduce facilities and measures through workplace Travel Plans. These could be as simple as the provision of on-site changing facilities or may involve measures like secure bike storage.

Case Study: Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary Relocation[4]

In 2018 the new Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary (DGRI) opened on the A75 close to Garroch roundabout in the west of Dumfries. This was following its relocation from Bankend Road in the south of Dumfries. This location was difficult to access due to the nature of the road network in the town and the limited number of crossings over the River Nith which led to traffic being funnelled through the town centre. The relocation has consequently led to reduced congestion in Dumfries town centre as well as improving access to DGRI by both public transport and active travel as well as enhancing access from the west of the region.

5.2   Priorities

i. Sustainably locate new developments to reduce the need to travel first and foremost

ii. Locate new development where it can be easily served by existing active travel and public transport links or, if not possible, by new active travel and public transport links which are accessible to all

iii. Sustainable transport measures and supporting ancillary infrastructure for new developments will be delivered through developer contributions as appropriate

iv. The concept of '20-minute neighbourhoods' will be incorporated into all future development and land-use planning processes

v. Transport interventions should be carefully sited and designed to prevent and minimise negative environmental impacts

vi. New major developments, including those proposed at Chapelcross Power Station and Stranraer Gateway, should apply an 'infrastructure first' approach

vii. At existing developments sustainable transport and ancillary infrastructure measures should be introduced to encourage the uptake of more sustainable transport by coordinated engagement with employers and other large organisations

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[4] Photograph source: File:Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary.jpg - Wikimedia Commons

Connecting Our Communities

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

6 Connecting Our Communities

6.1 Context

6.1.1 Achieving increased walking, wheeling and cycling depends upon ensuring that we have high quality infrastructure that provides safe and attractive routes within our villages and towns, along with low-traffic or traffic free active travel connections between them and to regional centres. High quality routes are continuous and provide attractive, safe and direct connections between multiple locations and which can be accessed by all groups. In addition, they should be physically separated from traffic, with smooth surfacing and appropriate lighting. To facilitate this requires a two-pronged approach which includes:

- Physical incremental improvements to existing active travel routes (including crossings, lighting, surfacing, obstructions, etc.)
- New bespoke routes for walkers, wheelers and cyclists

Stantec SWESTrans

6.1.2   Enhancing existing active travel networks would predominantly involve improvements to make them safer, more attractive, and fully accessible for people to walk, wheel and cycle. These would seek to maximise the quality of existing networks through measures such as:

- Road, cycleway and footway resurfacing
- Introduction of new pedestrian and cyclist crossings
- Upgraded pathways to reflect current accessibility guidance
- Removal of unnecessary street furniture

- Improved CCTV and lighting
- Installation of new or enhanced signs on active travel routes
- Accessibility audits of active travel routes to identify the need for the above measures

6.1.3   Alongside this in some instances there will be a requirement for the creation of new active travel routes both within towns and villages and between them as part of the development of a strategic active travel network for the region. This could entail creating new segregated active travel routes for walking, wheeling and cycling through measures such as converting disused railways for active travel. These would be high quality routes intended to be accessible to all for the purposes of functional active travel journeys as well as recreational and health purposes. Where appropriate they should be consistent with Cycling by Design, Designing Streets and other relevant technical guidance.[5] They would link the key settlements within Dumfries and Galloway along with providing routes within them as well, including filling gaps in existing networks. The initial network would draw upon the emerging Active Travel Strategy 2 being developed for the region and illustrated in Figure 6.1. This will be kept under review along with the Active Travel Strategy 2 itself. Furthermore, the South of Scotland Cycling Strategy, has set out a vision for Dumfries and Galloway and the Scottish Borders to make bike the most popular choice for short everyday journeys over the next 10 years.

6.1.4   Active travel also plays an important role in shaping the public realm by improving the streetscape, contributing to placemaking and making it an attractive place to spend time. This is closely tied into the sustainable development concepts set out in Chapter 5. The application of best practices in street design will help to reduce car dominance and ensure that street furniture is designed taking into consideration the needs of all users including the mobility impaired, blind, deaf, parents with pushchairs, young and elderly, people in wheelchairs and other vulnerable users.

6.1.5   Dumfries and Galloway Council is predominantly responsible for the implementation and maintenance of walking and cycling infrastructure. However, SWestrans has committed to spending at least 50% of its capital budget on active travel, and has also agreed to align both strategy and delivery with Dumfries and Galloway Council. A dedicated Active Travel Team will work on prioritising, designing, and delivering schemes and projects, as well as coordinating with all Dumfries and Galloway Council Services to respond to requests and align efforts towards neighbourhoods that provide the necessary features to support active travel's wider aims in terms of the quality of places, sustainability, and net-zero. This coordination will also help to make the case for joint plans, projects, and respective funding opportunities to deliver broader strategic projects.

6.1.6   In addition to infrastructure measures, there is also a need to raise awareness of existing routes and the benefits of active travel by partnering with schools and other civic groups to encourage participation and facilitate behaviour change. This will require close community engagement as well as campaigns that encourage the use of active travel.

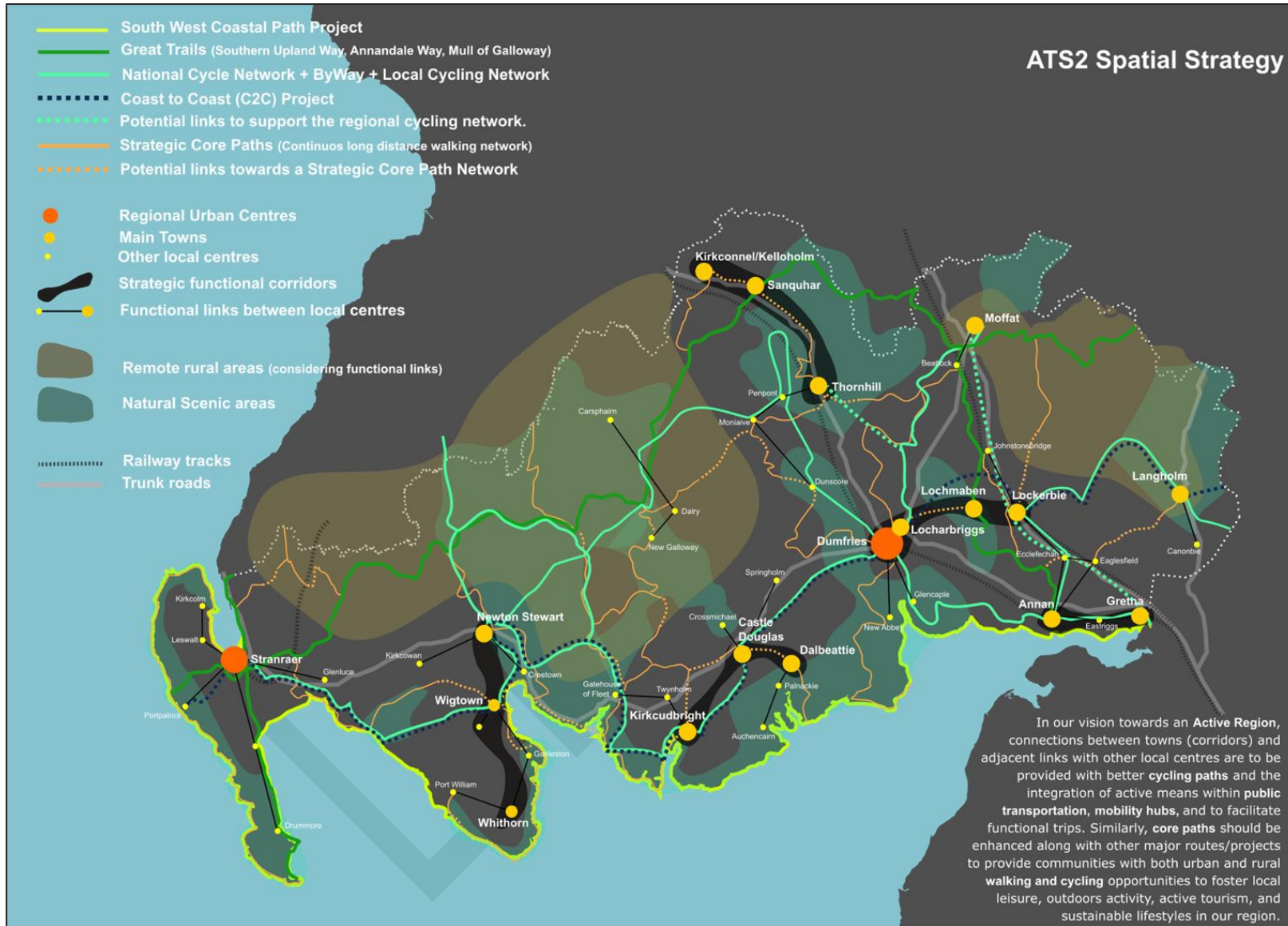[5] Walking and cycling infrastructure design guidance - Sustrans.org.uk

Figure 6.1 Active Travel Spatial Strategy

6.2 Priorities

i. Improvements to the active travel network will be delivered through a combination of incremental improvements to existing routes and new bespoke routes where appropriate

ii. The active travel network will be developed in accordance with Cycling by Design, Designing Streets and other relevant technical guidance

iii. An integrated active travel network linking both within and between our settlements will be developed in line with the Active Travel Spatial Strategy

iv. The Active Travel Strategy 2 will be kept under review and updated on a regular basis to ensure it is being effectively implemented

v. A dedicated Active Travel Team will work on prioritising, designing, and delivering schemes and projects in collaboration with funding partners

vi. Awareness raising to facilitate behaviour change will be delivered through close community engagement and campaigns to encourage the use of active travel

vii. SWestrans will spend at least 50% of its capital budget on active travel

Transforming Travel in Our Towns

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

7 Transforming Travel in Our Towns

7.1 Context

7.1.1 Improving the public realm in our towns by reducing car dominance will require some reallocation of roadspace to prioritise buses and active travel. This will require the reprioritisation of existing road carriageway. In the case of active travel this could entail a range of complementary measures closely linked to those set out in Chapter 6 such as:

- Creation of segregated active travel routes alongside the carriageway within urban areas
- Improved bike lane provision
- Conversion of advisory bike lanes to statutory bike lanes
- Provision of advanced stop lines, protected right turns and cycle priority at junctions and traffic signals
- Reviewing junction geometries to slow turning traffic

7.1.2 Furthermore, in some urban areas bus journey times can often be long, resulting in people choosing to travel by car instead. However, bus priority can speed up these journey times and make them competitive with travelling by car, particularly for shorter journeys. Roadspace reallocation can therefore also be used to deliver faster bus journey times within our towns.

7.1.3 Bus priority measures include priority signalling, dedicated bus only routes, bus advance areas, bus lanes and gates, and bus only corridors. These enhancements would be introduced along existing routes that experience particularly slow journey times including at junctions to increase the efficiency of bus services across the region as well as on new corridors where high quality bus services are required (e.g., as part of a new land-use development).

7.1.4 The principal objective of these interventions would be to reduce car dominance in towns and villages across Dumfries and Galloway and to transform the public realm to make it more people focussed instead. Opportunities for roadspace reallocation in urban areas should therefore be sought and taken forward in accordance with the National Transport Strategy 2's sustainable travel hierarchy. The identification of suitable locations for intervention will require detailed analysis of the performance of the transport network in settlements across Dumfries and Galloway and testing to identify the optimum interventions.

7.2 Priorities

i. Roadspace should be reallocated to prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport particularly within our towns and settlements in order to create a more attractive public realm across Dumfries and Galloway

ii. The National Transport Strategy 2's sustainable travel hierarchy should be applied to reprioritise the road network wherever possible

iii. Detailed analysis should be undertaken to identify suitable locations and interventions for the reallocation of roadspace away from general traffic to active travel and public transport

Reducing the Impact of Transport on Our Communities

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

8   Reducing the Impact of Transport on Our Communities

8.1   Context

8.1.1   Transport has a range of negative impacts which can blight our local communities by generating noise and vibration, bring severance, impacting on air quality as well as affecting safety and the attractiveness of the public realm as a place to spend time. Several of our settlements are located on the strategic road network and suffer from high levels of through traffic as a result. This includes Crocketford and Springholm on the A75, where there are high volumes of HGVs 24 hours per day to / from the ports at Cairnryan, and Kirkconnel, Sanquhar and Thornhill on the A76, Langholm on the A7 and Lochmaben on the A709. These communities would benefit from bypasses which would enable the reallocation of roadspace to more sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport. In addition, bypasses could also benefit other communities on the A75, A76 and A77 including Dumfries. These would be particularly appropriate where high traffic flows and congestion from through-traffic leads to negative impacts. However, it should be noted that Transport Scotland is responsible for maintaining and implementing enhancements to the Trunk Road network and it would have primary responsibility for delivering upgrades to this network.

8.1.2   Whilst these interventions would help to tackle specific problems in these locations wider measures are necessary to facilitate the decarbonisation of the car, taxi and commercial vehicle fleet in order to mitigate their negative environmental impacts across the region. The transport sector, particularly road transport, is a key contributor to carbon emissions and there is a need to reduce these impacts through measures to encourage transition to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) and to reduce the need for car ownership. These could include:

- Additional publicly accessible Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points
- Regional EV carsharing scheme
- Grants / loans to support uptake of EV and Hybrid vehicles
- Supporting the development of renewable fuels at existing petrol stations
- Introduction of Low Emission Zones (LEZs)

8.1.3   Furthermore, commercial vehicles comprise up to 35% of vehicles on strategic roads within Dumfries and Galloway.[6] This represents a significant proportion of road traffic leading to emissions, noise and vibration, and other negative impacts on local communities. Mitigation of these impacts can be achieved by the introduction of measures to encourage modal shift from road freight to more sustainable modes of freight transport and, where this isn't possible, to decarbonise the commercial vehicle fleet. In addition to the measures above these could include:

- New freight hubs on the railway to promote movement of freight by rail
- Implementation of LGV / HGV Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points
- Alternatively, decarbonisation of commercial vehicles may require alternative fuels such as green hydrogen

8.2   Priorities

i.   Investigate the feasibility of bypasses for Crocketford and Springholm on the A75 as well as other communities on the A7, A75, A76, A77 and A709 including Dumfries

ii. Support the decarbonisation of the car, taxi and commercial vehicle fleet through investigation and delivery, as appropriate, of measures such as:

   a.   Electric Vehicle charging points

   b.   Regional Electric Vehicle carsharing

   c.   Grants / loans for Electric / Hybrid vehicles

   d.   Low Emission Zones (LEZs)

   e.   New rail freight hubs

   f.   Alternative fuels e.g. green hydrogen

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[6] Vehicle composition at Roadside Interview Sites, October 2017

Enhancing Access to Transport Services

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

9 Enhancing Access to Transport Services

9.1 Context

9.1.1 Providing equal access to transport for all, including vulnerable and minority groups, requires removing both the physical and non-physical barriers to travel. These barriers can create disadvantage, social exclusion, deprivation and are a major contributor towards transport poverty. Removing these barriers is necessary to enable our residents to access essential services like employment, education, healthcare and retail. These barriers are often most acutely felt by our most vulnerable citizens in particular those with protected characteristics including women, elderly and younger people, ethnic minorities, people with mobility impairments or disabilities as well as those on low incomes.

9.1.2 In some instances, accessing public transport services can be challenging because of physical barriers. In addition, the tasks, and experiences inherent in undertaking independent public transport travel can pose challenges for particular groups in society, such as those with autism and cognitive impairments. This results in people either choosing to travel by car or not making journeys at all which in turn can limit their access to employment, education, social opportunities and other key services. Improving the customer experience for such users through enhanced staff training and the provision of a chaperoning service could enable them to make journeys / more journeys and in doing so help improve both economic and social participation, with resultant health, wellbeing and economic benefits.

9.1.3 When information on transport options is unavailable or is of poor quality, it can also lead to people choosing to take their car or not making journeys. Improving journey planning information therefore needs to be a priority to ensure people are aware of the alternatives available to them. Journey planning information should be available in various formats to meet the needs of differing users. These include online and traditional paper as well as braille, large print, and audio for those with sight difficulties. This needs to be supported by high quality wayfinding information on the network itself, so people do not become lost or confused during their journey. Furthermore, travel information can be improved through measures such as extending staffing hours at stations and staffing stations that are currently unstaffed.

9.1.4 It is also important to ensure that timetable information is up to date and, where possible, that real-time information is provided and accessible. This is particularly beneficial if people are not regular users of public transport as it can be difficult to ascertain when a bus or train is coming or where an interchange can best be made. The provision of real time information both at stops and stations as well as on services themselves can help users to understand the timings of services and to allow for seamless interchanges between them.

9.1.5 It will be particularly important to remove barriers to the use of **active travel** within our towns and settlements to help facilitate a modal shift away from car use. To achieve this will require a range of soft measures in addition to the infrastructure investment outlined in Chapter 6. These include:

- Providing additional active travel information online
- Installation of maps and signs along active travel corridors and within towns
- Public awareness campaigns
- Promoting the economic, health and environmental benefits of active travel

- Publication of maps that display accessible routes

9.1.6 Furthermore, widening the availability of bicycles, particularly e-bikes which make cycling longer distances feasible for more people, will be essential if we are to deliver a step change in sustainable transport usage in Dumfries and Galloway. The cost of purchasing a bicycle can price out those who are socio-economically disadvantaged. Additionally, users who may have an impairment could be priced out of specially adapted bicycles. The provision of grants and loans to support those who wish to purchase a bicycle (including e-bikes) along with the introduction of a regional cycle hire scheme in town centres to provide access to bikes for those that only require them for occasional use could help to reduce the barriers to cycle usage in the region.

9.1.7 Improving access to, from and within our **railway stations** is also a key requirement. Many of the stations within Dumfries and Galloway are not fully accessible, with 66% of the stations only achieving Accessibility Level B, where both platforms may be accessible but the distance or type of access (i.e., stairs) could limit access for some disabled users. The following stations have been classified as Accessibility Level B:

- **Annan:** Level to both platforms and connecting footbridge with stairs between platforms causing access difficulties for people in wheelchairs and parents with pushchairs
- **Dumfries:** Level to both platforms and connecting footbridge with stairs between platforms causing access difficulties for people in wheelchairs and parents with pushchairs
- **Kirkconnel:** Level to platform 1 and connecting footbridge with stairs to platform 2 (see adjacent)
- **Sanquhar:** Ramps to both platforms but no step free access to trains

9.1.8 This can cause users who are unable to access the platforms to travel by car instead. As shown in Figure 9.1, some stations, particularly Dumfries and Lockerbie, have a wide catchment area. In addition, the location of Lockerbie station on the WCML encourages car use due to lower fares and a wide level of connectivity to other cities within the UK.

9.1.9 It is therefore important to encourage increased access to our stations in line with the Scottish Government's sustainable travel hierarchy. There is a need to ensure that access to, from and within all stations is accessible for all users using a combination of the following:

- Provision of high-quality active travel links to stations
- Bus / rail timetable improvements to promote connections and seamless journeys
- Increased bus frequencies on routes that serve stations
- Introducing new bus services to link to stations from high catchment areas
- Installation of ramps and lifts at stations
- Removal of unnecessary street furniture within and on approaches to stations
- Increasing the promotion of integrated ticketing schemes

9.1.10 Finally, the security of taxi users could be improved by undertaking additional background checks on taxi drivers prior to granting their licences.

9.2 Priorities

i. Opportunities to enhance the customer experience when using public transport should be explored, particularly for vulnerable users who may require additional assistance or chaperoning in order to make their journey

ii. The public and active travel networks should provide equal access for all including vulnerable groups such as women, elderly and younger people, ethnic minorities, people with mobility impairments or disabilities as well as those on low incomes

iii. Journey planning information should be available in various formats to meet the needs of differing users including online, traditional paper copies, braille, large print, and audio

iv. Real Time Passenger Information should be made available for all public transport modes at stations, stops and on-board services wherever possible and practical
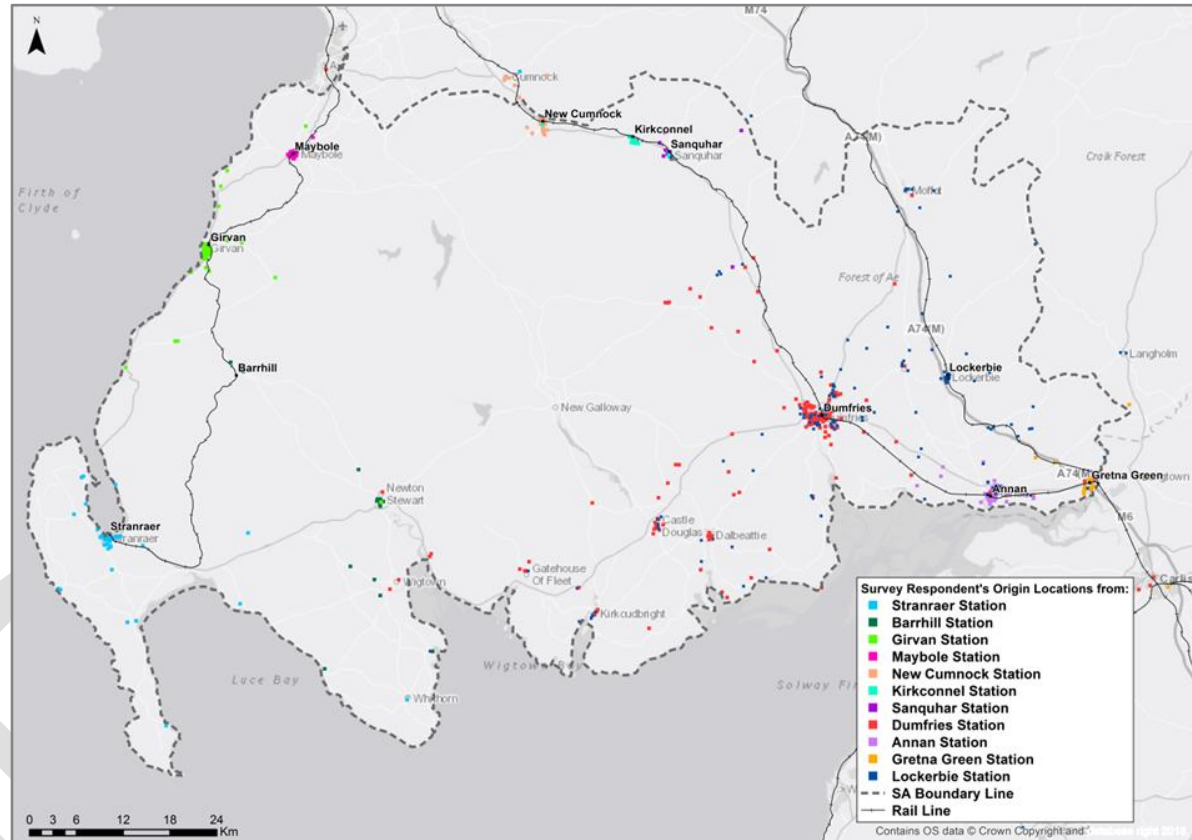

Figure 9.1 Rail Station Catchments in South West Scotland

v. Soft measures should be implemented to encourage the use of active travel through measures such as additional information online and in the form of maps and signs within towns accompanied by public awareness campaigns

vi. Access to bicycles, including e-bikes, should be facilitated through a combination of grants / loans for those that wish to purchase their own and provision of a regional cycle hire scheme for people that only require occasional access to a bike

vii. Improving accessibility to railway stations should be prioritised in Annan, Dumfries, Kirkconnel and Sanquhar where access arrangements could be limited for some disabled users

viii. Measures to encourage access to railway stations in line with the Scottish Government's Sustainable Travel Hierarchy should be taken forward

ix. The security of taxi users should be improved by undertaking additional background checks prior to granting taxi licences

Sustainable and Extended Local and Regional Public Transport Connectivity

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

10 Sustainable and Extended Local and Regional Public Transport Connectivity

10.1 Context

10.1.1 Extending the geographical coverage of services and stops / stations on the public transport network offers the potential to allow people to make new journeys and encourage modal shift to reduce car dependency across the region. Bus services are provided by a mix of commercial routes and supported routes with a significant proportion of bus services being subsidised by SWestrans. On this basis SWestrans has the ability to influence which services operate in the region along with changes to the bus network although these must be delivered through a combination of commercial operators and SWestrans.

Bus Network

10.1.2 The current bus routes and timetables are constrained by the dispersed population and the associated challenges of providing an attractive service that is also deliverable and cost effective. Currently 55% of bus services in Dumfries and Galloway require public subsidy as illustrated in Figure 10.1. All services west of Castle Douglas are therefore supported. As such, there may be opportunities to reconfigure routes and timings of services in some instances to increase usage or deliver better value for the same level of public investment. This could be achieved by reviewing, amending, and rationalising local and express services with the aim of
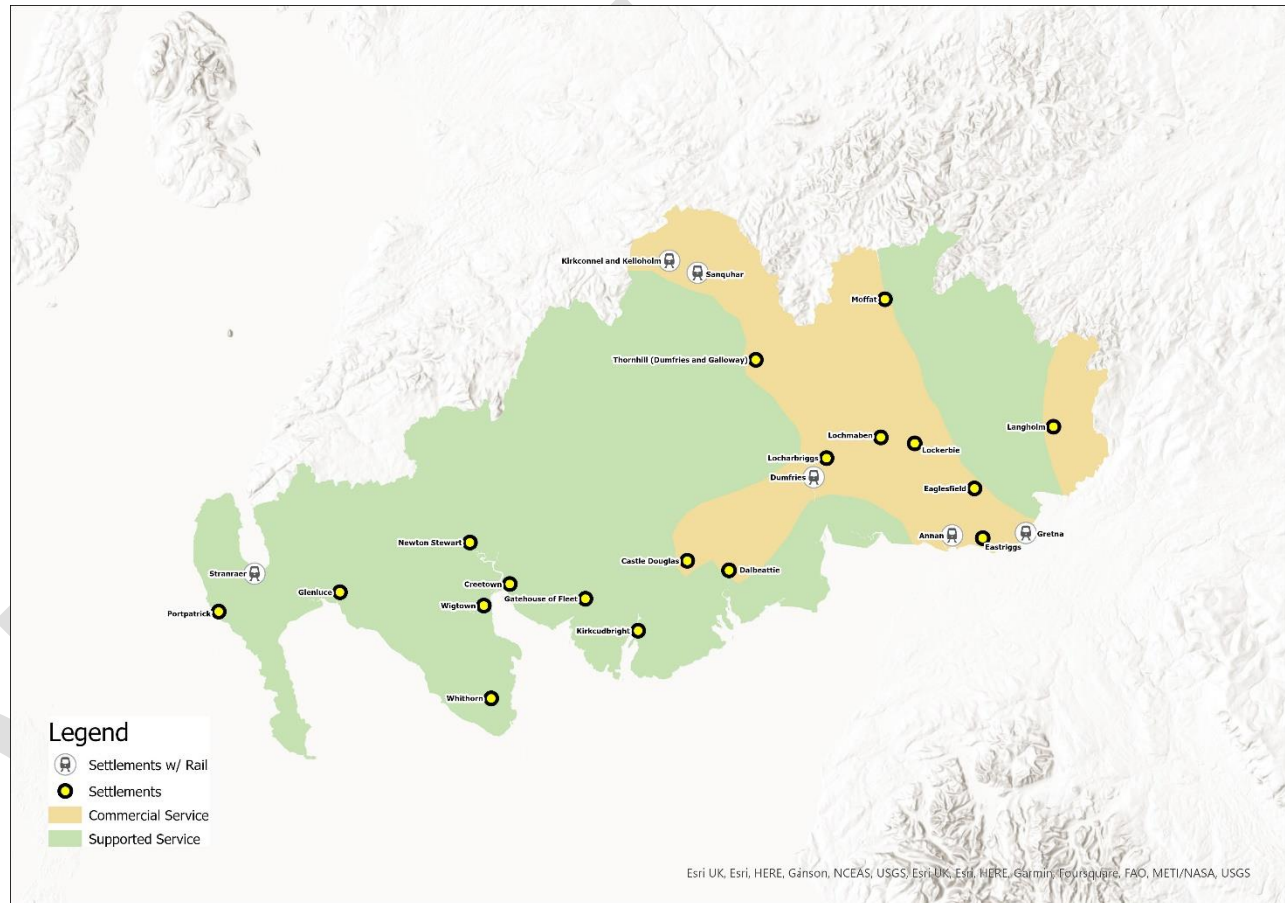

Figure 10.1 Subsidised Bus Network in Dumfries and Galloway

increasing connectivity across the region in a cost-effective manner whilst still ensuring people can access essential services such as healthcare, employment and education. Measures to deliver more efficient and effective subsidised bus services include:

- Rationalised bus services in key corridors
- Amended bus routes to incorporate underserved locations
- Splitting or consolidation of bus routes

- Creating bus route variants
- Increasing Sunday bus route coverage
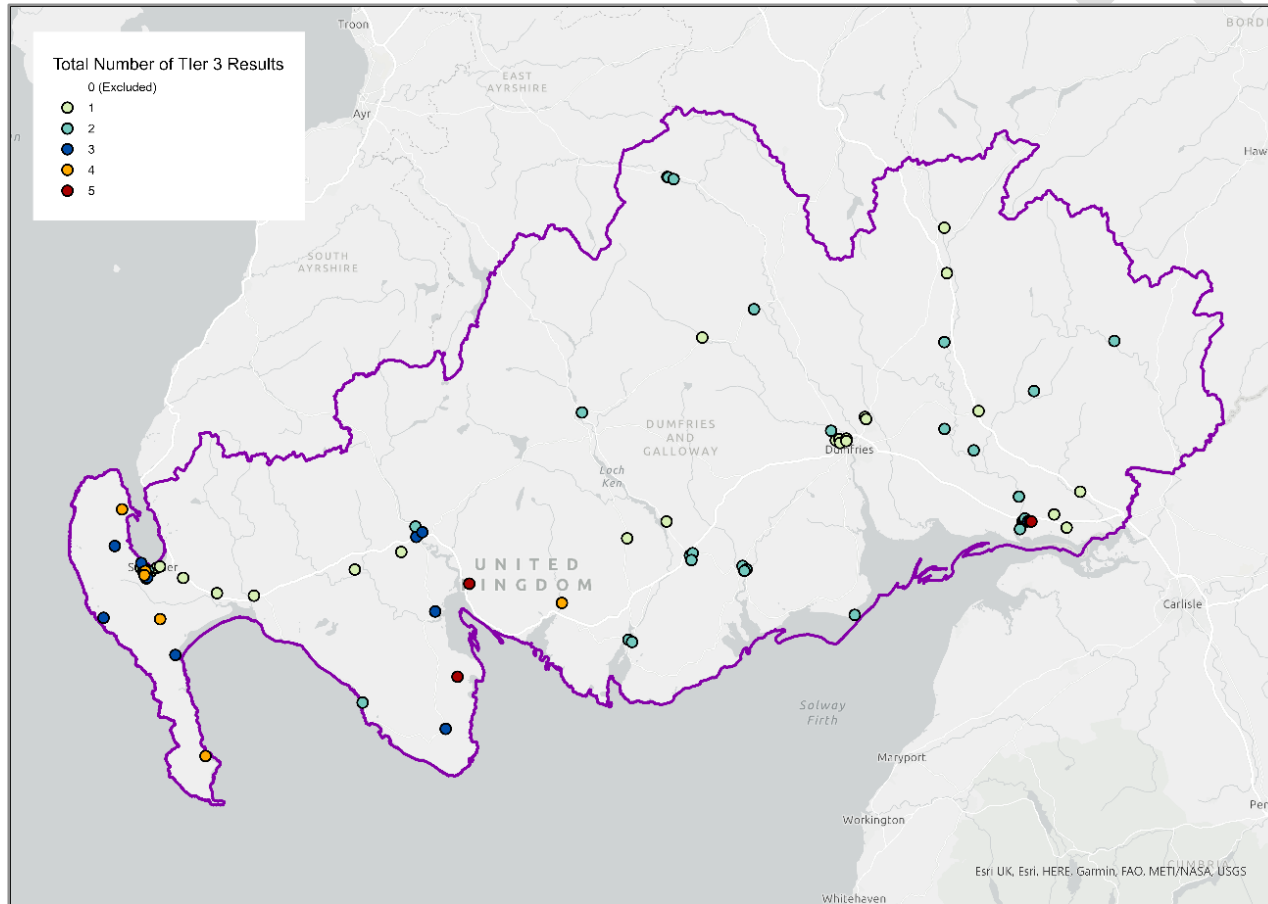- Increasing evening bus route coverage

Figure 10.2 Locations with Highest Levels of Connectivity Deprivation to Services (1 = good connectivity, 5 = poor connectivity)

10.1.3   Closely linked to this is the need for enhanced bus services that link locations with poor connectivity to essential services focusing on the most connectivity deprived areas as illustrated in Figure 10.2. In addition, at present some areas do not have timetables suitable for daytime commuters or evening leisure passengers, with some services commencing after 9am or terminating before 7pm. This limits opportunities for public transport usage, and residents are required to drive to access the workplace or essential services. Furthermore, some bus stops have low service frequencies limiting opportunities for public transport usage. Reconfiguring the current timetable to offer a longer operating window offers the potential for services better timed for commuters and for accessing leisure opportunities in areas where service provision is currently poor. This would require more late evening and early morning bus services and better-timed connections between express and feeder routes.

10.1.4   Furthermore, some bus journey speeds across the region are slow, with journey times often not being competitive with the car. One reason for this is indirect service routing through rural areas whilst frequent stops can also lead to slow journey times. Reconfiging the existing bus services therefore also offers potential to decrease journey times by bus.

10.1.5 However, the delivery of an enhanced bus network will be challenging in the face of declining bus passenger numbers, increasing costs and greater pressures on bus subsidies. This is illustrated in Figure 10.3 which shows how the cost of operating subsidised bus services in Dumfries and Galloway has changed over time and the noticeable impact of the pandemic which has driven the cost up when, broadly, they had been steady prior to that. Any improvements to the network will consequently be dependent upon maximising the efficiency of the existing operations.

10.1.6 On this basis there is a need for a new public transport model. This is required to ensure the network continues to be sustainable in the future by mitigating the consequences of potentially fewer commercial bus services across the region and to address the challenges of providing high-quality services across dispersed rural communities to an ageing population. Any future model must also fully consider and address the current and potential future challenges faced by the bus industry in Dumfries and Galloway. A sustainable delivery model is being developed utilising the opportunities available to provide our residents with a needs-based, coordinated, affordable and integrated public transport network that allows easy transitions across modes. This model applies a three-tier framework for delivering a public transport network for the region which incorporates all journey needs including:
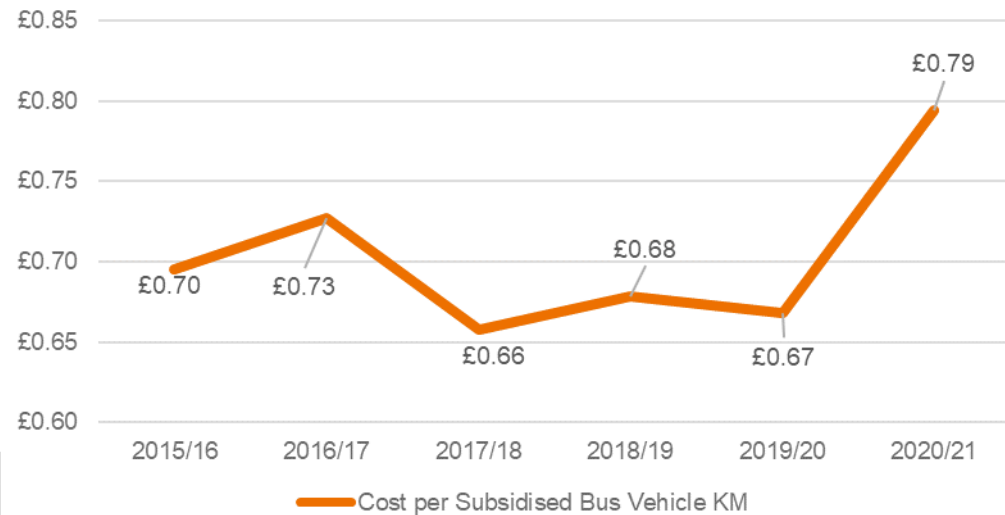

Figure 10.3 Cost per Subsidised Bus Vehicle KM in Dumfries and Galloway

- **Tier 1 – Community Level Provision:** made up of a number of tailored and flexible services providing travel opportunities at community level linking directly to amenities / services or to a more structured / timetabled public transport option. This tier will take the learning and structures developed through the Community Transport Public Social Partnership (PSP) and expand across the region. This 'mainstreaming' of the PSP learnings will be a critical building block for the delivery of needs-based transport.
- **Tier 2 – Supported Local Bus and Community Transport Services:** made up of supported bus services provided by bus operators, DGC Buses and Community Transport. This would include fixed or semi-fixed bus routes along with Demand Responsive Transport services that would either complement the current supported routes or be an alternative to these routes. One of the major aims of Tier 2 services would be to increase patronage of Tier 3 services through the development of Hub and Spoke feeder services to assist with the overall sustainability of commercial routes.
- **Tier 3 – Commercial Local Bus and Rail Services:** made up of commercial bus routes and ScotRail services. They would operate on the main corridors where there is high passenger demand for these services. Tier 3 services would be operated, in the main, by the commercial bus sector and Train Operating Companies.

10.1.7 This will be achieved through utilisation analysis of current public transport, mapping of demand 'drivers' (e.g., work, health and education locations) and development of area-based solutions including options for a bus station in Dumfries. At present, Dumfries does not have a dedicated bus station and services terminate at various locations across the town. A dedicated bus station within Dumfries would improve connections between services and enhance the overall journey experience making public transport more competitive with car. The new model will also provide opportunities to investigate the increased integration of bus and bike by providing services with the capability to carry bikes onboard.

10.1.8 Alongside this a network of mobility hubs will be developed across Dumfries and Galloway. Introducing new or improved intermodal facilities allows people to seamlessly move across the region using a variety of transport modes. Mobility hubs bring together public transport stops for buses and trains with a range of other modes and facilities such as bike sharing, car clubs, e-scooters, electric vehicle charging points, bike racks / lockers and taxi stances as well as non-transport facilities like parcel storage lockers, drinking fountains and phone charging points. Mobility hubs contribute to the '20-minute neighbourhood model' allowing people to live, work and learn within a 20-minute walk of their home. Additionally, mobility hubs have been identified as a strategic priority of the Scottish Government.

10.1.9 It is intended that the new model will also bring together the learning from the pilot schemes operated under the Social and Community Transport Public Social Partnership which has been developed locally in partnership with Third Sector Dumfries and Galloway, community transport operators and NHS Dumfries and Galloway. Achieving a fully integrated, co-ordinated and sustainable public transport network will require the development of a partnership between Dumfries and Galloway Council, SWestrans, the commercial bus sector, community transport, local communities and the NHS.

Case Study: Public Social Partnership – Design and Operation of the 517 Service

The main aim of the Public Social Partnership is to design / re-design services, through user engagement, with community transport piloting the service.

The 517 Kirkcudbright – Brighouse Bay – Borgue bus service was identified as a service that should be looked at. The service is very rural and there were very low passenger numbers.

There were a number of steps in the re-design of the service:

- **Consultation:** The local community of Borgue was consulted in relation to the re-design of the service to establish what the local community required. The engagement with the local community was a mixture of questionnaires and focus groups, which were facilitated by the Community Council and Galloway Community Transport.
- **Option Design:** From the feedback from the consultation options on the delivery of a new service were presented to the local community. It was agreed that the service required to start an hour earlier, align the timetable with connections to other services and a later finishing time.
- **Operation of Service:** The new designed service is currently being piloted by Galloway Community Transport and has seen a growth in the service pre and post COVID. It also enabled 3 people who were unemployed and went through the PSP D1 training programme to be employed on this service.

The PSP model of designing services through service user engagement and piloting them through Community Transport has been hugely successful. It serves the local community better, provides community transport with the opportunity to operate services of this type and provides the commissioner of the services with the confidence that community transport is able to provide this type of service.

10.1.10 The Council's bus fleet (DGC Buses) is a key element of future public transport delivery. A series of options for the future role of DGC Buses have been considered with it being identified that a partnership approach is the most effective one. The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 enabled the establishment of Bus Service Improvement Partnerships (BSIPs). These involve local transport authorities formulating a plan with the bus operators in their area and then deciding on how best to implement it through supporting schemes. The creation of a BSIP in Dumfries and Galloway will entail DGC Buses working in partnership with the commercial sector, community transport and NHS Dumfries and Galloway to develop and deliver transport solutions. It will ensure that where the private sector bus industry does things best, and in the most cost-effective way, this will continue. However, where other bus assets (DGC Buses or operators) are being underutilised, a coordinated partnership approach to service delivery will be developed to maximise usage whilst working alongside commercial services to deliver a more sustainable network. Where no service exists, demand responsive transport (DRT) solutions will be developed and operated by third sector community transport operators, DGC Buses and the community.

10.1.11 DRT can be beneficial in areas where there is a lack of public transport provision at times of the day or days of the week, or where public transport services are not catering for people with specific requirements such as those that require additional assistance (e.g., disabled or elderly people). For example, the provision of DRT services in the evenings or other off-peak times may be possible where fixed route services may not be feasible. Furthermore, DRT and community transport can help transport suppliers that are operating with spare capacity to maximise the utilisation of their services. In some instances, they may replace fixed route public transport whereas in others it may augment it, but this would be determined in line with the needs-based approach outlined previously and as part of the overall three tier hierarchy to ensure an integrated network.

10.1.12 Furthermore, work will continue to be undertaken to develop a business case for DGC Buses to become a Passenger Service Vehicle (PSV) Operator as a prudent step should an operator of last resort be needed. This would then enable DGC Buses, in whatever entity it takes, to provide local bus services on behalf of SWestrans if commercial bus services cease to operate.

Rail Network

10.1.13 A number of organisations are responsible for managing and enhancing the rail network and services in the region. Network Rail is responsible for maintaining and upgrading the railway network whilst ScotRail provide the majority of services in Scotland, although long-distance services on the West Coast Main Line are provided by other operators. Transport Scotland specify the ScotRail franchise and fund infrastructure enhancements which are delivered by Network Rail. These varying organisations, collectively known as Scotland's Railway, would consequently have primary responsibility for delivering amendments to the rail network or services in the region.

10.1.14 There are several stations within Dumfries and Galloway which have a poor rail service for various reasons. These include late starting first services, limited evening services and poor frequency throughout the day. Furthermore, the problems can be more acute at weekends. Key issues include:

- Stranraer is poorly served throughout the week with a limited number of services each day
- Services on the GSWL between Glasgow and Dumfries have gaps of up to two hours during the day
- There are limited services between Glasgow and Carlisle and from Carlisle beyond Dumfries
- Sunday frequencies are poor at Lockerbie and on the GSWL between Glasgow and Carlisle
- The journey time to Glasgow is far faster from Lockerbie (1 hour) than from Dumfries (1 hour 50 minutes)
- However, Lockerbie is well served by rail which leads to people driving from across the region to access the station

10.1.15 Improving the rail connectivity to the stations that have a poor service at these times would improve connections to economic, leisure and some health and community facilities by rail services. However, increasing the frequency of existing services will require close coordination with key stakeholders including ScotRail and Transport Scotland. In addition, a local service on the WCML between Carlisle and Edinburgh / Glasgow should be pursued.

10.1.16 Consideration should also be given to railway network upgrades to decrease journey times and increase capacity. This can benefit both passenger and freight services creating more efficiency and enabling more services to operate. The infrastructure in some areas is controlled through older semaphore signalling which can limit line speeds and capacity on the rail line, and its replacement with more modern signals offers potential for more efficient operation of the network. Furthermore, capacity and line speeds could be enhanced by the implementation of measures such as additional passing loops and upgrades to track geometry at key locations. The railway network within Dumfries and Galloway is mainly singletrack with limited passing loops and poor resilience to adverse weather conditions. Network upgrades could also therefore increase network resilience and reliability. Opportunities should also be explored to quadruple track the West Coast Main Line (WCML) through Lockerbie to enable long-distance services to overtake stopping services.

10.1.17 There are also issues with adequate train crew staffing, leading to service cancelations in some instances. An increase in locally situated train crews could therefore provide additional resilience to staffing related service issues.

10.1.18 Analysis has identified the potential benefits of reopening stations at Beattock on the WCML, and Eastriggs and Thornhill on the GSWL. They would provide direct rail connectivity for local residents and would reduce overall travel times. SWestrans will continue to support the delivery of these stations along with any others that demonstrate a strong business case and will pursue their delivery with industry partners.

10.1.19 In addition, the Draft National Planning Framework 4 has acknowledged the potential requirement to relocate the station at Stranraer. The current station is on the pier where ferries to Northern Ireland departed from before relocating to new ports on Loch Ryan. As the station is located on the pier, users must walk from the town onto the derelict and unused pier to access train services and there is poor linkage with the town itself. On this basis there is a strong case for relocating the station into the town to provide easier and less intimidating access for train users, and better integrate it with the rest of the town centre.

10.1.20 Consideration should also be given to reinstating the Castle Douglas and Dumfries railway which ran between Dumfries and Stranraer allowing residents along the line to access connecting services at Carlisle on the WCML. The line was closed during the 1965 Beeching closures, with the tracks and supporting infrastructure removed. At present the only public transport option along the route is by bus. Reopening the railway line between Dumfries and Stranraer along a similar route to the previous one would provide a sustainable alternative to the A75 enabling modal shift. In addition, there is also scope to deliver an extension to the Borders railway from Tweedbank serving Langholm and terminating at Carlisle which could provide wider connectivity across the region. Each of these are dependent upon business case development which would also determine the most appropriate locations for new stations. The development of new rail lines like these provides an opportunity to move both people and freight from road to rail leading to less emissions and a reduction in the other negative impacts associated with high traffic flows.

10.1.21 Where heavy rail is not feasible there may be potential to provide lighter forms of rail which require less rigorous technical design standards and can therefore be more affordable and deliverable in some instances. These should be investigated as appropriate as a potential means of providing fixed public transport links in Dumfries and Galloway if heavy rail is deemed impractical or unaffordable.

10.2 Priorities

i. SWestrans and its partners will work to deliver a new public transport model based around a needs-based approach applying a three tier framework as follows:

    a. Tier 1 – Community Level Provision

    b. Tier 2 – Supported Local Bus and Community Transport Services

    c. Tier 3 – Commercial Local Bus and Rail Services

ii. Bus service improvements should be focused in areas identified as at greatest risk of both transport poverty and deprivation. This should be informed by further analysis to develop options to improve bus service connectivity such as increased service frequencies, new services, more direct services and / or more express services

iii. Where no bus service exists, demand responsive transport (DRT) solutions will be developed and operated by third sector community transport operators, DGC Buses and the community

iv. Dumfries and Galloway council will undertake work to develop a business case for DGC Buses to become a Passenger Service Vehicle (PSV) Operator as a prudent step should a bus operator of last resort be needed in Dumfries and Galloway

v. Further analysis should be undertaken to assess the potential to provide a bus station in Dumfries and, if found to be feasible and beneficial, partners should work together to facilitate its delivery

vi. Opportunities to increase the carriage of bikes on buses will be explored

vii. A network of mobility hubs should be developed and implemented across Dumfries and Galloway

viii. A Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) should be created in Dumfries and Galloway using the powers set out in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 and will entail SWestrans working in partnership with the commercial sector, DGC Buses, community transport and NHS Dumfries and Galloway along with other partners as appropriate

ix. Improvements to rail services at stations where provision is poor should be taken forward in close coordination with key stakeholders including ScotRail and Transport Scotland

x. Opportunities should be investigated to run a local service on the WCML between Carlisle and Edinburgh / Glasgow

xi. Consideration should be given to rail network upgrades to decrease journey times and increase capacity including the replacement of semaphore signalling, passing loops and upgrades to track geometry at key locations

xii. Opportunities should be explored to quadruple track the West Coast Main Line (WCML) through Lockerbie and at other appropriate locations

xiii. The potential for more locally situated train crews should be investigated to provide additional resilience to staffing related service issues

xiv. The reopening of stations at Beattock on the WCML, and Eastriggs and Thornhill on the GSWL is supported and their delivery will be pursued with industry partners

xv. The potential to relocate the station at Stranraer should be explored to provide easier access for rail users and better integrate it with the rest of the town centre

xvi. Consideration should be given to reinstating the Castle Douglas and Dumfries railway between Dumfries and Stranraer along with delivering an extension to the Borders railway from Tweedbank serving Langholm and terminating at Carlisle with appropriate business case development being taken forward for each

xvii. Lighter rail solutions should be explored as an alternative to heavy rail where it may provide a more practical or affordable solution for fixed public transport links

Improving the Quality of Our Public Transport Offer

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

11 Improving the Quality and Affordability of Our Public Transport Offer

11.1 Context

11.1.1 In addition to enhancing our public transport services and expanding network coverage it is also essential that our public transport provision is affordable for all and that existing infrastructure, including vehicles and stops, is of a high standard. Furthermore, there is a need to improve integration between services and modes along with the quality of ticketing provision.

Affordability for All

11.1.2 In order to provide a viable alternative to car, the public transport system should be affordable for all. Bus fares are set by operators whilst ScotRail fares are set by Transport Scotland. Journeys that involve multiple modes or operators can also lead to several different fares. There is consequently a need to deliver solutions to make fares more affordable wherever possible.

11.1.3 There are currently multiple bus concessionary schemes in place within the region, including the national under 22 bus pass and over 60 / disabled concessionary pass which entitles each group to free bus travel through the National Entitlement Card. One option to make public transport more affordable would be to expand the eligibility of these current schemes or to create new concessionary schemes to allow more users access to reduced / no fare journeys. This could include increasing the number of people entitled to a companion or expanding the existing Dumfries and Galloway Council Taxicard Scheme. However, any changes to national schemes could require the agreement of the Scottish Government to be delivered. In addition, further promotion of the existing schemes could help to ensure that all those that are eligible for free bus travel are aware of and able to take advantage of these options.

11.1.4 Furthermore, these concessionary travel schemes (other than the national Blind Scheme) don't include rail which means it is often not an affordable option for young and elderly travellers and those with socio-economic disadvantage who are often amongst the most vulnerable groups who can least afford to pay. Expansion of the concessionary travel schemes to cover rail would help to enable more users to access affordable rail travel. Alternatively, new concessionary travel schemes could be established at a national or regional level targeted at low-income users although this would require ongoing funding and the support of partners for delivery.

11.1.5 There are also inequalities in the rail fare regime across the region as illustrated by the fare disparities between Dumfries and Lockerbie as well as Kirkconnel and New Cumnock set out in Table 11.1. The introduction of new rail fare structures could remove inequalities like these and ensure that journeys to similar destinations incur similar costs which are affordable for all users. This could potentially be achieved through extension of the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) fare zone, which provides discounted rail travel within the SPT area, to include Dumfries and Galloway or by the creation of a new fare zone specifically for the region. The impact of the SPT fare zone can be seen on the Kirkconnel and New Cumnock ticket prices with the two towns being located near to each other but the former being in Dumfries and Galloway and the latter in the SPT area. Delivery of changes to fare zones will require close working with rail industry partners.

Table 11.1 Peak time single rail fares [7]

	Glasgow	Edinburgh
Dumfries	£19.10	£84.20[8]
Lockerbie	£14.20	£21.50

	Glasgow
Kirkconnel	£15.60
New Cumnock	£9.80

Enhancing Ticketing & Seamless Journeys

11.1.6 Closely related to affordability is the need for integrated ticketing to make journeys as seamless as possible, and to provide discounts on multi-modal travel. This needs to build upon and better **promote existing schemes** such as PlusBus and Rail and Sail which already provide integrated ticketing between bus, rail and ferry within the region. There is a need to enable the purchasing of integrated tickets on buses. In addition, there are more opportunities to explore integrated ticketing between bus or rail and services to Northern Ireland from Loch Ryan.

11.1.7 The majority of public transport within Dumfries and Galloway is provided by **bus**. Creating a new or enhancing existing bus season tickets could help enable seamless transfers between services and improve the ease with which it is possible to travel around Dumfries and Galloway by bus without purchasing multiple different, expensive tickets. Any enhanced bus season ticket solution should allow users to purchase travel for a set number of days or journeys across multiple operators as part of a wider integrated ticketing solution for the region. In particular, they should enable travel on services provided by smaller operators who currently do not offer season tickets.

11.1.8 Furthermore, there is also scope to improve **multi-modal connections between bus, train and ferry**. Currently, transfers between bus, train and ferry services range from full integration, where a bus arrives at a train station, to difficult such as connecting between rail and ferry in Stranraer. Improving connections between different modes of transport by reducing the distance between connecting modes and coordinating the timing of connecting services offers the potential to provide enhanced integration which, when combined with integrated ticketing, enables seamless transfers. This could be achieved through new, relocated or retimed bus services that tie in with train and ferry links.

Infrastructure Enhancements

11.1.9 Upgrading the existing public transport infrastructure is also critical to ensuring that the region provides a high quality and attractive network for users. A range of infrastructure improvements can be made at bus stops which are often currently of a poor standard. These include accessibility improvements to facilitate step-free access, installation of real time bus information, new shelters where none previously existed, new CCTV / lighting, improved active travel links to stops, secure cycle parking and relocation of stops to more suitable locations. These interventions would improve the bus journey experience as well as the security and accessibility for all users.

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[7] Fares sourced from ScotRail website on 06/09/2022. Tickets searched were singles from origin to destination stations during the morning peak. Note in some instances considerable variance in ticket prices does exist but the fare for the first service was taken in each instance

[8] Via Carlisle

11.1.10 Currently, the railway lines to Dumfries and Stranraer are not electrified requiring diesel rolling stock for operation. Figure 11.1 shows that Transport Scotland plans to electrify the line between Carlisle and Kilmarnock but that electrification is not proposed south of Ayr. Instead, the use of alternative traction is proposed for access to Stranraer.

11.1.11 This solution will allow for the decarbonisation of the rail network in Dumfries and Galloway but would not enable electrified services to operate south of Ayr. This could constrain the number of services that operate to Stranraer as they will be dependent on the use of dedicated rolling stock. Another solution therefore would be to fully electrify all lines in Dumfries and Galloway to allow for electric traction on all routes. This would enable electrified services from north of Ayr to continue on to Stranraer which otherwise would need to be provided by specialist rolling stock limiting opportunities for service enhancements.

11.1.12 As such, consideration should be given to opportunities to electrify the rail network south of Ayr particularly given the additional demand that could be generated by a relocated station at Stranraer as discussed in Chapter 10.

11.1.13 At other stations across the region improvements to make them safer and more accessible for railway users will be required. These are closely related to the access improvements outlined in Chapter 9.

Improving the Fleet

11.1.14 Many of the buses currently serving Dumfries and Galloway are near the end of their operational life and consequently create higher levels of emissions due to their older engines. The ongoing replacement of these vehicles with low emission buses (such as Electric Vehicles, Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles, Hydrogen or Natural Gas) would substantially reduce CO_2 emissions as well as improving the quality and comfort onboard. New buses would also include measures to improve accessibility for all users, including deployable ramps and kneeling capabilities. The upgrade of the fleet will be taken forward though partnership working as outlined in Chapter 10.

11.1.15 Most of the rail services within Dumfries and Galloway are operated by the Class 15X Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) fleet of rolling stock. The majority were built in the late 1980s to 1990s. The fleet has undergone upgrades to improve the interior, but it is near the end of its service life. The current trains were not
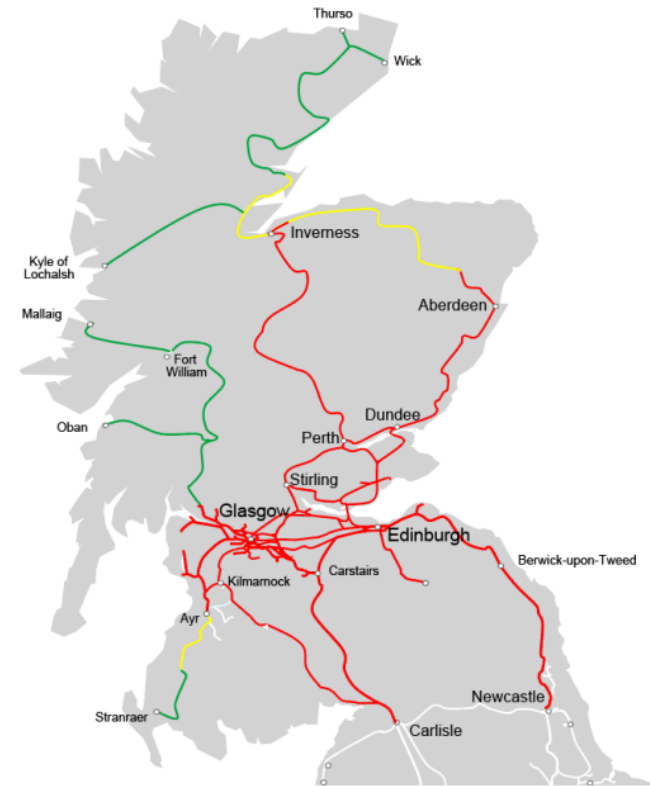
Map of decarbonised rail network in Scotland, 2035

The maps in this document show the rail network in Scotland; as there are no rail lines on the islands they are not shown.

Electrified network (some 1,616 kilometres (single track kilometres) to be electrified, sections of route could potentially include discontinuous electrification) and the electrification of some freight only lines may be subject to review

Alternative traction - transition solution (e.g. partial electrification and/or the use of alternative technology prior to electrification)

Alternative traction - permanent solution (i.e. the use of battery or alternative traction)

Figure 11.1 Decarbonised Rail Network in Scotland, 2035 (Transport Scotland)

constructed to current accessibility standards or have spaces for bikes, which in some cases has required retrofitting. The replacement of the current rolling stock with alternative traction such as hydrogen or battery power would not only provide a reduction in emissions but also enable a step change in the quality of customer experience. In particular, access for disabled and vulnerable users would be greatly enhanced. Alternatively, if the GSWL to Stranraer is electrified, then the rolling stock could be replaced by Electric Multiple Units (EMU). New rolling stock could also be provided with areas onboard to facilitate the carriage of bikes allowing for multi-modal journeys.

11.2 Priorities

i. Opportunities to expand the eligibility of existing concessionary travel schemes or to create new schemes to allow more users access to reduced / no fare journeys should be explored with key partners including Transport Scotland

ii. Expansion of existing concessionary travel schemes to cover rail should be considered to enable more users to access affordable rail travel

iii. The introduction of new rail fare structures should be explored to remove inequalities and to ensure that journeys to similar destinations incur similar costs which are affordable for all users

iv. Integrated ticketing solutions should build upon and better promote existing schemes such as PlusBus and Rail and Sail as well as seeking new opportunities to deliver integrated ticketing measures for bus, rail and ferry in the region

v. Improving links between different modes of transport by reducing the distance between connecting modes and coordinating the timing of services should be taken forward as a priority wherever possible

vi. Enhancements to existing bus stops will be implemented where practical to improve security, accessibility and the attractiveness of bus services for all users

vii. Support the decarbonisation of the rail network in Dumfries and Galloway and explore along with rail industry partners opportunities to electrify the line south of Ayr to provide greater scope for through services and to accommodate increased demand from a relocated Stranraer station

viii. The replacement of the bus fleet with low emission vehicles will be taken forward in conjunction with partners

ix. Replacement of rail rolling stock should be taken forward considering proposals for electrification of parts of the network in the region with the appropriate traction being based upon this and giving due consideration for the need to enhance the quality, accessibility and standard of rolling stock serving Dumfries and Galloway

x. Opportunities for the carriage of bikes on board trains should be explored as new rolling stock is procured

Supporting Safe and Effective Connections to Loch Ryan and Other Strategic Sites

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

12 Supporting Safe and Effective Connections to Loch Ryan and Other Strategic Sites

12.1 Context

12.1.1 Delivering enhancements to the strategic transport network that provide links to key economic destinations, gateways and development locations will be essential to increase efficiency and the economic competitiveness of the region. In particular, links to the strategic ports at Loch Ryan are of significance.

12.1.2 Lockerbie acts as a regional access point to the national rail network due to the long-distance services that serve the station, and the cheaper fares available from it to Edinburgh and Glasgow (see Table 11.1). Increasing the connectivity to Lockerbie station by a variety of modes of transport is consequently of strategic importance to the region. This could be achieved through offerings such as improved bus services, enhanced active travel links and increased parking capacity.

12.1.3 Several key routes throughout the region including the A7, A75, A76, A77 and A709 all see significant traffic flows and HGV usage due in part to the location of ports at Loch Ryan, and the large timber industry within the region. This can cause significant delays for road users due to the single carriageway status of these roads and the reduced speed of HGVs. Whilst there is a need to reduce

reliance on roads-based transport, the importance of these strategic linkages and rural nature of the region mean that it will still be essential to deliver enhancements to the existing strategic road network to make it safer and decrease journey times. This could involve measures such as:

- Dualling of all or parts of the A7, A75, A76, A77 and A709
- Partial dualling of other key routes to allow for passing areas
- Road safety and geometry improvements on single carriageway roads
- Improved overtaking opportunities and route standard on the A75
- Enhanced signage
- Increased speed limits for HGVs on some or all strategic routes across the region drawing on experience from the A9 pilot of a 50mph speed limit undertaken by Transport Scotland

12.1.4 Linked to this, diversionary routes for the A7, A75, A76, A77 and A709 routes are inadequate. Upgrading these routes is therefore also of critical importance to reduce diversionary route journey times by upgrading existing routes to cope with additional traffic and offering more direct diversionary routes where possible.

12.1.5 However, wherever possible opportunities should be sought to shift goods onto the rail network by the creation of new freight hubs on the railway to enable the movement of freight, particularly timber, by rail. The potential for creation of an intermodal freight hub at Cairnryan / Stranraer should also be explored which could potentially link with wider rail network proposals discussed in Chapter 10.

12.1.6 Furthermore, some roads have poor sightlines at junctions, leading to collisions and safety issues. This is especially relevant on rural roads due to the higher speed limits, sub-optimal geometry and overhanging vegetation. In locations like these it will be necessary to deliver junction improvements and other safety improvements through measures like:

- Improvements to the line of sight
- Enhanced geometry and junction layout
- Banning right turns at inappropriate locations
- Removal of vegetation
- Installation of warning signs
- Grade separation where appropriate

12.1.7 Road safety can be further improved by the implementation of interventions including average speed cameras on strategic routes where excessive speeds have been identified as a problem, the creation of 20mph zones in towns and villages as well as the installation of appropriate traffic calming and management measures.

12.1.8 Ensuring road safety and access to strategic locations also includes maintaining the network to a high standard. Dumfries and Galloway had 12% of its road network classified as condition 'red' and 35% as condition 'amber' by the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey in 2020/21. These are

amongst the highest figures of any local authority in Scotland. As such, there is a need to improve the quality of the road network through an enhanced programme of resurfacing in Dumfries and Galloway initially prioritising segments of road that have poor surfacing on major routes. Alongside this there is a need to enhance the surfacing of cycleways and footways within Dumfries and Galloway to encourage people to use active travel where practical.

12.1.9   At present, there are a limited amount of dedicated HGV and motorhome parking areas on the strategic road network. This causes HGVs and motorhomes to park in laybys when drivers are required to rest, blocking parking spaces for other users, and creating hazards by removing safe stopping points. In addition, it can cause people to drive for longer than they should without a break which also creates safety concerns. The creation of additional dedicated rest areas and motorhome park-ups across the region would enable HGV drivers to get sufficient rest and potential opportunities for new locations should be explored and implemented as appropriate.

12.2   Priorities

i.   Increasing the connectivity to Lockerbie station by a variety of modes should be explored given its strategic importance to the region

ii.   Enhancements to the strategic road network including the A7, A75, A76, A77 and A709 should be taken forward to improve safety, journey times, diversionary routes and improve access to key locations across the region

iii.   Opportunities should be sought to shift goods from HGVs onto the rail network by the creation of new rail freight hubs including the potential for the creation of an intermodal freight hub at Cairnryan / Stranraer

iv.   Junction improvements should be taken forward at locations of collision clusters

v.   Appropriate road safety, traffic calming and management measures should be used to provide a safe environment for all road users

vi.   Improvements to the quality of the road network should be prioritised through an enhanced programme of resurfacing in Dumfries and Galloway initially focused on segments of road that have poor surfacing on major routes

vii.   Opportunities for additional dedicated rest areas and motorhome park-ups across the region should be explored and implemented as appropriate

Managing Our Car Traffic

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

13 Managing Our Car Traffic

13.1 Context

13.1.1 Whilst there will always be a degree of car dependency within the region given its rural nature it is still essential that we make our contribution to reducing car dependency and contributing to the Scottish Government's target to reduce car km by 20% by 2030 whilst reflecting the regional circumstances. Whilst a rural area like Dumfries and Galloway may not make as significant a contribution to the national target as more urban parts of the country measures will still be required to reduce our car dependency. One way to achieve this will be to cut down on the number of single occupancy car journeys. This can be facilitated through the use of shared mobility as outlined in Chapter 14 along with the new three tier public transport model outlined in Chapter 10. In 2018, 41% of employed adults over 16 that travelled to work by car or van stated that they could use public transport instead highlighting the potential for modal shift.[9] Furthermore, for local journeys active travel will play a prominent role in reducing car use. Digital connectivity can also play a prominent role in reducing the need to travel by enabling home working for some, home shopping, etc. although this requires the roll out of suitable broadband infrastructure to enable it.

13.1.2 These measures are consistent with the approach set out in Transport Scotland's draft Reducing Car Use for a Healthier, Fairer and Greener Scotland Route Map. This sets out a series of behaviour changes and interventions intended to deliver the target of a 20% reduction in car km by 2030. It also states that a range of demand management measures are likely to be required that sit alongside the positive incentives provided through enhancing alternative modes and reducing the need for people to travel by car, although no specific measures are proposed at this stage. A combination of these measures will be required in Dumfries and Galloway if a meaningful contribution is going to be made towards the national target.

13.1.3 Measures to reduce traffic and the impacts of traffic can have beneficial impacts for other transport users including people walking, wheeling and cycling. High volumes of fast-moving vehicles can increase the actual and perceived danger when crossing roads which discourages residents from walking, wheeling and cycling to local destinations. This increases car usage and perpetuates car dependency and inequalities. Reducing traffic to make towns and urban areas more attractive environments for active travel therefore makes these modes even more attractive and can be achieved through measures such as the introduction of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

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[9] Scottish Household Survey Transport and Travel in Scotland 2019 Local Authority Tables – Table 2

13.1.4 The management and enforcement of parking restrictions can also be an important mechanism to reduce car dependency in urban areas. This can entail a wide range of potential interventions including:

- Increasing or reducing parking supply
- Increasing the number of blue badge spaces
- Amending parking regulation
- Introducing parking charges to encourage turnover of parking spaces
- Adopting Decriminalised Parking Enforcement (DPE) in Dumfries and Galloway to improve enforcement of parking regulations
- Introduction of Workplace Parking Licensing
- Reviewing waiting restrictions in town centres
- Charging for parking at stations where there are high levels of demand and many short car trips are made

13.1.5 Any demand management and parking measures implemented will be applied proportionately, taking into account the rural nature of the region and will be subject to statutory impact assessments to ensure a 'just transition' and the needs of key equalities groups. This will reflect the needs of local communities alongside the wider aspirations of the RTS to reduce emissions and the region's contribution to climate change and the wider adverse impacts of road traffic on health and liveability of neighbourhoods.

13.2 Priorities

i. Dumfries and Galloway will make its contribution to delivering the Scottish Government's target to reduce car km by 20% by 2030 reflecting the regional circumstances

ii. A combination of enhanced active travel, public transport, shared mobility and digital infrastructure will be used to provide an effective alternative to car travel with a particular focus on reducing single occupancy car journeys

iii. Proportionate behaviour change, demand management and parking measures will be taken forward to support modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport and reduce car dependency across the region

Making the Most of New Opportunities

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

14 Making the Most of New Opportunities

14.1 Context

14.1.1 Transport is currently undergoing a period of significant technical innovation and change as automation and digital technology begin to present significant opportunities to change how we travel in the future. Capitalising on these opportunities will depend upon making the most of beneficial new technologies.

14.1.2 In particular, technological innovation presents an opportunity to travel smarter and to offer a personalised travel service based on user preferences. Many of these innovations can be collectively drawn together under the umbrella of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) which, through integration, offers potential to enable faster, more efficient, more sustainable, and less expensive travel. MaaS enables users to plan, book, and pay for multiple types of mobility services through one digital platform. It envisages users buying transport services (including public transport, car usage, access to active travel, taxi, demand responsive transport, etc.) as packages based on their needs instead of buying the means of transport itself. This enables seamless journeys and for the traditional ownership model to be broken.

14.1.3 The implementation of a MaaS system within Dumfries and Galloway offers potential to reduce disparities of access and could be closely integrated with the provision of the new public transport model described in Chapter 10. However, given its early stage of development there is still uncertainty around how MaaS will be implemented with an associated requirement for public sector bodies like MaaS Scotland to guide and shape its roll out to ensure effective delivery and equality of access.

Case Study: Hannover Mobility as a Service

Hannover's MaaS app, Hannovermobil, developed by the public transport operator ÜSTRA and the Greater Hannover Transport Association, provides access to its mobility shop and automatically develops an integrated bill for all mobility services used at the end of the month. When launched in 2016 this multi-modal app completely replaced its 'public transport only' predecessor. Currently the service provides access to bus, rail, car-sharing, bike-sharing and taxis with taxis and car-sharing prices reduced about 10 percent on average from what is available to the public.

14.1.4   Closely related to MaaS is the provision of shared mobility which removes the need for people to own the mode of transport whereas instead they can share a journey or vehicle. This can help decrease the number of single occupancy vehicles being used and offers transport for people who do not own or have access to a car. Shared mobility can help move towards an 'on demand' system of transport provision where people only pay for access to transport when they require it rather than buying a vehicle that may only be used occasionally. The implementation of shared mobility solutions across Dumfries and Galloway could entail measures such as:

- Regional bike hire scheme in town centres and at transport hubs
- Regional car sharing scheme with a potential focus on Electric Vehicles
- Regional trip sharing scheme building on DG Tripshare
- Peer to peer car lending
- Electric scooter sharing (subject to appropriate legislation being passed)
- More widespread provision of taxicards for those with no alternative form of transport
- Increase the number of taxi licenses granted and percentage of accessible taxis

14.1.5   Due to the population characteristics of the region, different implementation approaches will be required. For example, a cycle hire scheme may be feasible in Dumfries and other larger settlements, but not viable in more rural settlements. Introduction of new digital based transport and accessibility schemes will also require careful consideration of the needs of people with protected characteristics to engage with the technology.
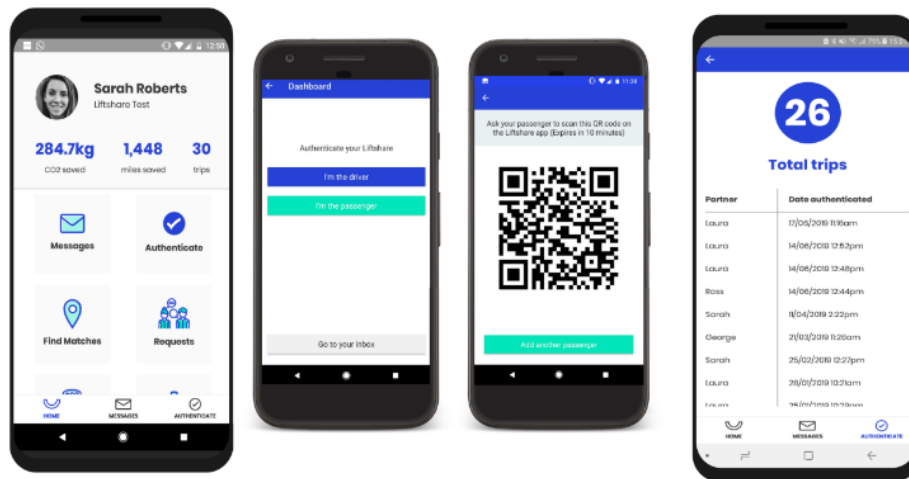
Case Study: DG Tripshare

Liftshare is an online platform which facilitates ridesharing between strangers via an online app. DG Tripshare utilises this platform to provide ridesharing within the region with over 450 individuals making use of the scheme.

Users looking to ride share register online and add their journey to the Liftshare matching database. They can then filter their search to find the most suitable ride share option for them and use the messaging system to arrange their potential Liftshare before confirming their request.

Payment between driver and passenger(s) is up to each member, with Liftshare recommending the cost per mile as a suggested contribution.

14.1.6   Alongside shared mobility there are also opportunities to capitalise upon the growth of micro mobility. This refers to the usage of small vehicles operating at a speed below 15 mph and driven by users. These can include bicycles, electric bikes and electric scooters. Micro mobility may involve

users travelling from their homes to a hub, where they can store their bike or scooter before travelling onwards to a final destination via another mode (e.g. public transport). As such, there is a close relationship with the mobility hubs discussed in Chapter 10. Whilst this is another emerging field, and its application will require further analysis, potential means in which it could be implemented across the region include:

- Cargo bikes for the last mile logistics movement of freight in towns and urban areas
- Electric bikes for long distance cycle journeys (e.g. town to town)
- Electric scooters, hoverboards and electric skateboards for local journeys (subject to appropriate legislation being passed)

14.1.7 Sometimes the information provided while travelling by road can be poor with limited signage and not enough up-to-date information. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) could significantly improve information provision along key routes by offering real-time information on travel conditions, warnings about incidents and roadworks as well as signing drivers on to appropriate diversionary routes in the case of a road closure. Furthermore, ITS are being actively introduced into traffic control systems, vehicle designs and interactive systems for informing transport network users. To counteract or limit the intensification of congestion or disruption, ITS can manipulate the transport network by:

- Predicting traffic conditions via data from the surrounding environment and infrastructure
- Providing information to network users to best inform travel choice
- Car communication via signal controllers in the road infrastructure relaying information to individual vehicles to modify speed / act accordingly
- Smart intersections which collect data and relay information
- Redirecting road traffic
- Altering signal timings

14.1.8 The implementation of ITS in the region should be part of a wider programme of enhancements to improve the safety and efficiency of the strategic road network as outlined in preceding chapters.

14.2 Priorities

i.   The implementation of Mobility of a Service (MaaS) in Dumfries and Galloway will be taken forward in close coordination with the delivery of the new public transport model

ii. A range of shared mobility measures should be taken forward across the region taking into account its varying characteristics and dispersed population to provide access to a variety of transport options without requiring ownership

iii. Opportunities to capitalise upon the growth of micro mobility should be explored alongside the development of mobility hubs

iv. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) should be implemented alongside other enhancements to the strategic road network to improve the safety and efficiency of its operation

Delivery

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

15 Delivery

15.1 Overview

15.1.1 This strategy has set out the long-term policy context for transport in Dumfries and Galloway. Its delivery will be dependent on a combination of actions by SWestrans, Dumfries and Galloway Council and close partnership working with other key industry bodies. To guide the implementation of the RTS and the priorities it has identified a Delivery Plan will be prepared which will accompany the strategy. This will set out a series of actions including an ongoing programme of physical and non-physical interventions. It will include measures which can be delivered by SWestrans and also those where it would look to partners to lead on delivery. These will also include analysis and appraisal work to identify new interventions to support the delivery of the RTS priorities.

15.1.2 The Delivery Plan will be reviewed and updated on a regular basis throughout the lifetime of the strategy as part of the ongoing Monitoring process set out in the following chapter. The interventions it contains are likely to be at a range of different stages in the project lifecycle from concept to construction and the regular review will enable their status to be updated accordingly. An overview of risks to implementation will also be provided taking account of the delivery stage the intervention is at.

15.1.3 All interventions within the Delivery Plan will need to be able to demonstrate that they make a contribution towards achieving the Vision, Strategy Objectives and RTS priorities.

15.2 Priorities

i.   SWestrans will develop a Delivery Plan which outlines both physical and non-physical interventions and actions to implement the RTS policy and priorities

ii. The Delivery Plan will be regularly reviewed and updated throughout the lifetime of the RTS

Monitoring

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

16 Monitoring

16.1 Overview

16.1.1 Monitoring the RTS is important to assess the extent to which it is achieving the Strategy Objectives and Vision set out in Chapter 4. To facilitate this a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified. These are each linked to the defined Strategy Objectives and are closely linked to those defined for monitoring the National Transport Strategy 2. They will be used to measure how the transport system performs over the lifetime of the RTS against an established baseline prior to its implementation.

16.1.2 Throughout the lifetime of the strategy monitoring reports will be prepared every two years. These will outline the key regional transport and behavioural trends based upon the KPIs defined below.

16.2 Key Performance Indicators

Strategy Objective 1: To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs

KPIs for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Adults (16+) – frequency of walking in previous seven days (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Main mode of travel – Walking (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Main mode of travel – Bicycle (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Frequency of walking in previous 7 days (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)

Strategy Objective 2: To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region

KPIs for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Adults views on satisfaction with public transport in the previous month (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Adults (16+) – who used a local bus service in the past month – percentages who agreed with each statement (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Adults (16+) – who used rail service sin the past month – percentages who agreed with each statement (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)

Strategy Objective 3: To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region

KPIs for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Use of local bus services in previous month (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Use of local train services in previous month (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Main mode of travel – bus (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Main mode of travel – rail (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary / Transport Focus Surveys)
- Main purpose of travel (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Connectivity and deprivation analysis for key healthcare, education, and employment destinations (TRACC)
- Public transport labour market catchments of largest employment sites (Business Register and Employment Survey / TRACC)

Strategy Objective 4: To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region

KPIs for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Vehicle and passenger traffic between Scotland and Northern Ireland (Scottish Transport Statistics)
- Satisfaction with public transport (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary / Transport Focus surveys)
- How random adult usually travelled to work a year ago by current main mode of travel (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Reason for changing mode of travel to work (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Employed adults method of travel to work, and whether they could use public transport (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Reasons why public transport is not used by school children (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Adults use of local bus and train services, in the past month (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)
- Typical number of interchanges between major settlements (TRACC)

Strategy Objective 5: To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan

KPIs for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Reported road collisions on strategic road network (Scottish Transport Statistics)
- Road journey times between key origins and destinations by time period (INRIX)
- Ratio of peak journey time to inter peak journey times between key origins and destinations (INRIX)
- Congestion delays experienced by drivers and car occupants (Scottish Household Survey Travel Diary)

Strategy Objective 6: To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region

KPIs for Monitoring and Evaluation

- Transport related CO_2 emissions (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy)
- Number of Air Quality Management Areas (Scottish Transport Statistics)
- Average Annual Daily Traffic through Settlements (Transport Scotland / Department for Transport ATCs)
- Roads causing severance due to high traffic flows (Transport Scotland / Department for Transport ATCs)

RTS Priorities

SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy

Consultation Draft

17 RTS Priorities

17.1 Overview

17.1.1 This section provides a summary of all the RTS Priorities set out in the preceding chapters for ease of reference.

Enabling More Sustainable Development

i. Sustainably locate new developments to reduce the need to travel first and foremost

ii. Locate new development where it can be easily served by existing active travel and public transport links or, if not possible, by new active travel and public transport links which are accessible to all

iii. Sustainable transport measures and supporting ancillary infrastructure for new developments will be delivered through developer contributions as appropriate

iv. The concept of '20-minute neighbourhoods' will be incorporated into all future development and land-use planning processes

v. Transport interventions should be carefully sited and designed to prevent and minimise negative environmental impacts

vi. New major developments, including those proposed at Chapelcross Power Station and Stranraer Gateway, should apply an 'infrastructure first' approach

vii. At existing developments sustainable transport and ancillary infrastructure measures should be introduced to encourage the uptake of more sustainable transport by coordinated engagement with employers and other large organisations

Connecting Our Communities

i. Improvements to the active travel network will be delivered through a combination of incremental improvements to existing routes and new bespoke routes where appropriate

ii. The active travel network will be developed in accordance with Cycling by Design, Designing Streets and other relevant technical guidance

iii. An integrated active travel network linking both within and between our settlements will be developed in line with the Active Travel Spatial Strategy

iv. The Active Travel Strategy 2 will be kept under review and updated on a regular basis to ensure it is being effectively implemented

v. A dedicated Active Travel Team will work on prioritising, designing, and delivering schemes and projects in collaboration with funding partners

vi. Awareness raising to facilitate behaviour change will be delivered through close community engagement and campaigns to encourage the use of active travel

vii. SWestrans will spend at least 50% of its capital budget on active travel

Transforming Travel in Our Towns

i. Roadspace should be reallocated to prioritise walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport particularly within our towns and settlements in order to create a more attractive public realm across Dumfries and Galloway

ii. The National Transport Strategy 2's sustainable travel hierarchy should be applied to reprioritise the road network wherever possible

iii. Detailed analysis should be undertaken to identify suitable locations and interventions for the reallocation of roadspace away from general traffic to active travel and public transport

Reducing the Impact of Transport on Our Communities

i. Investigate the feasibility of bypasses for Crocketford and Springholm on the A75 as well as other communities on the A7, A75, A76, A77 and A709 including Dumfries

ii. Support the decarbonisation of the car, taxi and commercial vehicle fleet through investigation and delivery, as appropriate, of measures such as:

a. Electric Vehicle charging points

b. Regional Electric Vehicle carsharing

c. Grants / loans for Electric / Hybrid vehicles

d. Low Emission Zones (LEZs)

e. New rail freight hubs

f. Alternative fuels e.g. green hydrogen

Enhancing Access to Transport Services

i. Opportunities to enhance the customer experience when using public transport should be explored, particularly for vulnerable users who may require additional assistance or chaperoning in order to make their journey

ii. The public and active travel networks should provide equal access for all including vulnerable groups such as women, elderly and younger people, ethnic minorities, people with mobility impairments or disabilities as well as those on low incomes

iii. Journey planning information should be available in various formats to meet the needs of differing users including online, traditional paper copies, braille, large print, and audio

iv. Real Time Passenger Information should be made available for all public transport modes at stations, stops and on-board services wherever possible and practical

v. Soft measures should be implemented to encourage the use of active travel through measures such as additional information online and in the form of maps and signs within towns accompanied by public awareness campaigns

vi. Access to bicycles, including e-bikes, should be facilitated through a combination of grants / loans for those that wish to purchase their own and provision of a regional cycle hire scheme for people that only require occasional access to a bike

vii. Improving accessibility to railway stations should be prioritised in Annan, Dumfries, Kirkconnel and Sanquhar where access arrangements could be limited for some disabled users

viii. Measures to encourage access to railway stations in line with the Scottish Government's Sustainable Travel Hierarchy should be taken forward

ix. The security of taxi users should be improved by undertaking additional background checks prior to granting taxi licences

Sustainable and Extended Local and Regional Public Transport Connectivity

i. SWestrans and its partners will work to deliver a new public transport model based around a needs-based approach applying a three tier framework as follows:

Tier 1 – Community Level Provision

Tier 2 – Supported Local Bus and Community Transport Services

Tier 3 – Commercial Local Bus and Rail Services

ii. Bus service improvements should be focused in areas identified as at greatest risk of both transport poverty and deprivation. This should be informed by further analysis to develop options to improve bus service connectivity such as increased service frequencies, new services, more direct services and / or more express services

iii. Where no bus service exists, demand responsive transport (DRT) solutions will be developed and operated by third sector community transport operators, DGC Buses and the community

iv. Dumfries and Galloway council will undertake work to develop a business case for DGC Buses to become a Passenger Service Vehicle (PSV) Operator as a prudent step should a bus operator of last resort be needed in Dumfries and Galloway

v. Further analysis should be undertaken to assess the potential to provide a bus station in Dumfries and, if found to be feasible and beneficial, partners should work together to facilitate its delivery

vi. Opportunities to increase the carriage of bikes on buses will be explored

vii. A network of mobility hubs should be developed and implemented across Dumfries and Galloway

viii. A Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) should be created in Dumfries and Galloway using the powers set out in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 and will entail SWestrans working in partnership with the commercial sector, DGC Buses, community transport and NHS Dumfries and Galloway along with other partners as appropriate

ix. Improvements to rail services at stations where provision is poor should be taken forward in close coordination with key stakeholders including ScotRail and Transport Scotland

x. Opportunities should be investigated to run a local service on the WCML between Carlisle and Edinburgh / Glasgow

xi. Consideration should be given to rail network upgrades to decrease journey times and increase capacity including the replacement of semaphore signalling, passing loops and upgrades to track geometry at key locations

xii. Opportunities should be explored to quadruple track the West Coast Main Line (WCML) through Lockerbie and at other appropriate locations

xiii. The potential for more locally situated train crews should be investigated to provide additional resilience to staffing related service issues

xiv. The reopening of stations at Beattock on the WCML, and Eastriggs and Thornhill on the GSWL is supported and their delivery will be pursued with industry partners

xv. The potential to relocate the station at Stranraer should be explored to provide easier access for rail users and better integrate it with the rest of the town centre

xvi. Consideration should be given to reinstating the Castle Douglas and Dumfries railway between Dumfries and Stranraer along with delivering an extension to the Borders railway from Tweedbank serving Langholm and terminating at Carlisle with appropriate business case development being taken forward for each

xvii. Lighter rail solutions should be explored as an alternative to heavy rail where it may provide a more practical or affordable solution for fixed public transport links

Improving the Quality and Affordability of Our Public Transport Offer

i. Opportunities to expand the eligibility of existing concessionary travel schemes or to create new schemes to allow more users access to reduced / no fare journeys should be explored with key partners including Transport Scotland

ii. Expansion of existing concessionary travel schemes to cover rail should be considered to enable more users to access affordable rail travel

iii. The introduction of new rail fare structures should be explored to remove inequalities and to ensure that journeys to similar destinations incur similar costs which are affordable for all users

iv. Integrated ticketing solutions should build upon and better promote existing schemes such as PlusBus and Rail and Sail as well as seeking new opportunities to deliver integrated ticketing measures for bus, rail and ferry in the region

v. Improving links between different modes of transport by reducing the distance between connecting modes and coordinating the timing of services should be taken forward as a priority wherever possible

vi. Enhancements to existing bus stops will be implemented where practical to improve security, accessibility and the attractiveness of bus services for all users

vii. Support the decarbonisation of the rail network in Dumfries and Galloway and explore along with rail industry partners opportunities to electrify the line south of Ayr to provide greater scope for through services and to accommodate increased demand from a relocated Stranraer station

viii. The replacement of the bus fleet with low emission vehicles will be taken forward in conjunction with partners

ix. Replacement of rail rolling stock should be taken forward considering proposals for electrification of parts of the network in the region with the appropriate traction being based upon this and giving due consideration for the need to enhance the quality, accessibility and standard of rolling stock serving Dumfries and Galloway

x. Opportunities for the carriage of bikes on board trains should be explored as new rolling stock is procured

Supporting Safe, Effective and Resilient Connections to Loch Ryan and Other Strategic Sites

i. Increasing the connectivity to Lockerbie station by a variety of modes should be explored given its strategic importance to the region

ii. Enhancements to the strategic road network including the A7, A75, A76, A77 and A709 should be taken forward to improve safety, journey times, diversionary routes and improve access to key locations across the region

iii. Opportunities should be sought to shift goods from HGVs onto the rail network by the creation of new rail freight hubs including the potential for the creation of an intermodal freight hub at Cairnryan / Stranraer

iv. Junction improvements should be taken forward at locations of collision clusters

v. Appropriate road safety, traffic calming and management measures should be used to provide a safe environment for all road users

vi. Improvements to the quality of the road network should be prioritised through an enhanced programme of resurfacing in Dumfries and Galloway initially focused on segments of road that have poor surfacing on major routes

vii. Opportunities for additional dedicated rest areas and motorhome park-ups across the region should be explored and implemented as appropriate

Managing Our Car Traffic

i. Dumfries and Galloway will make its contribution to delivering the Scottish Government's target to reduce car km by 20% by 2030 reflecting the regional circumstances

ii. A combination of enhanced active travel, public transport, shared mobility and digital infrastructure will be used to provide an effective alternative to car travel with a particular focus on reducing single occupancy car journeys

iii. Proportionate behaviour change, demand management and parking measures will be taken forward to support modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport and reduce car dependency across the region

Making the Most of New Opportunities

i. The implementation of Mobility of a Service (MaaS) in Dumfries and Galloway will be taken forward in close coordination with the delivery of the new public transport model

ii. A range of shared mobility measures should be taken forward across the region taking into account its varying characteristics and dispersed population to provide access to a variety of transport options without requiring ownership

iii. Opportunities to capitalise upon the growth of micro mobility should be explored alongside the development of mobility hubs

iv. Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) should be implemented alongside other enhancements to the strategic road network to improve the safety and efficiency of its operation

LOCAL BUS UPDATE

1.   Reason for Report
To provide Members of the Board with a briefing on the local bus network including:
- a summary of the current local bus network provision in Dumfries and Galloway;
- an update on recent actions;
- current issues; and
- the new Public Transport model and delivery challenges.

2.   Background

2.1   The Transport Act 1985 deregulated buses, effectively giving control of the market to private companies to determine the bus services, routes and times they provide to the public for profit. In many cases these companies are significant multi-nation entities with interests in rail and other transport services. The Act enables transport authorities (e.g., SWestrans) to provide socially necessary supported services, through competitive tender, where no commercial routes exist.

2.2   There are 20 commercial routes in Dumfries and Galloway which receive no funding support from SWestrans, and their delivery is in the full control of the commercial bus operator. These are detailed in section 3.

2.3   The 1985 Act remains to this day, however the control over certain aspects of bus services was passed to the devolved governments and in 2001, 2005 and 2019 unique Scottish Transport Acts were passed.

2.4   SWestrans as a Model III Regional Transport Partnership (established by the 2005 act) has a statutory duty to secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as it considers appropriate to meet any public transport requirements within its area which would not be met apart from any action taken by it for that purpose.

2.5   The Board in 2011 and then again 2014 agreed the policy and framework under which it would provide such socially necessary services (within the budget available) with a set of 6 prioritised travel need factors developed through public consultation, as follows:
    1. Employment; 2. Education; 3. Health; 4. Retail; 5. Transport Links;
    6. Personal Activity

2.6   SWestrans supports 57 local bus services across the region for a total gross annual spend of some £4.2M with funding contributions received from SPT, Scottish Borders Council and NHS Dumfries and Galloway totalling £0.6M giving a net annual spend of £3.6M.

2.7   During the COVID-19 pandemic there was a significant decline in passengers numbers, although services continued to run for essential workers. During this period, the Scottish Government put in place the COVID-19 Support Grant (CSG) and the COVID-19 Support Grant – Restart (CSG-R). The CSG grant was implemented in

April / May 2020 and provided eligible operators payments at the levels forecast prior to the impact of COVID-19. These payments were based on the estimated level of financial compensation received from the National Concessionary Transport Scheme pre-COVID and the pre-COVID level of financial funding received from the Bus Service Operators Grant.

2.8   The CSG-R grant was an additional grant to increase bus services back to pre-COVID levels. The grant was available for operators to claim from June 2020 and ended on the 31 March 2022. This grant was replaced by the Network Support Grant (NSG). The NSG pays operators monthly and is divided into two sub-schemes, NSG and NSG Plus.

2.9   The NSG Plus scheme is intended to help offset lost revenue while patronage recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSG Plus rate was initially 79.4p/km and was reduced to 50.4p/km in August 2022 and is due to end on 9 October 2022. Beyond this, it is unlikely that government will provide similar funding and all operators are assessing the impact this will have on the viability of services. The base NSG rate of 14.4p/km remains unchanged.

3.   Key Points – Current Local Bus Provision

Overview

3.1   There are 3 types of local bus services in Dumfries and Galloway, providing 94 bus routes covering over 10 million Km per annum:

- **Commercial** (45% of network) - Where the route, timetable and vehicles used are completely in control of the private operator, receives no public funding.
- **Supported** (51% of network) - socially necessary services procured through competitive tendering where these services are not provided commercially and that meet the policies determined by SWestrans. The route, times and vehicles used are specified by SWestrans.
- **Council Operated DGC Buses** (4% of network*) – provided under S.46 of the Public Passenger Vehicle Act 1981. The route, times and vehicles are determined by the Council.   *Considered to be part of the supported services total.
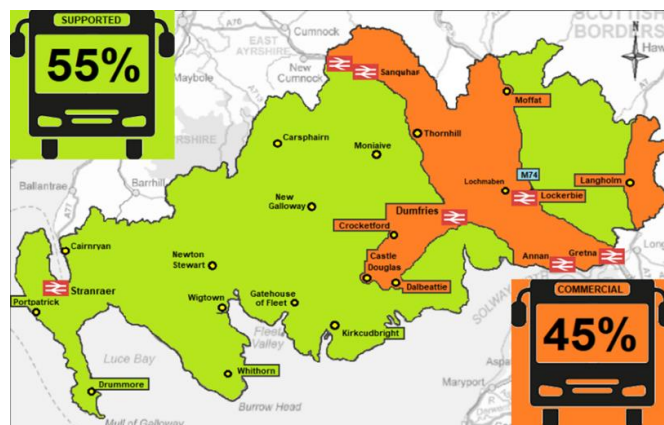
Commercial Local Bus Services

3.2   There are 20 local bus services which operate on a commercial basis, these services are completely in control of the private operator and receive no funding.

3.3   Legislation requires SWestrans not to compete with or procure services on routes that could compete with the commercial service provided.

3.4   A summary of the commercial routes is provided in Table 1 below:

Operator	Service	Destination
Stagecoach Cumbria	179	Carlisle to Annan
Stagecoach West Scotland	246	Dumfries to Cumnock
Houstons Coaches	381	Lockerbie to Dumfries
McCalls Coaches	381	Lockerbie to Dumfries
Houstons Coaches	383	Lockerbie to Annan
Stagecoach West Scotland	501	Dumfries to Castle Douglas
Houstons Coaches	6	Kingholm Quay to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	74	Dumfries to Moffat
Stagecoach Cumbria	79	Carlisle to Annan to Dumfries
Stagecoach Cumbria	80	Annan Town
Stagecoach West Scotland	81	Dumfries to Lockerbie
Stagecoach West Scotland	D1	Locharbriggs to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D10	Lochside to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D12	Lincluden to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D2	Heathhall to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D3	Georgetown to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D4	Lochvale to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	X74	Dumfries to Moffat to Glasgow
Stagecoach West Scotland	X75	Stranraer to Newton Stewart
Borders Buses	X95	Galashiels to Carlisle

Table 1 – Commercial Local Bus Routes 2022

Supported Local Bus Services

3.5   Where local bus services would not be provided other than by action taken by the Transport Authority (SWestrans) it can, through competitive tendering, procure such socially necessary services considered appropriate within the budget available.

3.6   All funding for supported local bus services comes from our constituent Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council and the funding available is determined by the Council through its annual budget setting process.

3.7   There are 57 socially necessary local bus services supported by SWestrans which were all, with the exception of 101/102 Dumfries to Edinburgh and 502 Castle Douglas to Dumfries, awarded to commence in August 2022 on a 1 year contract (plus a possible 1 year extension). A summary of these is provided in Table 2 below:

Operator	Service	Destination
Stagecoach West Scotland	D4A	Lochvale/Georgetown to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D5	Crichton to Dumfries Town Centre
Houstons Coaches	6A	Caerlaverock to Dumfries
Stagecoach West Scotland	D7	Troqueer to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D8	Cargenbridge to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach West Scotland	D9	Summerhill to Dumfries Town Centre
Stagecoach Cumbria	79	Carlisle to Annan to Dumfries (Eve)
Houstons Coaches	379	Gretna to Annan
Houstons Coaches	381	Dumfries to Lockerbie (Eve/Sun)

Operator	Service	Destination
Borders Buses	X95	Galashiels to Langholm to Carlisle (Sun)
Stagecoach West Scotland	101/102	Dumfries to Edinburgh
Houstons Coaches	104	Lockerbie Town / Corrie
Houstons Coaches	110	Lockerbie to Annan
Houstons Coaches	111	Dumfries Town Centre to DGRI
Houstons Coaches	112	Lockerbie to Samye Ling
Houstons Coaches	115	Dumfries to Ae Village
McCalls Coaches	115	Ae Village to Dumfries
McCalls Coaches	117	Lockerbie to Hightae
Andersons of Langholm	120	Langholm Town (Sat)
Andersons of Langholm	123	Langholm to Annan
Telfords Coaches	124	Lanholm to Samye Ling
Houstons Coaches	202	Moniaive to Dumfries
Brownriggs Coaches	212	Moniaive to Thornhill
Brownriggs Coaches	221	Wanlockhead to Sanquhar to Kirkconnel
Houstons Coaches	236	Dumfries to Kirkton to Thornhill
McCalls Coaches	236	Dumfries to Kirkton to Thornhill
Stagecoach West Scotland	358	Stranraer to Girvan
Stagecoach West Scotland	359	Newton Stewart to Girvan
Stagecoach West Scotland	365	Stranraer Town
Stagecoach West Scotland	367	Stranraer to Portpatrick
Houstons Coaches	372	Dalbeattie to Sandyhills
Houstons Coaches	373	Dumfries to Shawhead
Houstons Coaches	380	Lockerbie to Moffat
McCalls Coaches	382	Lockerbie to Carlisle
Houstons Coaches	382	Lockerbie to Gretna
McCalls Coaches	383	Lockerbie to Annan (Sat)
McCalls Coaches	385	Annan to Dumfries
Anderstons of Langholm	388	Annan to Back of the Hill
Andersons of Langholm	390	Annan to Powfoot
Stagecoach West Scotland	407	Stranraer to Drummore
Stagecoach West Scotland	408	Stranraer to Kirkcolm
McCullochs Coaches	410	Glenluce to Stranraer
McCullochs Coaches	411	Stranraer to Knock
McCullochs Coaches	412	Stranraer to Ervie
Stagecoach West Scotland	415	Machars to Newton Stewart
Stagecoach West Scotland	416	Machars to Stranraer
Stagecoach West Scotland	420	Newton Stewart Town
Houstons Coaches	431	Gatehouse to Kirkcudbright (Town)
Stagecoach West Scotland	500	Dumfries to Stranraer
Stagecoach West Scotland	501	Dumfries to Kirkcudbright
Stagecoach West Scotland	502	Kirkcudbright to Castle Douglas
McCalls Coaches	502	Dumfries to Castle Douglas
McCalls Coaches	503	Dumfries to Castle Douglas
McCalls Coaches	505	Dalbeattie to Kirkcudbright
McCalls Coaches	512	Castle Douglas Town
McCalls Coaches	520	Castle Douglas to Dalmellington
McCalls Coaches	521	Laurieston to Dumfries

Table 2 – Supported Local bus Services 2022

Council Operated

3.8   Dumfries and Galloway Councils internal bus fleet (DGC Buses) provides 17 local bus services as shown in Table 3 below. These services are provided under Section 46 of the Public Passenger Vehicle Act 1981 and as such are restricted to Monday to Friday operation. These are funded by Dumfries and Galloway Council.

Operator	Service	Destination
DGC Buses	4A	Larchfield to Dumfries Town Centre
DGC Buses	5A	Georgetown to Crichton
DGC Buses	6A	Caerlaverock to Dumfries
DGC Buses	14	Marchfields to Dumfries Town Centre
DGC Buses	120	Langholm Town (Mon-Fri)
DGC Buses	122	Langholm to Rowanburn
DGC Buses	200	Thornhill to Durisdeer
DGC Buses	213	Thornhill to Dumfries
DGC Buses	367	Stranraer to Portpatrick
DGC Buses	384	Fallford to Ecclefechan to Annan
DGC Buses	415	Elrig to Newton Stewart
DGC Buses	505	Kirkcudbright to Dumfries
DGC Buses	512	Castle Douglas Town
DGC Buses	515	Castle Douglas to Mossdale
DGC Buses	516	Castle Douglas to Auchencairn
DGC Buses	517	Kirkcudbright to Borgue
DGC Buses	555	Kirkcudbright to Dumfries

Table 3 – Council Operated Local Bus Services 2022

3.9   The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 has new powers that enable the provision of local bus services by Local Authorities. Section 34 of the Act inserts a new section to the 2001 Act which enables local transport authorities to provide services for the carriage of passengers by road using vehicles requiring a PSV operator's licence. The local transport authority must be satisfied that the provision of such services will contribute to the implementation of their relevant general policies (as defined in section 48 of the 2001 Act). This repeals the provisions of the 1985 Act which placed a restriction on Councils and/or Regional Transport Partnerships operating such services.

3.10   The Council's bus operation (DGC Buses) does not hold a PSV Operators Licence and therefore does not have the same rights and legal opportunities to run bus services in the same manner as a commercial operator. The Council has agreed to investigate the opportunities to move DGC Buses from its current operational model to become a municipal PSV bus company.

3.11   To establish if this is feasible a full business case will be necessary to inform any decision on the creation of a municipal bus company and presentation to the relevant Council Committee for decision. This business case would look in detail at the strategic case, legislative framework, policy context, case for change, alignment with Council priorities, current provision, bus sector challenges, customer needs, delivery models (it is highly likely that any municipal bus company would need to be established as a separate entity to allow the company to tender for Council/Regional Transport Partnership services), scope for development, benefits/risks, the economic case and a full options appraisal.

3.12   The Council is aware that there would be a need for significant investment in infrastructure and staff to enable them to meet the PSV Operator standards required by the Traffic Commissioner. This would include:

- Investment in a fleet replacement strategy
- Depot Infrastructure – an increase in the number of Depots.
- Staff – a requirement to increase both the amount and skills of staff including:
- More CPC Managers
- All drivers with PCV licence and CPC Driver qualifications
- Additional drivers – fully PCV and CPC qualified
- More mechanics and garage staff

Passenger Usage

3.13   Detailed passenger usage for 2019, 2020 and 2021 has been collated with Stagecoach providing high-level usage numbers on their commercial journeys. This has enabled a comparison of usage to be made across the 3 years with 2019 showing the pre-Covid usage. A summary of the usage figures (annualised) is provided in Table 4 below:

Type	2019	2020	2021
Supported	1,671,934	798,782	1,030,633
Commercial	3,084,354	1,448,278	1,554,462
Totals	**4,756,288**	**2,247,060**	**2,585,095**

Table 4 – Annualised usage figure 2019 to 2021

3.14   Overall, passenger usage is currently some 46% below pre-Covid numbers with a slight build back from the 2020 usage which was 53% below pre-Covid usage. Analysis of the supported service information shows the passenger decline is based on a reduction of Adults (17%), Children (41%) and Concessions (50%).

3.15   Passenger usage for 2022 will be available early in 2023 however indications are that usage remains significantly lower than pre-Covid period.

4.   Key Points – Recent Actions

101-2 Dumfries to Edinburgh

4.1   At its meeting on 24 June 2022, the Board were updated on the position with the replacement of the 101/102 Dumfries to Edinburgh local bus service and were advised that our procurement for a like for like replacement had returned a price of £508k per annum, an increase of 86.4% on the previous level, and that the likelihood was that the service would terminate when the contract ended on 14 August 2022.

4.2   As discussed at the meeting, SWestrans and our partners (Scottish Borders Council and SPT) were still seeking alternative affordable ways to retain a level of service that met the needs of the communities along the route. To further support this and, following agreement with partners and in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair, a contract was awarded to the existing operator at the new annual rate for 20 weeks (plus a possible 13 weeks) with the cost split evenly between the 3 partners. This is a temporary short-term measure whilst consultation can take place on a more sustainable and affordable service.

4.3   The Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair progressed the contract to a conclusion under Standing Order 19 "Delegation to Lead Officer". The Board are asked to homologate the decision of the Lead Officer to agree the award of contract SW/22/101/A Dumfries to Edinburgh at a value of £507,940 per year from 15

August 2022 for a period of 20 weeks (with an option to extend for up to a further 13 weeks).

4.4   Throughout the summer, the partners have worked to find alternative affordable ways to retain a level of service that meets the needs of the communities. It is intended that the consultation event will be scheduled in October with a meeting at a suitable location on the route with all partners in attendance. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the issues, opportunities and possible solutions and seek the views of the communities prior to retendering the service. SPT has agreed to be the lead authority for this tender and the draft timeline is presented below:

Date	Action
Week commencing 26 September 2022	Briefing note issued to elected members and stakeholders
Week commencing 10 October 2022	Consultation event
Week commencing 24 October 2022	Feedback on consultation to elected members and stakeholders
31 October 2022 to 13 November 2022	Tenders issued
14 November 2022 to 27 November 2022	Tenders returned
January 2023	Contract award approved
February 2023	Contract commences

Table 5 – Draft timeline 101/102 Dumfries to Edinburgh local bus service replacement

502 Castle Douglas to Dumfries

4.5   The Board, at its meeting on 24 June 2022, were advised of the withdrawal of the commercial local bus service 502 Castle Douglas to Dumfries with effect from 7 August 2022. As advised and agreed at this meeting. the process undertaken would be to firstly determine if any other operator would wish to take on the service commercially. If there was no interest, then as agreed by the Board, we would seek prices through our procurement framework to replace the service. This procurement would include a like for like timetable replacement and a reduced timetable option(s) to determine if there is any affordable route to provide a replacement service.

4.6   There was no commercial interest and subsequent procurement was issued with a closing date of 15 July 2022.

4.7   As SWestrans has a cash-limited budget which is fully committed, the only source of any additional funding for such replacement is our constituent Council. Therefore, a request for urgent support was made to Dumfries and Galloway Council to provide an annual budget enhancement to SWestrans of some £97k per year (pro-rata rate for 22/23 is £63.5k) to enable the award of a contract to replace this service.

4.8   The Council agreed funding of £63.5k in 2022/23 on a non-recurring basis indicating that this decision did not establish a precedent should any similar request(s) be made in the future. The funding was also on the basis that SWestrans reprofiles existing bus network to ensure the continuation of the 502 and other routes under their direct management within their existing resources. A contract was awarded to operate initially from 8 August 2022 until 31 March 2023 with a possible extension up to August 2024.

4.9   The Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair progressed the contract to a conclusion under Standing Order 19 "Delegation to Lead Officer". The

Board are asked to homologate the decision of the Lead Officer to agree the award of contract SW/22/502/C Castle Douglas to Dumfries at a value of £96,987 per year from 8 August 2022 for a period up to 31 March 2023 (with an option to extend for up to a further period until 4 August 2024).

5.   Key Points – Current Issues

Petition – Reinstatement of Locharbriggs and Heathhall evening services

5.1   A petition with 345 signatures was submitted to SWestrans in August 2022 stating 'I hereby once again formally submit the petition asking for the reinstatement of evening services by Stagecoach or another operator to Locharbriggs Heathhall and all communities between these suburbs and villages whose lives have been severely restricted and in some cases endangered by the withdrawal of these services for the past two years. I gather that the route receives no subsidy as it is profit making. Please either negotiate with Stagecoach whose profits last year were £151 million to get them to accept the necessity socially and culturally of keeping these routes open in the evening, or provide some subsidy to help them run these services or provide an alternative operator or run them as the Council as I believe you are now allowed to do. I have written to the Transport Secretary asking for an enquiry into the loss of these vital services in particular and the very poor provision of bus services in Dumfries and Galloway as a whole. I would ask you for a formal response to this petition so I can pass it on to the 345 signatories and relevant Councillors MSPs.'

5.2   The Lead Officer acknowledged receipt of the petition on 16 August 2022 and provided the following response:

> 'Thank you for submitting the petition to SWestrans to 'reinstate evening bus services to Locharbriggs and Heathhall', I confirm receipt.

> Local bus services to Locharbriggs and Heathhall are provided on a commercial basis by Stagecoach West Scotland and as such receive no funding from SWestrans to operate. All decisions on the route including frequency are the responsibility of the operator. Stagecoach has recently confirmed that the service will continue to operate its current timetable on a permanent basis with the last Monday to Saturday journey departing from Great King Street at 2020.

> I can advise that the petition will be highlighted to the SWestrans Board at its meeting on 23 September 2022.'

5.3   Prior to March 2020, evening journeys to Locharbriggs/Heathhall operated from Great King Street at 2020, 2100, 2140, 2220, 2300, 2340 and 0020. As indicated above, Stagecoach has confirmed that the last journey they will operate is the 2020 and they are not in a position to reinstate any later journeys. Given this, and in line with established practice, the opportunity to operate some/all of the journeys was highlighted to other local bus operators. No operator indicated any interest in providing journeys. The Board are asked to consider the information above and any action they wish officers to undertake

Confidential Paper – Sustainability of a current contract

5.4.   The Board will consider a confidential paper on the significant challenges to the sustainability of a contract which commenced on 8 August 2022.
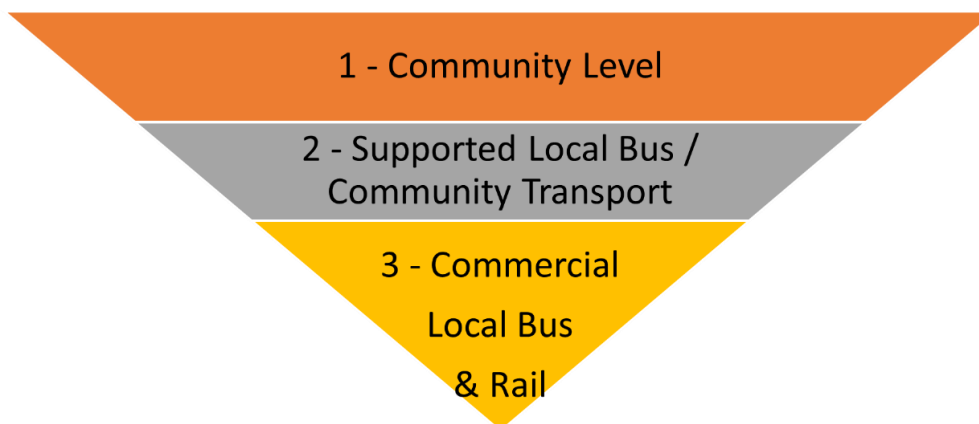
6.   Key Points – Future Challenges and the new Public Transport model

New Public Transport model

6.1   At its meeting on 24 September 2021, the Board agreed to SWestrans being the lead Community Planning Partner for the development and delivery of a new Public Transport Model, subject to the identified staff resource being provided.

6.2   Dumfries and Galloway Council agreed funding within its budget process for 2022/23 to 3 additional staff resources for SWestrans. Recruitment for these posts is nearing completion with 1 post filled and the other 2 due to reach interview stage shortly.

6.3   The model will seek to utilise the opportunities available to provide our residents with a needs-based, coordinated, affordable and integrated network that allows easy transitions across modes. The model will be structured around a 3 tier framework for delivering a public transport network for the region which incorporates all journey needs, outlined in the diagram below:

Tier 1 – Community Level Provision: made up of a number of tailored and flexible services providing travel opportunities at community level linking directly to amenities/services or to a more structured/timetabled public transport option. This tier will take the learning and structures developed through the Community Transport Public Social Partnership (PSP) and expand across the region. This 'mainstreaming' of the PSP learnings will be a critical building block for the delivery of needs-based transport.

Tier 2 – Supported Local Bus and Community Transport Services: made up of supported bus services provided by bus operators, DGC Buses and Community Transport. This would include fixed or semi-fixed bus routes along with Demand Responsive Transport services that would either complement the current supported routes or be an alternative to these routes. One of the major aims of Tier 2 services would be to increase patronage of Tier 3 services through the development of Hub and Spoke feeder services to assist with the overall sustainability of commercial routes.

Tier 3 – Commercial Local Bus and Rail Services: made up of commercial bus routes and ScotRail services. They would operate on the main corridors where there is high passenger demand for these services. Tier 3 services would be operated, in the main, by the commercial bus sector and Train Operating Companies

6.4   A vital element of this new model will be co-ordinating, scheduling and planning resources more effectively particularly in Tier 1 but also across Tier 2 to ensure that these resources are used efficiently whilst delivering high quality and appropriate services to the travelling public. It will be key that journeys are integrated, with all key partners working collaboratively and that passengers have a simple and flexible way to book transport if needed. Therefore, development and establishment of a Transport Hub which creates an integrated single booking and scheduling point of contact will be an essential part of the new model.

6.5   The development of a new public transport model will be challenging and complex. It will require buy-in from all key stakeholders and the travelling public. As well as designing and introducing new transport services it also requires a different approach to funding, governance and will require the establishment of the necessary key infrastructures and structures to enable delivery. Achieving a fully integrated, co-ordinated and sustainable public transport network will require the development of a partnership(s) between the Council, SWestrans, the commercial bus sector, community transport, local communities and the NHS. There will be a need for this partnership(s) to develop an operational model(s) that is/are flexible, dynamic and fit into the governance and operational strengths of the key stakeholders.

6.6   It is important that the timescales for the development and implementation of the model by April 2024 coincide with tendering for the local bus network.

6.7   Therefore, as indicated in paragraph 3.7, it was intended that all supported local bus services were tendered to start in August 2022 on a 1 year contract (with possible 1 year extension). However, this has been complicated by the challenges presented by the 101/102 Dumfries to Edinburgh (paragraphs 4.1 to 4.4) and 502 Castle Douglas to Dumfries (paragraphs 4.5 to 4.9) contracts both of which will terminate and require resolution in early 2023.

6.8   The initial phases in the development of the new model would include the following:
- Establishment of a Social Enterprise Organisation for Community Transport.
- The Public Social Partnership model mainstreamed as the model for service design and engagement (as referenced in the parallel report and presentation to this meeting on the Community Transport Strategy).
- Establishment of a Transport Hub.
- Consideration and development of options for DGC Buses (inc. PSV Operation) as indicated in paragraphs 3.8 to 3.12
- Design of a new bus network – mixture of DRT Hub & Spoke / Accessible Services, Community Car Clubs - making use of Councils vehicle downtime to fit in with the supported network established by SWestrans.
- Establishment of Bus Service Improvement Partnership Working Group.

Delivery and challenges
6.9   The development and implementation of the new model was, as indicated in paragraph 6.6, initially expected to be completed by April 2024.

6.10   The recent challenges on services 101 Dumfries to Edinburgh and 502 Castle Douglas to Dumfries and the need to find a resolution to these services within the cash limited budget available early in 2023 will now require a review of the existing supported local bus network to determine what, if any, efficiencies can be identified to enable all routes to be maintained.

6.11   However, it is unlikely that any efficiencies are possible within such short-term (1 year) contracts and therefore it will be necessary to review all current services in line with the Board's agreed policy and framework, as indicated in paragraph 2.5, and provide further information to the Board at its next meetings in November 2022 and January 2023 on what level of service could be provided to communities from August 2023.

6.12   This will be further exacerbated with the ongoing operating cost volatility (fuel, maintenance, wages), low passenger numbers and the challenges operators are having with the national shortage of qualified drivers.

6.13   In addition, as indicated in paragraph 2.9, with additional government support through the NSG Plus scheme due to end on 9 October 2022 all operators are assessing the impact this will have on the viability of services.

6.14   Whilst we do anticipate a level of inflation across supported services, there is simply not enough available budget to ensure that we can meet the needs of all of our constituents. Public Transport is facing an extremely challenging time ahead and unless significant additional revenue funding is provided service levels will need to change as operators and transport authorities react to the current challenges.

7. Implications	
Financial	The financial implications in relation to future sustainability could be significant and will be monitored as appropriate.
Policy	SWestrans has a statutory duty to determine the policy and provision of socially necessary bus services within the budget it has available. Bus service provision is a key priority within the RTS and within Dumfries and Galloway Council's Council Plan
Equalities	Procurement exercises to retain local bus services that may be cancelled commercially and to trial new models of service delivery are undertaken with the aim to retain local bus services and mitigate the impact of any such loss. The reduction of local bus services will impact on a number of groups with protected characteristics: Older people would be disproportionately affected by reductions in services. At a minimum, services would be reduced for personal activity and retail, removing non-peak journeys. Older people tend to use these services, and many rely on the national concessionary fare scheme for their travel. Disabled people who rely on public transport for their travel needs would face an increased lack of accessibility. Our own research shows that women are more reliant on public transport than men and have lower levels of access to private vehicles. Pregnant women and mothers of younger children also tend to rely

	more heavily on public transport for accessing health and retail, and other facilities.
	Service reduction will have a potential impact on the mental and physical health of residents who will suffer reduced access to facilities.
	Service reduction will impact those in more isolated areas who cannot access alternative transport.
	Research indicates that those members of society on lower income rely heavily on public transport for access to all essential services; any reduction in provision could result in increased hardship and greater inequality.
Climate Change	Bus service provision can have a positive impact on climate change objectives by reducing emissions associated with car usage.
Risk Management	Local bus provision relates to the known risks: R02 – Public Image; R03 – Strategic Direction R07 – Revenue Funding; R08 – Bus Contracts Prices; R11 – Contract Disputes R13 – Lack of Bus Operators and Drivers

8. Recommendations

Members of the Board are asked to:

8.1   note the summary of current local bus network provision in Dumfries and Galloway;

8.2   note the update on recent actions in relation to local bus services 101/102 Dumfries to Edinburgh and 502 Castle Douglas to Dumfries;

8.3   homologate the decision of the Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to agree the award of contract SW/22/101/A Dumfries to Edinburgh at a value of £507,940 per year from 15 August 2022 for a period of 20 weeks (with an option to extend for up to a further 13 weeks);

8.4   homologate the decision of the Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair to agree the award of contract SW/22/502/C Castle Douglas to Dumfries at a value of £96,987 per year from 8 August 2022 for a period up to 31 March 2023 (with an option to extend for up to a further period until 4 August 2024);

8.5   consider the information in section 5 of the report in relation to the petition for the reinstatement of evening journeys on local bus service D1 Locharbriggs / Heathhall and determine any action for officers to undertake;

8.6   note the update on the proposed new Public Transport model and delivery challenges; and

8.7   agree to receive further reports on a review of all current supported local bus services to meet the delivery challenges identified.

Douglas Kirkpatrick – Report Author Tel:01387 260136 Date of Report: 14 September 2022 File Ref: SW2/meetings/2022	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick, Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park, Dumfries DG2 8PN

Report   **South West of Scotland Transport Partnership**   **23 September 2022**

RAIL UPDATE

1. Reason for Report
To update Members of the Board on the following rail developments:
- National Rail Conversation
- Rail Station Re-openings STAG addendums
- Lockerbie Services

2. Background
The region is served by three railway lines:
- The Glasgow and Southwestern Line (GSWL) which runs down the Stranraer Line which connects the far west of the region into the Central Belt network at Ayr, and with services on to Kilmarnock.
- The Glasgow and Southwestern Line (GSWL) which runs down the Nith Valley. Stations in Dumfries and Galloway include Kirkconnel, Sanquhar, Dumfries, Annan, and Gretna.
- The West Coast Main Line (WCML) passing through the east of the region, with a station at Lockerbie.

3. National Rail Conversion
3.1   The National Rail Conversation (NRC) was launched by the Minister for Transport in February 2022 with the aim of engaging with members of the public, both rail and non-rail users, on the future of ScotRail. Transport Scotland want to seek suggestions on what the public want from ScotRail in the future and will use these suggestions to inform decision making going forward.

3.2   As part of the engagement Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) have been asked to produce a submission of suggestions, by early 2023. The suggestions from RTPs will assist engagement between Transport Scotland, RTP's and RTP stakeholders on the National Rail Conversation.

3.3   Transport Scotland will provide SWestrans with a brief, listing subjects for discussion, for SWestrans to respond to and produce a paper on highlighting our suggestions for the future of ScotRail. Members are asked to agree to officers drafting a submission to be presented at the November Board which will allow members the opportunity to feed their views into the suggestions paper prior to submission to Transport Scotland. Transport Scotland are keen to be involved in the process and work collaboratively with SWestrans to deliver the paper.

4. Rail Station re-openings STAG Addendums
4.1   Three Strategic Business Cases for Thornhill, Beattock and Eastriggs were submitted to Transport Scotland by SWestrans in 2019. Consideration of these three Strategic Business Cases was paused by Transport Scotland during the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2). The recommendations in STPR2 were published in January 2022 and confirmed that new rail stations did not form part of the strategic rail recommendations. At its meeting on 28 January 2022, the Board agreed that the Chair write to the Transport Minister seeking urgent clarification on the status of the

Strategic Business Cases for Thornhill, Beattock and Eastriggs and assurance that these were now being progressed through the relevant railway process. A letter was sent on 2 February 2022 which was shared with Board at its meeting on 24 June 2022.

4.2 A response from Transport Scotland's Head of Infrastructure Planning was received on 30 May 2022. The response confirmed our understanding of the STPR2 draft recommendations and stated 'Given that STPR2 has now reported and its draft recommendations published, Transport Scotland is now in position to provide feedback on the submitted reports in line with the response provided in December 2019. Given that all three documents are substantial reports in themselves it would be our intention to provide a consolidated set of feedback which we anticipate should be available in late summer.'

4.3 The response also stated, 'In advance of the specific feedback and as promoter, you may wish to consider whether updates to the reports are required to reflect, for example: changes in transport demand or provision in a study area, including those that have occurred post Covid; new or recently published and relevant national policies, strategies and plans; and recent updates to STAG guidance.'

4.4 Following receipt of the response the Lead Officer discussed it's content with Stantec, the consultant who undertook all 3 STAG reports, to seek advice on the submission of any updates to the reports, timelines and cost. The following advice was provided by Stantec:
- All of the data used to inform the STAG work was collected pre-COVID. This includes the station surveys and all information relating to the network supply side and transport demand, as well as the socio-economic data.
- Stakeholder views may well have altered given the pandemic, as well as the public views potentially – but re-doing the public engagement would be a substantial undertaking and is likely to cause confusion.
- The STAG has recently (March 2022) been revised with some changes to the STAG criteria, with re-organised existing criteria and some new additional criteria.
- To update all the reports with new information would come at a substantial cost.

However:
- the rationale for the stations was never premised on passenger volumes and was focussed on the connectivity benefits (suggesting that re-doing station surveys is unlikely to alter the underpinning narrative).
- COVID impacts certainly will have changed travel patterns and the way people work and live, but this is still settling down post-pandemic – so collecting data now would be a risk.
- The objectives set for the study(s) still hold true.

4.5 Following the advice above, the Board at its meeting on 24 June 2022 agreed that given the post-COVID 'new normal' has not yet been truly established and the rationale for the 3 schemes is unlikely to be altered significantly, instead of spending substantial funds updating large parts of the reports it would be more appropriate to include a short addendum for each area. Each addendum would include:

- a discussion on broadly what has changed in terms of the transport supply side – this will differ for the three studies and will also include updates with regards to development planning.
- a discussion on the pandemic impacts (which will include commentary on the impacts to public transport) and the likely impacts for each study (the latter of which will differ between studies).
- a discussion on the ongoing uncertainty around working patterns and lifestyle choices due to COVID – this may differ between the studies given the slightly differing focus of the benefits to the individual communities
- a discussion on the updated policy context since the reports were prepared in relation to the Climate Change Plan, National Transport Strategy 2 and Transport Scotland targets in respect of vehicle kilometre reductions and the route to net zero – this will be similar between the studies.

4.6   The addendums for each of the three STAG reports have now been finalised and are included as **Appendix 1, 2, and 3**. They were submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration on 27 August 2022 and officers will update the Board when a response is received. The Board are asked to note the three addendums and their submission to Transport Scotland.

5.   Lockerbie Services

5.1   Throughout 2022 there has been significant disruption to train services operated by Transpennine Express and Avanti West Coast that serve Lockerbie Station with a number of on-the-day and/or evening before cancellations.

5.2   Transpennine Express (TPE) have introduced a reduced timetable from 12 September 2022 in order to improve the stability of services and provide greater certainty for passengers. Some services at Lockerbie have been temporarily removed from the timetable and TPE have highlighted that they will review and assess with stakeholders, and the Rail North Partnership, over the coming months the effectiveness of the reduced timetable, with the aim of progressively re-introducing services from the December 2022 timetable change, with full restoration by May 2023 at the latest.

5.3   A summary of the weekday stopping pattern is shown below, with the TPE journeys that were removed from 12 September highlighted in **bold** text:

From Lockerbie   (G) – to Glasgow   (E) – to Edinburgh
0709(G), 0835(E), **0930(G)**, 1027(G), 1032(E), 1138(G), 1226(E), 1335(G), **1443(G)**, 1536(G), 1634(E), **1734(G)**, 1835(E), **1935(G)**, 2037(E), 2044(G), 2210(G), 2236(E)

Arriving at Lockerbie   (G) – from Glasgow (E) – from Edinburgh
0550(G), 0712(E), 0726(G), **0810(G)**, 0900(G), 0911(E), 1010(G), 1111(E), **1210(G)**, 1306(G), 1311(E), 1409(G), 1513(E), 1609(G), 1711(E), 1810(G), 1825(G), 1912(E), **2008(G)**, 2104(G), **2112(E)**

5.4   Saturday service patterns will be similar to weekdays, with some differences and Sunday services will reflect recent service patterns.

5.5   TPE will also be providing rail replacement buses at certain times of the day to provide additional connectivity between Lockerbie and Carlisle, and one rail replacement bus from Edinburgh to Lockerbie. These are shown in Table 1 below:

Depart Lockerbie	Arrive Carlisle
1210	1250
2010	2050
2225	2305
Depart Carlisle	**Arrive Lockerbie**
0915	0955
1715	1755
1925	2005
Depart Edinburgh	**Arrive Lockerbie**
2015	2225

Table 1 – Rail replacement bus services - Lockerbie

5.6   Officers will provide any further relevant updates on services at Lockerbie at future Board meetings.

6. Implications	
Financial	None.
Policy	No change in policy.
Equalities	Opportunities to improve and enhance travel experience for those with protected characteristics may emerge from the NRC.
Climate Change	No change in policy.
Risk Management	None.

7.   Recommendations
Members of the Board are asked to: 7.1   agree that officers draft a submission to the National Rail Conversation which will be presented at the November Board allowing members the opportunity to feed their views into the paper prior to submission to Transport Scotland; 7.2   note the three STAG addendums attached at Appendix 1, 2 and 3 and their submission to Transport Scotland for consideration; and 7.3   note the current position with services to/from Lockerbie Station.

Report Author: Kirsty Dunsmore	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick
Tel: 07734073391	Lead Officer
Date of Report: 13 September 2022	South West of Scotland Transport Partnership
	Cargen Tower, Garroch Business Park,
File Ref: SW2/meetings/2022	Dumfries, DG2 8PN

Appendix 1- Beattock & Moffat Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal Addendum

Appendix 2- Eastriggs Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal Addendum

Appendix 3- Thornhill Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal Addendum

Beattock and Moffat
Sustainable Transport Options
STAG Appraisal

Addendum

On behalf of **SWestrans**

Document Control Sheet

Project Name: Beattock and Moffat Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal

Project Ref: **330610675**

Report Title: **Addendum**

Date: **26th August 2022**

	Name	Position	Signature	Date
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Approved by:	Scott Leitham	Director of Transport Planning	SL	26/08/22
For and on behalf of Stantec UK Limited				

Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Reviewed	Approved
1					

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1 Background

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 Between 2016 and 2019, Stantec (at the start of the project still Peter Brett Associates) on behalf of SWestrans, undertook, in line with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), the Case for Change, Preliminary Options Appraisal and Detailed Options Appraisal stages for the Beattock and Moffat Sustainable Transport Options study. At that time, the STAG appraisal stages were referred to as the Pre-Appraisal, Part 1 and Part 2 stages.

1.1.2 On conclusion of the work in the Autumn of 2019, the final STAG report was submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration, and some feedback was received. However, at the time, Transport Scotland was undertaking the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2). To inform STPR2, Transport Scotland had commissioned the South-West Scotland Transport Study (SWSTS) which encompassed the Dumfries & Galloway region – this was the first stage in researching the case for investment in transport interventions in the South West of Scotland through a STAG Case for Change study. This study reported in Spring 2019 and took cognisance of the outcomes of the Beattock and Moffat Sustainable Transport Options study.

1.1.3 Given the development of STPR2 was ongoing, and the outcomes of the Beattock and Moffat Sustainable Transport Options study were being considered within the next stages of the STPR development, further independent consideration and progression of the Beattock and Moffat study was not undertaken.

1.1.4 The outcomes and recommendations of STPR2, covering the period 2022 to 2042, were reported in early 2022. These recommendations did not include any of the options developed through the Beattock and Moffat study. As such, SWestrans requested that Transport Scotland now, outwith the STPR process, reconsider the study findings.

1.1.5 However, since the Beattock and Moffat Sustainable Transport Options study report was submitted to Transport Scotland in Autumn 2019, there have been significant developments in terms of transport policy, transport supply, and travel patterns and behaviours.

1.1.6 The COVID-19 pandemic brought a seismic change in terms of working, shopping and lifestyle habits, the impacts of which are still evolving. The impact on public transport was stark and public transport services and patronage levels are still recovering, and may, given changed working and shopping habits, never recover to their pre-pandemic levels. Given the pandemic, both bus and rail operations and timetables have evolved, and there is a need to bring the study transport baseline up to date to reconsider this where it has been used to evidence the transport problems for the study.

1.1.7 In terms of policy, Transport Scotland's *National Transport Strategy 2* (NTS2) was published in early 2020 and the Scottish Government's updated *Climate Change Plan* (2020) set out revised climate change targets including: reducing car kilometres by 20% and phasing out the need for petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030, and supporting all transformational active travel projects. Furthermore, the *Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland* (2022) publication outlines the route map to achieving the 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030 and describes the key sustainable travel behaviours which make up the framework, including investing in the public transport network.

1.1.8 Given these significant changes, Stantec on behalf of SWestrans, has developed this Addendum to the STAG report prior to its review by Transport Scotland. The purpose of the Addendum is to review the previous findings and update key data and outcomes in respect to changes since the original report was submitted in 2019. This Addendum should be read in conjunction with the original report.

1.2 This Report

1.2.1 It is noted that the original study analysed data pre-pandemic, which included station surveys to inform transport demand, as well as a range of stakeholder and public engagement activities. Repeating these data collection and engagement activities would come at a significant cost and could not be considered proportionate.

1.2.2 It is however recognised that:

- the rationale for the Beattock station re-opening option was never premised on high passenger volumes and was focussed on the connectivity benefits (suggesting that re-doing station surveys is unlikely to alter the underpinning narrative)

- Pandemic impacts certainly will have changed travel patterns and the way people work and live, but this is still settling down post-pandemic. As such, collecting data now would be a risk.

1.2.3 Given the above and taking a more pragmatic and proportionate approach, this Addendum to the original report includes:

- A discussion on the updated policy context since the report was prepared in relation to the Climate Change Plan, NTS2 and Transport Scotland targets in respect of vehicle kilometre reductions and the route to net zero and how this strengthens or weakens the case for investment

- A discussion on the pandemic impacts in terms of travel patterns and travel behaviours, and again whether the outcomes of this are likely to strengthen or weaken the problems and opportunities previously identified

- A discussion on the ongoing uncertainty around working patterns and lifestyle choices due to COVID

- A discussion on broadly what has changed in terms of the transport supply side and also any updates with regards to development planning, and whether the outcomes of this analysis strengthen or weaken the problems and opportunities previously identified

- The outcomes of further consultation with the Beattock Station Action Group (BSAG), a key stakeholder in the study, to confirm whether the identified problems and opportunities, study objectives, and options are still pertinent

1.3 Outcomes of original STAG work

1.3.1 As a succinct overview, the problems and opportunities identified, Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) set and options developed, as part of the previous study are noted below.

Problems and Opportunities

1.3.2 The original STAG work identified and evidenced six problems:

- PR1: Poor strategic public transport frequency

- PR2: Long strategic public transport journey times

- PR3: Lack of sufficiently direct public transport services

- PR4: Limited Bus Operating Hours

- PR5: Poor Integration between Bus and Rail

- PR6: Lack of Safe Cycling Route between Moffat and Beattock

Objectives

1.3.3   Three TPOs were set for the study:

- TPO 1: Enable an effective day trip by public transport to key education, retail and social opportunities in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Carlisle

- TPO 2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week

- TPO 3: Increase the inbound public transport catchment to support local businesses through increased visitors to the area

Options

1.3.4   Seven options were developed for the study. Of these, the three shown in bold below were taken through the full STAG appraisal process.

- **Option 1a/b: Adjustment of Service 380 bus times to reduce interchange time at Lockerbie Railway Station with additional direct instances of the service, and extended service operating hours later into the evening**

- Option 2: Bus priority measures in Dumfries town centre

- **Option 3: Increase direct buses to Edinburgh**

- Option 4: Park & Ride (Bus) at Beattock

- Option 5: Increased promotion and further development and support of Community Transport

- **Option 6: Re-open Beattock Railway Station**

- Option 7: Improved cycle link between Beattock and Moffat

2   Policy Updates

2.1   Introduction

2.1.1   As noted in the introduction, there has been significant evolution in the policy context since the original study report was submitted to Transport Scotland in 2019, most notably Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), the Scottish Government's updated Climate Change Plan and Transport Scotland's Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland (2022) publication. The latter publication is at the heart of the policy evolution with the crucial objective of taking measures to reduce Scotland's contribution to climate change, ultimately contributing to the delivery of the Scottish Government's legal commitment to deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

2.1.2   This focus on emissions reductions represents a major shift in emphasis on the transport strategy work which has occurred before, both in Dumfries & Galloway and nationally. In the past, transport planning and investment has more typically been based on models which provide infrastructure and services to meet current and forecast future demand. The emerging new approach is focused instead on reducing the need to travel, making better use of existing assets and, where a journey is required, ensuring that this is made by active travel or public transport where possible.

2.1.3   The remainder of this section discusses the changed policy landscape and how this may impact on the study and its findings.

2.2   National Policy

NTS2

2.2.1   In February 2020, Transport Scotland published its NTS2 which set out a vision for Scotland's transport system over the 20-years to 2040, including a statement of transport's contribution to achieving net zero by 2045. Its 'Vision' is:

'We will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors'.

2.2.2   The NTS2 establishes two 'hierarchies' which define the principles upon which future transport investment decision making and services should be planned. The 'Sustainable Travel Hierarchy' defines the priority which will be given to each mode of transport in future investment planning and is shown in the figure below.
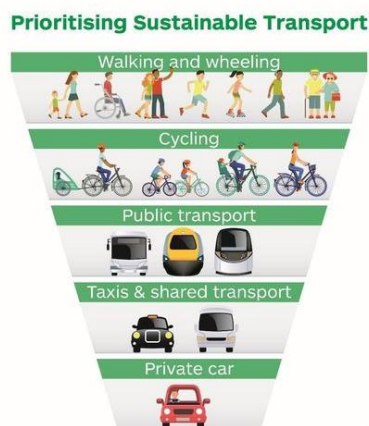

Figure 2:1: NTS2 Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

2.2.3   The Sustainable Travel Hierarchy prioritises walking & wheeling and cycling, with investment to support the single occupant private car being the lowest priority. It is clear that **the options developed through the Beattock and Moffat Sustainable Transport study prioritise active travel and accessible public transport connections, whilst at the same time discouraging car journeys**. As such, **the options are aligned with national transport policy**.

2.2.4   The NTS2 Sustainable Investment Hierarchy, as shown in Figure 2:2, establishes a set of steps to be followed when planning investment in transport provision. This focuses on how to reduce unsustainable travel, where journeys must be made. The implication of this hierarchy is that investment in new infrastructure should only be considered once a wider package of options to reduce the need to travel, reduce the need to travel unsustainably, optimise use of existing infrastructure, influence travel behaviour or manage demand have been explored. Given the rural nature of the study area, trips relating to employment, education and healthcare can be considered trips which 'must be made'. Therefore, with respect to the investment hierarchy, ensuring these can me made sustainably is essential.

Figure 2:2: Sustainable Investment Hierarchy[1]

STPR2

2.2.5   The publication of the draft STPR2 in 2022 outlines the delivery plan for the vision, priorities and outcomes that are set out in the NTS2. A final list of recommendations is included, each appraised in line with STAG. This report informs transport investment in Scotland from 2022 to 2042 by providing evidence-based recommendations for future transport investment decisions. The objectives of STPR2 are consistent to those listed within the NTS2 and across other government transport policy and are:

- Taking climate action

- Addressing inequalities & improving accessibility

- Improving health & wellbeing

- Supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth

- Improving safety and resilience

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[1] National Transport Strategy 2, Transport Scotland

2.2.6 Based on the objectives listed above, the report makes 45 recommendations. The most relevant to the development of this study are listed in the table below. It is noted that new stations were not specifically noted in the recommendations.

Table 2.1: Relevant STPR2 Recommendations

	Recommendations	Commentary
3	Village-Town Active Travel Connections	Consideration of the options developed for this study in light of this recommendation is important. Option 7 is 'Improved cycle link between Beattock and Moffat', which falls clearly under STPR2 recommendation 3 and would also provide benefit in terms of recommendation 8 by linking Beattock to Moffat, where the nearest high school, Moffat Academy is located.
4	Connecting Towns by Active Travel	
8	Increasing Active Travel to School	The option was not progressed through the STAG process as a stand-alone option given the option not strongly supporting the Transport Planning Objectives set for the study. It was however noted that the option could be provided as part of Option 6 (Re-opening Beattock railway station) if that were progressed, to enable active travel to the station from Moffat. It is also noted that a new Active Travel Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway (2022 – 2027) is currently being developed (the strategy is draft at present). Within the draft strategy a Moffat to Beattock connection is ranked 4th of 64 connections considered through a prioritisation exercise. It is assumed this option will be progressed through the Strategy.
20	Investment in Demand Responsive Transport and Mobility as a Service	Option 5 (*Increased promotion and further development and support of Community Transport*) was sifted out of the STAG appraisal work given work was being undertaken by the Public Social Partnership (PSP) to explore healthcare and social transport solutions. Since the original STAG report submission, progress has been made by the PSP around three pilot projects: • Transport Service Developments • Health and Social Care Transport Solutions • Capability/Capacity Building of Community Transport Operators A range of progress has been made including: • Securing funding from South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) that will enable the purchase of an electric accessible people carrier, scheduling software and the employability pathway project development • The continuation of the two Health Transport volunteer car schemes operated by Annandale Community Transport Services (ACTS) and Galloway Community Transport (GCT) • Feeding into the new model for sustainable public transport development where it is envisaged that community transport will play an important role • On-going support to the members of the community transport network • Review of community transport fleet • On-going discussions with key stakeholders to scope out the best way forward for the Health and Social Care hub • Continuing development and establishing a new community transport social enterprise

Recommendations	Commentary
	Given the above, Option 5 is still considered out of scope here given the work already progressing through the PSP.

National Planning Framework 4

2.2.7   The National Planning Framework 4 is currently in the draft consultation phase, with the final draft to be published in late 2022. The plan sits under a National Spatial Strategy, which is guided by four overarching principles:

- Sustainable places – where we reduce emissions and restore and better connect biodiversity

- Liveable places – where we can live better, healthier lives

- Productive places – where we have greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy

- Distinctive places - where we recognise and work with our assets

2.2.8   The draft NPF4 outlines a wide range of plans and developments across five areas of Scotland. Dumfries and Galloway is located within the Southern Sustainability Area. Two of the proposed transport objectives within this area are:

- 22. Create a low-carbon network of towns – Settlements across this area provide services to surrounding rural communities. The towns are well placed to be models of sustainable living. Quality of life for people living in the area will depend on this network in the future and it should be used for the basis of a tailored response to the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. In terms of this study, **Option 7 'Improved cycle link between Beattock and Moffat' is relevant but is being developed through the Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy** as noted above.

- 25. Strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity, with the NPF4 noting '*The area's low-carbon future will depend on supporting modal shift and reducing car use, given current dependence on the car and the need to improve access to services, education and employment. **Public transport, including the bus network, will play an important role in decarbonisation and developing innovative solutions and linkages to the rail system**. Active travel should be supported with wheeling, walking and cycling within and between towns and other communities linked to strategic routes for tourists and visitors*.' **The section marked in bold is pertinent as it strengthens the rationale for this study's Options 1a/b, Option 3 and Option 6** which all improve sustainable transport connectivity, with Option 1/b providing links to the rail network.

Transport (Scotland) Act

2.2.9   The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 is an important legal framework that was designed to help make Scotland's transport network cleaner and more accessible. The law grants new powers to local authorities in the areas of bus provision, parking, low emission zones, road works, smart ticketing, and Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs).

2.2.10   The creation of new powers for RTPs allows for more local provision of bus services and will create new opportunities for increased public transport connectivity and **strengthens the potential for the provision of Options 1a/b within this study**.

A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2022 – 23

2.2.11 The Scottish Government's Programme for Scotland sets out the Government's ambitions for each fiscal year. The document provides strategies and policies across all departments of Government, including transport. Within this year's document, there is a focus on Scotland's transition to a Net Zero Nation in a fair and just way. There are six policy interventions that could strengthen the development of options for the study. Three of these policies come from '*Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Climate Change Plan 2018- 2032*':

- Removing the majority of diesel buses from public transport by the end of 2023

- Reducing car kilometres by 20% by 2030

- Decarbonising Scotland's railways by 2035

2.2.12 The remaining three policies within the Programme for Scotland came from the Bute House Agreement between the Scottish National Party and the Scottish Green Party:

- Phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030

- Nationwide free bus travel for young people under the age of 22

- Spending at least £320 million or 10% of the total transport budget on active travel (beginning in 2024-2025)

2.2.13 The vision for increased spending on active travel and free bus travel for under 22s promotes these modes of transport and further strengthens the case for investment in the options coming through this study.

Consultation on the 20% Reduction in Car KMs: Route Map

2.2.14 The commitment to reduce car kilometres by 20% within the Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Climate Change Plan (2018 – 2032) policy document is a defining aspect of Scotland's net zero future. Transport Scotland recently published their stakeholder consultation report along with a route map.

2.2.15 The framework recognises that any solution must include a holistic suite of interventions to provide car-use reduction options for different trip types in different geographical areas. To encourage the reduction in car usage, the framework outlines the need for a behaviour change by users through positive messaging. This has led to the development of four desired behaviours, of which one is '*switching modes*' noting that '*switching to walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport may be more feasible if a local destination has already been chosen. Active modes and public transport provide opportunities for physical activity which benefits health and mental wellbeing*'. Again, **this policy context further strengthens the rationale for the options appraised through this study**.

A Network fit for the Future: Draft Vision for Scotland's Public Electric Vehicle Charging Network

2.2.16 Transport Scotland published a draft vision for Scotland's public electric vehicle (EV) charging network in late January 2022. The plan aims to encourage the uptake of zero emission vehicles through increasing the number of publicly available EV chargers.

2.2.17 Since 2013, £50 million has been invested into ChargePlace Scotland's network of chargers creating a network of over 2,100 charge points. Some 12.7% of new cars purchased in 2021 were EVs, with Transport Scotland estimating 500,000 to 1 million EVs will be on Scotland's

roads by 2030. To deliver the infrastructure for EVs the vision outlines four main objectives one of which is to Integrate with Scotland's Sustainable Transport System.

2.2.18   While no individual electric vehicle charging option was developed as part of this study, **the inclusion of such infrastructure as part of Option 6 'Re-open Beattock Railway Station' should be considered**.

National Strategy for Economic Transformation

2.2.19   The Scottish Government's Delivering Economic Prosperity strategy document was published in March 2022 and sets out Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation. The strategy includes a number of Policy Programmes of Action of which one action is 'Productive Businesses and Regions'. The aim of this policy programme is to *make 'Scotland's businesses, industries, regions, communities and public services more productive and innovative'*.

2.2.20   The strategy recognises that productivity is driven by a multitude of factors, including the quality of infrastructure and connectivity, and seeks to address current geographical disparities to deliver prosperity for all Scotland's people and places. Under the 'Skilled Workforce' programme of action the strategy states the opportunity for creating a more diverse workforce, but that the '***barriers faced by some, including transport needed to be addressed in order to unlock business productivity and economic prosperity'***. Project 13 'Expand Scotland's Available Talent Pool, at all Skills Levels, to Give Employers the Skills Pipeline They Need to Take Advantage of Opportunities' notes the action to '*systemically address Scotland's labour market inactivity challenges'* with the action to identify, amongst other factors, what steps can be taken to bring more individuals into the labour market including through transport provision. **This policy context further strengthens the rationale for the options appraised through this study which provide strategic linkages to urban conurbations where employment opportunities are more focused.**

2.3   Regional Policy

Regional Spatial Strategy

2.3.1   The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 established a new duty for planning authorities to produce a Regional Spatial Strategy with Local Development Plans. The indicative Regional Spatial Strategies (iRSS) have been used in the development of the NPF4 to ensure closer integration between land-use and transport planning in the region.

2.3.2   The South of Scotland iRSS covers the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway and notes '***Rail Improvements – West Coast Main Line and New Rail Station at Beattock'*** **among the Strategic Development Projects**.

2.3.3   The iRSS highlights the importance of increasing connectivity across the region noting that good transport infrastructure and strong connections between communities and settlements are important to ensure that there are no barriers to participation.

South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy

2.3.4   The South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy (SOSRES) was published by the South of Scotland Economic Partnership in September 2021 with a subsequent Delivery Plan (2022 – 2025) published in November 2021. The 10-year strategy sets out a clear vision for how the partnership wants the region's economy to look and work in the future and focuses on making the South of Scotland "Green, Fair and Flourishing".

2.3.5   The SOSRES has six priority themes:

- Skilled and Ambitious People

- Innovative and Enterprising

- Rewarding and Fair Work

- Cultural and Creative Excellence

- Green and Sustainable Economy

- Thriving and Distinct Communities

2.3.6   Theme six incorporates a transport priority and recognises the need to '*to support the greening of our transport and deliver against Scotland's legally binding targets to reduce and eliminate our carbon footprint*'. The strategy further recognises the need for the region to *'rapidly enhance sustainable transport connectivity within key locations, establish new and innovative models of public transport delivery and build on road, rail and active travel investments, to improve connections within and outwith the South of Scotland'.*

2.3.7   The Delivery Plan for the Thriving and Distinct Communities theme includes Action 6(D) which states '*One of the key challenges and barriers in the South of Scotland is the lack of good transport connectivity'*. The plan states the action to undertake a strategic high-level review of transport proposals and includes note of '*potential new station facilities in the region; potential public transport improvements; and active travel.'* **The option proposals developed through the Beattock and Moffat study clearly align with this action from the SOSRES Delivery Plan.**

Borderlands Growth Deal

2.3.8   The Borderlands Growth Deal was published in March 2021. The deal is the result of a collaboration between the Scottish and United Kingdom governments and acts as a framework for investment for developing the economies of Carlisle, Cumbria, Dumfries and Galloway, Northumberland, and the Scottish Borders.

2.3.9   The plan's shared ambition is to: *'[Ensure] the Borderlands [reaches] its potential for everyone, delivering green growth and attracting new businesses and investment. We will improve our connectivity, deliver skills and innovation, and improve our places to support their longer-term resilience. We will attract new residents and welcome more visitors to enjoy the beautiful natural environment of our vibrant, inclusive region.'*

2.3.10   The plan identifies three key solutions which aim to increase economic growth within the region:

- Narrowing the productivity gap

- Increasing the working age population

- Delivering inclusive growth

2.3.11   The plan focuses on delivering on the following investment themes, with those elements highlighted in bold particularly pertinent to this study:

- Enabling infrastructure – **increasing** digital and **transport connectivity**

- Improving places – **revitalising rural areas**, towns and cities to attract people to live, work and visit. With Moffat a key tourist draw in Dumfries & Galloway, and within commutable distance of both Edinburgh and Glasgow (especially so if working under a hybrid modal where commuting is only require part time), **this is particularly pertinent**

to the study and strengthens the case for investment in strategic transport links to the study area.

- Supporting business, innovation and skills – simulating business growth to create a more diverse regional economy

- Encouraging green growth – capitalising on the green credentials of the Borderlands region and to facilitation decarbonisation and the creation of new high value jobs supporting low carbon energy generation

Regional Transport Strategy

2.3.12   Work to develop the next Regional Transport Strategy got underway in early 2022, with the Case for Change report published in April 2022.

2.3.13   The strategy set out 6 strategic Transport Planning Objectives:

- **TPO1:** To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs

- **TPO2:** To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region

- **TPO3:** To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region

- **TPO4:** To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region

- **TPO5:** To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan

- **TPO6:** To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region

2.3.14   The Case for Change notes the fragile nature of the bus network. The COVID-19 impacts, and the stagnant SWestrans budget to support services means the bus network is even more fragile now than when the original STAG reports were reported in Autumn 2019 (this is discussed in greater detail in Section 3).

2.4   Local Policy

Active Travel Strategy 2022-2027

2.4.1   Dumfries and Galloway's new Active Travel Strategy is currently being developed and is due to be published in Autumn 2022 and aims to *'provide an overarching approach to improving active travel infrastructure and culture within Dumfries and Galloway to better respond to sustainability challenges and meet carbon reduction targets'*. The strategy's principles are **Collaboration**, **Integration**, and **Diversity** and the strategy focuses on the principal of 20-minute neighbourhoods while acknowledging the rural context of Dumfries and Galloway.

2.4.2   The strategy contains eight Strategic Areas of Action where further work is required *to develop local strategic plans to deliver actions on active tourism, key settlement connections, mobility hubs, regeneration of existing paths, old railway tracks, and other major infrastructures with the vision of benefiting corridors and satellite communities in the long term.*

2.4.3   As noted above, to inform this, work has been undertaken to develop a range of 'short paths' which concentrate on linking 16 towns and settlements in the region, of which Moffat is one. **The Moffat to Beattock connection is ranked 4th of all 64 connections considered through a prioritisation exercise** (this initial prioritisation was based on a high-level non-engineering assessment of existing infrastructure, opportunities and constraints on the links with each scored on feasibility, value for money (cost/population) and strategic fit).

Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)

2.4.4   The Dumfries and Galloway LDP2 was published in October 2019 and is the Council's key strategic land use planning document. The purpose of this plan is to set out a long-term strategy and a policy framework to guide future development, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and regeneration of rural areas. Part of the Plan's vision is for '*A viable rural economy and community characterised by ready access to higher education and opportunities for knowledge transfer*'. **The ability to reach educational opportunities in Glasgow and Edinburgh was noted during engagement for the study**.

2.4.5   Data relating to the LDP2 is presented in Appendix B although it is noted that this has not fundamentally altered since the original study report was prepared.

2.5   Summary

2.5.1   Recent changes across the policy landscape, most notably around climate change, present decision makers with the rationale and justification to implement the changes and behavioural change catalysts required to help contribute towards lowering carbon emissions from transport.

2.5.2   This strong underpinning policy context offers strengthened opportunities for successfully developing and implementing sustainable transport schemes.

2.5.3   Furthermore, the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 provides new opportunities for Local Authorities to develop Bus Services Improvement Partnerships and the powers to make Local Services Franchises (replacing Quality Contract Schemes (QCSs)).

2.5.4   In summary, recent policy updates all strengthen the rationale for the options developed and appraised in this study.

3   Pandemic Impacts and Ongoing Uncertainty

3.1   Introduction

3.1.1   The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath has introduced a high degree of uncertainty into all aspects of transport planning. Whilst the short-term picture (during the pandemic and the various levels of restriction) is well understood, there remains some uncertainty regarding the structural (permanent) changes in peoples' behaviour now that the pandemic is largely behind us.

3.1.2   This section discusses the pandemic's impacts on public transport alongside ongoing uncertainty relating to the pandemic as well as recent cost of living impacts.

3.2   COVID-19 Pandemic Impacts

Impact on the Bus Network[2]

3.2.1   Dumfries and Galloway is served by 10 different bus operators, operating both commercial and supported services, with some council operated services.

3.2.2   Whilst some scheduled services operate without subsidy, the extent of the commercially operated network in Dumfries and Galloway is limited.

3.2.3   During the COVID-19 pandemic there was a significant decline in passengers, although services were required to run for essential workers. During this period, the Scottish Government put in place the COVID-19 Support Grant (CSG) and the COVID-19 Support Grant – Restart (CSG-R). The CSG grant was implemented in April / May 2020 and provided eligible commercial operators payments at the levels forecast prior to the impact of COVID-19. These payments were based on the estimated level of financial compensation received from the National Concessionary Transport Scheme (NCTS) pre-COVID and the pre-COVID level of financial funding received from the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG). The grant required operators to deliver around 30% (25-35%) of pre-COVID service levels for the period of the scheme, to maintain core services and to liaise with local authorities and health boards to determine which services should be operated.

3.2.4   The CSG-R grant is an additional grant to increase bus services back to pre-COVID levels. The grant was available for operators to claim from June 2020 and ended on the 31 March 2022. This grant was replaced by the Network Support Grant (NSG), which is intended to last until the end of the 2022/23 financial year. The NSG pays operators monthly and is divided into two sub-schemes, NSG and NSG Plus. This grant is only eligible to operators who are either operating a local bus service as defined in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985 or operating a community transport service possessing a Section 19 or Section 22.

3.2.5   The NSG Plus scheme is intended to help offset lost revenue while patronage recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSG Plus rate will be subject to review and adjustment as patronage and revenue recovers. **The Scottish Government announced the NSG Plus rate (79.4p/km) would reduce in July 2022 to 44.4p/km then cease in October 2022 with operators required to opt-in to the NSG rate of 14.4p/km thereafter. Beyond this, it is unknown whether government will provide any additional funding which may threaten the viability of the bus network**.

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[2] SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy 2022, Case for Change Report, April 2022, SWestrans - Dumfries and Galloway Council - Regional Transport Strategy

Supported Services

3.2.6 It was noted in the original STAG reporting that two-thirds of bus routes operating in Dumfries and Galloway operate with partial or full subsidy, and this subsidy is reducing due to competing pressures on local authority budgets. There is uncertainty regarding how much funding will be available in the future. For commercially run services, the overall viability of services is only achievable if passenger numbers are maintained. As such, the overall bus network and operation across the region is fragile and even minor changes to routes or services (or any new competition with rail), which have the potential to tie up resources or affect patronage, can have major consequences for the viability of the network.

3.2.7 As was also noted in the original STAG reports, the funding available to support bus services had been declining year on year. Since the original STAG report, newly available data from 2019/20 and 2020/21 is shown in the table below which, while showing a small cash increase in the budget available in 2020/21, does highlight there is still a 7% cash decrease in subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21 (this reduction will be greater in real terms). During this period, total bus kilometres have reduced by 16.8%. Supported services have seen a larger reduction in bus kilometres (-18.6%) when compared to commercial services (-13.9%). These declines reflect the COVID-19 pandemic, however, there was still a decline in bus mileage pre-COVID, albeit at a slower pace. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shifting travel-to-work patterns, **the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen**.

Table 3.1: Subsidy Spent on Supported Bus Services and Bus Mileage

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Subsidy (£'000)	£3,736	£3,531	£3,400	£3,395	£3,400	£3,472
Change in subsidy compared to previous year		-5.5%	-3.7%	-0.1%	+0.1%	+2.1%
Commercial milage (km)	3,709,195	3,668,843	3,762,063	3,757,383	3,619,269	3,192,425
Change in commercial milage compared to previous year		-1.1%	+2.5%	-0.1%	-3.7%	-11.8%
Supported (km)	5,372,340	4,855,325	5,167,167	5,004,795	5,091,427	4,371,526
Change in supported milage compared to previous year		-9.6%	6.4%	-3.1%	1.7%	-14.1%
Total (km)	9,091,535	8,524,168	8,929,230	8,762,178	8,710,696	7,563,951
Change in total milage compared to previous year		-6.2%	4.7%	-1.9%	-0.6%	-13.1%

3.2.8 The table below shows passenger numbers for 2019, 2020 and 2021 for all commercial and supported services across the Dumfries and Galloway area.

Table 3.2: Bus Passengers (2019 - 2021)

Type	2019	2020	2021
Supported	1,671,934	798,782	1,030,633
Commercial	3,084,354	1,448,278	1,554,462
Total	**4,756,288**	**2,247,060**	**2,585,095**

3.2.9 When compared to pre-COVID usage figures, commercial services have seen a 50% decrease in passengers to 2021, supported services a 38% decrease, with an overall

decrease of 46% in passenger numbers. Further analysis provided by SWestrans (to inform the Regional Transport Strategy Case for Change) shows that the passenger decline is based on a reduction of Adults (17%), Children (41%) and Concessions (50%). At the UK level, bus travel (excluding London) is now around 70% of pre-pandemic levels.[3]

3.2.10 **There is a risk of further reductions in supported service provision due to the rising subsidy costs and a stagnant budget to fund such services. This could result in fewer services connecting rural towns, such as Beattock and Moffat, to economic and leisure opportunities and public services**.

Impacts on Rail Network

3.2.11 The COVID pandemic and the ongoing changes to working patterns and commuting have significantly impacted on the rail network. To highlight this, passengers per annum by station between 2017 and 2021, for all stations located in the region based on Office and Road and Rail (ORR) estimates on passenger entries and exits, is shown the figure below.

Figure 3:1: Passengers per annum by station (2017 – 2021, ORR)

3.2.12 The patronage figures are significantly impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with large drop-offs evident at all stations in 2020/21, equating to an over 86% reduction at all stations. At the UK level, rail travel is now around 80% of pre-pandemic levels.

Long Term Travel Behaviour Changes

3.2.13 As noted in the introduction to this section, while the short-term picture (during the pandemic and the various levels of restriction) is well understood, there remains uncertainty regarding the structural (permanent) changes in peoples' behaviour once the pandemic is behind us.

3.2.14 The Office for National Statistics recently published the article '*Is hybrid working here to stay'* which analysed data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OLS) to consider peoples future plans to both work from home and in the workplace[4]. Data for the OLS was collected in February 2022, after government guidance to work from home when possible was lifted.

3.2.15 More than eight in 10 workers who had to work from home during the pandemic said they planned to hybrid work. Since then, the proportion of workers hybrid working has risen from

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[3] Transport use during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[4] Is hybrid working here to stay? - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

13% in early February 2022 to 24% in May 2022. The percentage working exclusively from home has fallen from 22% to 14% in the same period.[4]

3.2.16   Increased home working during the pandemic also encouraged people to reassess their lifestyle priorities and where they live. There is a need and desire for larger properties, with additional rooms to allow for a separate 'office' and a likely reduced need in the future to commute on a daily basis. These two key factors have driven up interest in both larger properties and more rurally located properties further from key employment centres. Indeed, the population of Dumfries and Galloway rose by 0.3% from mid-2020 to mid 2021[5] (whereas the population of the region had previously been slow decline since 2011). **Beattock and Moffat are situated within commutable distance of the key employment centres of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Carlisle and are particularly attractive if that commute were only to me made once or twice a week under a 'hybrid' working arrangement.** While people may be travelling less, they may well be travelling further and strategic transport links are even more important in this regard.

3.3   Cost of Living increases including increased fuel costs

3.3.1   Prices in the UK are currently rising at the fastest rate in 40 years. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), UK inflation jumped to 9.4% in the 12 months to June from 9.1% in May.[6]

3.3.2   Between June 2021 and June 2022, the cost of petrol and diesel increased significantly. The Petrol Retailers Association note that customers bought 15% less fuel in 2021 as a result of the pandemic[7]. Given this, retailers had to make higher profits on each litre sold to cover their costs. Therefore, fuel prices were already rising before the invasion of Ukraine (which started in February 2022), and the ongoing sanction against Russia, the world's second largest oil exporter[8], has exacerbated the issue.

3.3.3   In June 2022, petrol and diesel sales fell by 4.3%[9] from May indicating people were cutting back on spending due to concerns over what they could afford.

3.3.4   This increased cost of living, and particularly fuel can have a significant impact on rural communities where the only way to access employment and education is often with a car. In addition, businesses and services in these areas require staff to be able access their place of work, again often by car as the only viable travel option.

3.3.5   The significantly increased fuel costs have a number of potential impacts:

- It becomes financially unviable to commute to work or education out of the area, reducing opportunities and could lead to increased deprivation and / or out migration from the area as a result

- It becomes financially unviable to attend social activities out of the area, increasing social isolation

- Businesses and essential services cannot attract staff and are no longer able to operate in the area and close / relocate elsewhere

[5] City populations fall in latest estimates | National Records of Scotland (nrscotland.gov.uk)

[6] Inflation: Fuel, milk and eggs push prices up at fastest rate in 40 years - BBC News

[7] Fuel prices: Why is petrol so expensive in the UK? - BBC News

[8] https://www.investopedia.com/articles/company-insights/082316/worlds-top-10-oil-exporters.asp

[9] Cost of living: Fuel and clothing at top of family spending cuts - BBC News

- Visitors choose not to come to the area given the cost of travel, impacting on the local economy

3.3.6   However, given this, **there is a clear opportunity that increasing fuel costs could accelerate a switch to more sustainable transport modes if they were available, and that enabling access to and from rural areas by sustainable transport has the ability to prevent some of the potential negative impacts**.

3.3.7   It should however be recognised that the rising cost of fuel will also be impacting on the operational costs for public transport operators and as such the costs of bus and rail fares is likely to be impacted to some degree.

4 Problems and Opportunities Update

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section replicates, where pertinent, the original STAG report Section 2.4 *Key Problems and Opportunities Identified* and updates the data and commentary. The updates take cognisance of refreshed Summer 2022 data, as presented in Appendix A in relation to transport supply analysis, updated development data as presented in Appendix B and the commentary in the previous chapters. In addition, a meeting was held with Beattock Station Action Group to discuss whether the problems and opportunities, objectives and options developed originally remained pertinent. Appendix C presents the key points from the discussion.

4.2 Key Problems and Opportunities Identified

4.2.1 From the original study engagement exercise, the key problems and opportunities for the study area, as perceived by the public and the key stakeholders were reviewed and assessed before being collated into a succinct list of problems and opportunities, for which data was analysed.

4.2.2 The key transport problems and opportunities identified were as follows:

- PR1: Poor strategic public transport frequency

- PR2: Long strategic public transport journey times

- PR3: Lack of sufficiently direct public transport services

- PR4: Limited bus operating hours

- PR5: Poor integration between bus and rail

- PR6: Lack of safe cycling route between Moffat and Beattock

4.2.3 Each of these is presented below, alongside the updated evidence of the problems where this has altered given the new analysis undertaken. This section does not seek to fully replicate the original report but builds on the previous reporting and should be read in conjunction with the original report narrative.

PR1: Poor Strategic Public Transport Frequency

PR2: Long Strategic Public Transport Journey Times

PR3: Lack of sufficiently direct Public Transport Services

4.2.4 Public transport connections directly serving Beattock and Moffat are still limited to bus as there is no railway station in or near the towns.

4.2.5 It was noted in the initial public consultation exercise that there are very limited or no direct bus connections to Edinburgh and Carlisle. This remains true in 2022.

Key Evidence

4.2.6 In terms of existing public transport connections:

- Services to Glasgow have been reduced (a loss of four services over the operating week).

- Bus service 101 connects Beattock and Moffat with **Edinburgh** directly (with details provided in Appendix A.2.1). The service had been due to be discontinued in August 2022. However, local campaigners staged protests[10] to campaign for the 'vital link' and a funding extension was secured to enable the service to run until March 2023[11]. **The longer-term future of the service remains unknown**. It is also noted that the travel time of the service remains long at around 2.5 hours.

- The number of bus services to Glasgow and Dumfries has decreased since 2019 with one fewer weekday services to Glasgow and two fewer weekday services to Dumfries, as shown in Table 4.1. There is still a much greater offering of direct strategic connections from Lockerbie compared to Moffat / Beattock.

Table 4.1: Strategic public transport connections from Beattock and Lockerbie

Strategic Location		Number of direct public transport connections from Moffat / Beattock	
Year		2019	2022
To…	Glasgow	12	11 (-1)
	Edinburgh	3	3 (-)
	Dumfries	18	16 (-2)
	Carlisle	0	0 (-)

4.2.7 In summary, the **number of services to both Dumfries and Glasgow have reduced since the original report was prepared and the future of the bus service to Edinburgh is uncertain. As such problems PR1, PR2 and PR3 have been worsened**.

Economic and Social Impacts

4.2.8 From both the original initial public engagement, and the Public Event and associated feedback from the online survey, the existing level of transport connectivity was felt to be causing a number of economic and social problems in the local communities, as set out in the original STAG report. These were discussed with Beattock Station Action Group in July 2022. The following additional comments were made:

- **Limiting visitors to the area.** It was re-emphasised that the town (Moffat) relies on tourists and that there had been an increase in visitors during and post COVID-19. However, the poor public transport connections meant that most visitors arrived by car. The lack of direct public transport links was still felt to be a constraint on tourism in the area, and the recent significant increase in fuel costs was creating serious concern around future visitor numbers to the area. The new long-distance walking trail under development linking Moffat to Berwick-Upon-Tweed was felt likely to encourage visitors but a way of accessing the start of the walk more easily with public transport was required in order to promote the route and capitalise on its availability.

- **Sustainable Communities**. The importance of encouraging in-migration to the area was noted to ensure the sustainability of both the Beattock and Moffat communities in the longer term. It was noted, anecdotally, that many new residents are working age and chose to live in the area as they can access the cities but live in a village environment. The clear pandemic-induced in-migration of people to the area was noted with houses felt

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[10] Protest staged along threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route - BBC News
[11] Threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route secures funding lifeline - BBC News

to be selling much faster. It was felt that better public transport connections could help further encourage people into the area.

PR4: Limited Bus Operating Hours

4.2.9   Bus services:

- Do not operate across the entire day, often with the last service running in the early evening

- Operate with a much more limited Sunday service

Key Evidence

4.2.10   Table 4.2 shows all bus services which serve Beattock comparing 2019 and 2022 for:

- The first bus departure to Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dumfries and Lockerbie

- The last bus departure back from Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dumfries and Lockerbie

- The number of connections of the services a day

4.2.11   The travel times to / from Moffat differ by five minutes from the times set out in the table for Beattock, with arrival / departure at Moffat either five minutes earlier or 5 five minutes later depending on direction of travel.

4.2.12   The table shows that:

- The last weekday bus back from Dumfries arrives at Beattock at 18:20 and Moffat at 18:25, which is significantly earlier than the service in 2019 when it arrived back at 21:20 and 21.25. On a Sunday the last bus back arrives into Beattock at 17:20 and Moffat at 17:25, when previously, in 2019, this was 21:20 and 21:25 also. This limits the time residents of Beattock and Moffat can spend in Dumfries if they rely on the bus or wish to use public transport, as the last bus back departs Dumfries at 17:45 on a weekday and 16:45 on a Sunday.

- The last bus back from Glasgow departs Glasgow at 20:15 on a weekday and Saturday, and 19:15 on a Sunday. The last bus back from Glasgow departed Glasgow at 22:40 on weekday and weekend evenings in 2019. This limits the time residents of Beattock and Moffat can spend in Glasgow if they rely on the bus or wish to use public transport, and is especially limiting for evening cultural activities.

- The time of the last bus from Lockerbie arrives at Beattock at 16:15 on a Sunday, which is earlier than in 2019 when the latest bus was at 18:10, reducing the time residents of Beattock can spend in Lockerbie if they rely on the bus or wish to use public transport

4.2.13   In summary, **the length of the operating day to both Dumfries and Lockerbie have reduced** since the original report was prepared and as such **this problem has been worsened**.

Table 4.2: Bus Operating Hours from and to Beattock

Beattock / Moffat ... To / From	Service	Serving	Weekday / Saturday						Sunday					
			First connection from Beattock to….		Last connection back to Beattock from…(arrival time in Beattock)		No. services (each direction)		First connection from Beattock to…		Last connection back to Beattock….(arrival time in Beattock)		No. services (each direction)	
			2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
Edinburgh	101	Dumfries – Beattock - Moffat – Edinburgh	06:01	06:01	23:00	23:00	3	3	10:30	10:30	23:11	23:11	1	1
Glasgow	X74	Dumfries – Beattock – Moffat – Glasgow	06:45	06:45	00:50	21:50	12	11	07:20	07:20	00:50	20:50	8	6
Dumfries	X74 / 74 /101	Dumfries – Beattock – Moffat – (Glasgow / Edinburgh)	07:45	07:50	21:20	18:20	18	16	10:50	10:50	19:20	17:20	10	7
Lockerbie	380	Lockerbie - Beattock – Moffat	07:20	08:00	18:05	18:00	10	9	11:30	11:05	18:10	16:10	4	4

PR5: Poor Integration between Bus and Rail

4.2.14   In terms of integration between bus and rail, there are problems relating to:

- Poor integration between bus and rail timetables

- A lack of physical integration between bus stops and railway stations with the rail network not easily accessible, especially for those with limited mobility

Key Evidence

Considerable analysis was undertaken to inform this in the original report. This has not been re-done. However, given the reduced number of bus services and shorter operating day in 2022 compared to 2019, it can be surmised that this problem has at best remained the same, but most likely worsened. This is especially likely to be the case for evening rail connections where later running bus services have been removed.

PR6: Lack of Safe Cycling Route between Moffat and Beattock

4.2.15   Consultation highlighted that:

- It was felt that cycle provision in the area was poor with cyclists forced to join busy carriageways or cycle beside them

- A number of respondents to the Online Public Event survey noting that active travel routes in the area needed to be improved

4.2.16   The ongoing work to develop the new Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy, as set out in Chapter 2 is noted. The development of the strategy included the development and prioritisation of a number of active travel links linking communities. As noted in Chapter 2, a route linking Beattock and Moffat was prioritised 4th of all 64 connections considered through the prioritisation exercise, clearly highlighting its importance.

5 Transport Planning Objectives

5.1.1 Given the additional points raised in the previous section in relation to the problems and opportunities, the TPOs originally set for the study are still felt to be pertinent and remain as:

- TPO 1: Enable an effective day trip by public transport to key education, retail and social opportunities in Glasgow, Edinburgh and Carlisle

- TPO 2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week

- TPO 3: Increase the inbound public transport catchment to support local businesses through increased visitors to the area

5.1.2 This was further agreed through discussion with BSAG.

6 Options

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 This section adds additional commentary to the appraisal of the options where appropriate and should be read in conjunction with the original report appraisal tables. The commentary here does not replace the original appraisal but adds to it.

6.2 Updated Appraisal – Additional Points

6.2.1 The table below sets out additional appraisal points against each option, given the updated policy context, the updated transport data and the additional engagement undertaken. While the original appraisal work was undertaken against the STAG criteria at that time, the points below are made against the relevant refreshed STAG criteria as of February 2022. Where a revised STAG score is noted, the original report scoring against the criterion, if applicable, is indicted in brackets.

6.2.2 It is noted that the appraisal against the Environment, and Health, Safety and Wellbeing (with elements previously covered through the Environment and Safety criteria) criteria are not presented in the table below as there is not considered to be any material change to the original appraisal.

Table 6.1: Additional Appraisal Points

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
TPO1: Enable an effective day trip by public transport	All	Unchanged	Given the reduced public transport connections and shortened operating day seen in 2022 compared to 2019, especially with the loss of later running evening connections back to the study area, all the options will provide increased benefit over the existing situation. Given the rising cost of fuel, increasing the inbound public catchment to support local businesses through enabling visitors to reach the area (TPO3) more cost effectively is even more important that it was in 2019.
TPO2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week			
TPO3: Increase the inbound public transport catchment			
Climate Change	1a	1	The Climate Change Scotland Act (2019) includes a target date of 2045 for achieving net-zero carbon as well as a target of 75% reduction against 1990 emissions levels by 2030. Private car ownership and use is high in the study area. The options are likely to encourage some modal shift from private car to bus and rail. As a result, there will be some reduction in vehicle carbon emissions. This is likely to be greatest under Option 6 where direct access will be available to Carlisle, Edinburgh and Glasgow with travel
	1b	1	
	3	1	
	6	2	

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
			times of around an hour – much less than at present and much less than under the other options. The ability to reach the area by rail in under an hour is also more likely to encourage visitors to the area using public transport from the major urban conurbations of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Carlisle. It is noted that under Option 6, the station construction would generate embodied carbon. In addition, an increase in the number of buses would generate emissions (on the assumption that the vehicles used were not zero-emission).
Economy	1a/b	1	As discussed in Section 2, the *South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy* Thriving and Distinct Communities theme Delivery Plan states '*One of the key challenges and barriers in the South of Scotland is the lack of good transport connectivity'.* The *Borderlands Growth Deal* includes '*potential new station facilities in the region; potential public transport improvements; and active travel'.* One of the plan's focusses is on *revitalising rural areas to attract people to live, work and visit.* All the options seek to support good transport connectivity with Option 6 relating to *potential new station facilities.* During the additional engagement undertaken with the Beattock Station Action Group in July 2022 (see Appendix C), it was noted that there has been an increase in visitors to the area over the pandemic period and beyond, but that these visitors are not coming by public transport. In addition, the number of new people moving into the area (as a result of life style changes during the pandemic) was noted. It was noted that many new residents are working age and this would have a positive impact on the longer term economic sustainability of the area.
	3	1	Improved transport links connecting the area would help capitalise on the above and ensure inclusive growth in the area. A new station at Beattock is most likely to capitalise on the above given the connections to the major cities of Edinburgh ,Glasgow and Carlisle, enabling commuting for employment and education as well as providing sustainable travel connections for visitors the area, including for day trips.
	6	-2	The scores for all options have been increased from those presented in the original STAG report. It is noted that the negative scores originally given against this criteria took account of the subsidy requirements / disbenefit recorded against the options through the analysis undertaken to inform the Detailed Options Appraisal. These are discussed in the Cost to Government section below and the economy scores here reflect just the economic benefits / impacts.

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
Equality and Accessibility	All	-	The importance of *delivering inclusive growth* is one of the *Borderland Growth Deal's* three key solutions to increase economic growth in the region. As noted above, there are reduced public transport connections and a shortened bus operating day in 2022 compared to 2019, especially with the loss of later running evening connections. As such all the options will provide an increased benefit over the existing 2022 situation compared to that of 2019. This is particularly important in enabling inclusive access to employment opportunities, education and healthcare appointments, as well as enabling participation in social activities. While the above is noted, as the appraisal scores as noted in the original STAG report are already high, and the appraisal scores remain unchanged.
Cost to Government	1a/b		The analysis undertaken in the original study estimated the bus service would require £200k – £230k annually in subsidy to 'break-even'. At that time this equated to 6-7% of SWestrans total bus subsidy funding available. As noted in Table 3.1, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shifting travel patterns, the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen between 2015 and 2021. There has also been a 7% reduction in the subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21. Given this, it is likely to even more challenging to implement this option.
	3		The analysis undertaken in the original study estimated the bus service would require £42k in subsidy to 'break-even'. As noted above, the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen and there has been a 7% reduction in the subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21. Given this it is likely to be harder to secure additional subsidy for this service. In addition, the existing bus service (Service 101) had been due to be withdrawn in August 2022. Local campaigners staged protests[12] to campaign for the 'vital link' and a funding extension was secured to enable the service to run until March 2023[13]. **The longer-term future of the service remains uncertain**. Given the above, the appetite for increasing the frequency of the service may be very limited.
	6		It is worth drawing out some similarities with Reston station, situated on the East Coast Main Line, which opened on 23rd May 2022. Reston is a small village in the rural Scottish Borders located between Berwick-Upon-Tweed and Dunbar, but within commutable reach of both Edinburgh and Newcastle for employment and education. The economic appraisal (core scenario) as presented in the *East Linton & Reston Stations Business Case (WSP, December 2020)* returned a negative Net Present Value, driven by the disbenefits to long distance train passengers due to the introduction of the additional stop at Reston (and thus increased end-to-end journey times). The appraisal of the scheme concluded that the station re-opening was *very poor value for money, with moderate integration and accessibility and social inclusion benefits* but that the scheme performed well against the study objectives (which related to improving access to reliable public transport to enable travel to Edinburgh and Newcastle and increasing the sustainable transport mode share).

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[12] [Protest staged along threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route - BBC News](#)
[13] [Threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route secures funding lifeline - BBC News](#)

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
			The Business Case for the station noted a number of key problems including low frequency buses with long journey times to key urban centres, compounded by short operating days which effectively precluded residents from using public transport to commute for employment, education and leisure activities. **Such a set of problems are similar to the Beattock and Moffat narrative**. The noted opportunities in the business case to capitalise on the tourism potential of the area also hold true for Beattock and Moffat, and perhaps even more so given the strong tourist offering in Moffat and the town's reliance on tourism to support the local economy. Drawing further parallels between this study and the business case, the analysis presented within the business case also noted: the East Berwickshire area having an ageing population which will need greater access to health facilities and the lower proportion of working age residents than the Scotland average. This is similar to the characteristics of the Beattock and Moffat study area. The business case notes '*The new stations will also deliver substantial social benefits through greater access to cultural activities and educational facilities, particularly for younger people for whom a lack of transport may be a barrier*'. This reflects the comments made through this study's engagement with local Moffat Academy students. The business case also noted the Borders Railway investment has brought significant benefit to the Borders area served by the line. The above narrative and decision to re-open Reston Station present a clear parallel position where **the importance of the opportunities with regards to accessibility and social inclusion outweigh the value for money of a scheme from a purely economic perspective. Such a narrative is highly relevant to support the case for Beattock Station reopening.** It is also worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts of Brexit have had a significant impact on the cost of building materials[14]. This is likely to persist into the future and would increase the costs associated with the station build and as such reduce the estimated BCR for this option.
Risk & Uncertainty	All		There are a range of additional risks and uncertainties which have the potential to impact on all the options. These include: • The ongoing uncertainty around public transport patronage and whether it recovers to pre-pandemic levels – this has the potential to reduce the revenue associated with the options and in particular would increase the subsidy costs associated with Options 1a &1b and Option 3 • The ongoing cost of living increases including the cost of fuel and how this may impact in potentially increasing public transport usage. This would likely reduce the subsidy costs associated with Options 1a & 1b and Option 3 and generate a more positive BCR for Option 6. However, the likely impact of rising fuel costs would also increase the operational costs for the services, potentially increasing the subsidy required. • Future shift to alternative fuels presents a number of uncertainties with a risk that the transition to alternative fuel sources is seen as a panacea to transport emissions and that people choose to use their electric car more often on this basis – this would impact negatively on public transport usage Future automation of the transport system, referring to a myriad of technologies which range from automated car features to modifications across a transport network which integrates information and communication for different modes. Automated vehicles have the potential to make everyone 'car available' and in doing so there is scope for vehicle kilometres travelled by private car to increase, and as a result public transport

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[14] [Materials Price Rise Across The UK In 2022 | Checkatrade](#)

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
			patronage decline. This would have a negative impact on the sustainable transport options developed for this study.
	1a/b		On-going uncertainty around the reducing Swestrans budget to subsidise supported services which may impact on the ability to implement the options.
	3		
	6		As noted above, the cost of building materials has risen significantly over the last few years with high prices likely to persist. This creates uncertainty around the capital cost associated with the station build.

It is noted that Reston station reopening cost approximately £20million, and similarly to Beattock is situated on a main rail line. |

7 Summary

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 This Addendum has reviewed the previous findings as presented in the *Beattock and Moffat Sustainable Transport Options study* and updated the key data analysis and outcomes in respect to changes since the original report was submitted to Transport Scotland in 2019.

7.1.2 The Addendum has considered the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in national, regional and local policy since the original report was prepared.

7.2 Conclusions

7.2.1 There have been significant policy changes since the original reports were published and there are significant new targets in relation to Climate Change and transport's role in reducing carbon emissions, namely the national target for net zero by 2045 and the target for a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030.

7.2.2 This strong underpinning policy context offers a strengthened rationale and opportunities for successfully developing and implementing sustainable transport schemes.

7.2.3 The options developed within this study seek to improve public transport connections, and **clearly support the national policy objectives**. Moreover, the options also seek to support **inclusive growth** by providing public transport connections which:

- enable travel out of the area for work, education, health and leisure activities

- support sustainable inward travel to the area to support the economic sustainability of the rural communities of Beattock and Moffat, capitalising on both increased visitor numbers to the area due to the COVID pandemic and in-migration to the area, again driven by lifestyles changes made as a result of the pandemic

7.2.4 The analysis of 2022 transport supply side data shows public transport services have deteriorated compared to 2019, exacerbating the previously identified problems and increasing the need for improved connections to ensure sustainable and equitable access to opportunities.

7.2.5 Whilst bus and rail patronage remain suppressed below pre pandemic levels, the connectivity problems previously identified, transport planning objectives set, options developed, and options appraisal and appraisal outcomes presented within the original study reporting still hold true. The need for better connections is now stronger given the reduction in services since 2019. It this however acknowledged that there is a risk that the already low patronage forecast in the original STAG report may reduce further as the structural impacts of the pandemic become established.

Appendix A   Transport Travel and Trends

A.1   Introduction

A.1.1   The purpose of this Appendix is to provide an update and comparison of the key transport travel and trends between the original reporting for the study in August 2019 and the Summer of 2022.

A.2   Existing Bus Services

A.2.1   The existing bus services to/from the Beattock and Moffat study area include:

- Service 74 / X74 – Beattock to Dumfries / Glasgow - Operated by Stagecoach

- Service 101 – Edinburgh to Dumfries via Biggar – Operated by Stagecoach

- Service 380 – Moffat/Beattock to Lockerbie – Operated by Stagecoach/Houstons Minicoaches

A.2.2   The **Service 74 / X74** is delivered by Stagecoach West Scotland and operates between Dumfries, Beattock and Glasgow. The timetable was updated in May 2021 and, from Beattock to Glasgow begins operating at 06:45 in the morning peak, then hourly from 09:20 to 16:20 with a final service at 18:20. Following the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a reduction in the length of the operating day. In 2019 the last service was 21:20. On Saturday, the service begins at 07:05 and is then hourly from 09:20 till 18:20. The last bus back from Glasgow departs Glasgow at 20:15 on a weekday and Saturday, and 19:15 on a Sunday. The last bus back from Glasgow departed Glasgow at 22:40 on weekday and weekend evenings in 2019.

A.2.3   Similarly, on Sundays, the service now operates every 2 hours from 07:20 to 17:20, rather than to 21:20. **Across the operating week, this equates to a loss of four services from 2019**. Fares to Dumfries and Glasgow are £3.70 and £8.90 respectively, both an increase on the 2019 fares (previously £3.30 and £8.20).

A.2.4   **Service 101** is delivered by Stagecoach West Scotland and operates Monday to Saturday with three services at 11:34, 15:34 and 22:55 respectively from Moffat (via Beattock) to Dumfries with services at 05:30, 13:00 and 16:30 from Dumfries to Beattock/Moffat. Similarly, there are three services around 06:01, 13:35 and 17:05 respectively from Beattock (via Moffat) to Edinburgh with services at 09:20, 13:20 and 20:30 from Edinburgh to Beattock/Moffat.

A.2.5   On Sunday, there is a single service at approximately 10:00 from Dumfries and 20:40 from Edinburgh. **The timetable in 2022 remains similar to that in 2019**. Fares to Dumfries and Edinburgh are £3.70 and £8.40 respectively, a 40p and 60p increase from 2019.

A.2.6   It is however worth noting that the 101 service had been due to be discontinued in August 2022. Local campaigners staged protests[15] to campaign for the service and a funding extension was secured to enable the service to run until March 2023[16]. The longer term future of the service remains uncertain.

A.2.7   **Service 380** is operated by Houston's Minicoaches and as of September 2020 provides services, Monday to Saturday, roughly every 50 minutes from 08:00 to 09:35 (at Beattock). **In 2019 the service operated from a slightly earlier time of 07:20**. Service frequency is similar to that in 2019 including weekend operations. Fares also remain similar.

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[15] Protest staged along threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route - BBC News
[16] Threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route secures funding lifeline - BBC News

A.2.8   Table A.1 compares the number of buses to key destinations from Beattock in both 2019 and 2022.

Table A.1: Bus Service Frequency Changes

To	Number of weekday bus services	
	2019	2022
Glasgow	12	11
Edinburgh	3	3
Dumfries	16	13
Carlisle	0	0

A.2.9   The table shows a reduced bus offering from Beattock to Glasgow and Dumfries in 2022 compared to 2019.

A.3   Existing Rail Services

A.3.1   The nearest railway station is around 25km south at Lockerbie. Weekday northbound and southbound weekday rail connections from Lockerbie remain similar to those of 2019. However, on a Saturday there are now eight services to Edinburgh and 16 to Glasgow (**double that of 2019**) and 17 services southbound.

A.3.2   The length of the rail operating day remains similar to 2019. Rail times to both Edinburgh and Glasgow are marginally quicker than in 2019.

A.3.3   Table A.1 shows the typical journey times and adult fares from Lockerbie to a range of destinations and compares 2019 to 2022 data.

Table A.1: Approximate Journey Times and Typical Fares

From	To	Approximate Journey Time (minutes)	Anytime single		Anytime return		Off-peak return	
			2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
Lockerbie	Glasgow	65	£15.40	£17.40	£30.90	£31.60	£20.50	£25.00
	Edinburgh	60	£19.40	£21.50	£38.10	£29.20	£31.20	£34.10
	Carlisle	20	£13.60	£14.90	£16.00	£24.40	£16.00	£17.40
	Carstairs	33	£15.40	£16.40	£30.90	£32.80	£22.90	£25.00

A.3.4   Rail fares have nearly all increased between 2019 and 2022, with the Anytime Return fare between Lockerbie and Carlisle having increased the most. It should be noted that there are a range of commercially set fares depending on time of train and time of booking and fares may vary from those shown above.

Appendix B   Development

B.1.1   Table B.1 outlines the Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan (LDP) allocations and the Housing Land Audit (HLA) indicative build out rates for the Beattock study area. A revised LDP was adopted in October 2019, following the finalisation of the original STAG report. The table below has been updated accordingly from the data presented in the original STAG report. It is noted that the overall housing allocation has not significantly in the updated LDP.

B.1.2   There is a further 20ha of employment land allocated in the LDP at Hangingshaws, Johnstonebridge. This remained unchanged.

Table B.1: Local Development Plan Allocation and Housing Land Audit Indicative Phasing

Location	Site	LDP Allocation up to 2029 (units)	LDP Allocation beyond 2029 (units)	Remaining Capacity at 3rd October 2019	Completions 2015 - 2026	Completions												
						2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	2024 - 25	2025 - 26	2026-27	Post 2026
Moffat	Dickson's Well	6		6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	0	0	0
	Greenacres	15		15	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	3	3	3	0
	Old Carlisle Road	34		34	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	5	5	5	9
	Selkirk Road	200		200	175	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	44	25	25	25	25	25
	Former Academy	10 plus flexible business units	0	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	0
	Former Woollen Mill	Retail & tourist	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Fellside, Old Carlisle Road	n/a	n/a	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Old Carlisle Road	n/a	n/a	4	4	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Johnstonebridge	North of MacLean Drive	39	0	39	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	10	9	0
	Land west of primary school	90	0	90	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	10	60
	Total	394		389	355	2	1	1	1	0	0	31	56	47	57	55	54	85

Appendix C   Further Engagement

C.1 Stakeholder Engagement

C.1.1 An individual discussion was held with Beattock Station Action Group on 28th July 2022 with the key points from the meeting outlined below.

Post-COVID Trends

- There has been a move to communities like Moffat as some are making lifestyle changes as a result of COVID

- Noted people moving to the area from England and some are working from home and others have their own businesses. There is a clear post-covid in-migration of people to the area following the pandemic

- Many new residents are working age and choose Moffat or Beattock as they can access cities while living in a village environment – key issue is the sustainability to Beattock and Moffat longer term and attracting younger families to the area is important

- Anecdotally noted that houses are selling faster

Tourism

- There has been an increase in visitors to Moffat, but they do not travel by public transport. If there was an improved bus service and a new station in Beattock then they may make the modal shift

- Having to travel to and from Lockerbie is not a trip visitors want to make

- A station at Beattock will improve accessibility for visitors from key destinations such as Manchester, London, Liverpool and cities in Scotland

- There is a new long-distance walking trail under development linking Moffat and Berwick-Upon-Tweed which may encourage more people to visit the area

- Strong concern around tourism and visitor numbers to the area (on which the area relies) due to the rising cost of fuel which may discourage people from visiting – this emphasises the need for affordable public transport

Problems

C.1.2 All the problems identified during the original study are still considered highly relevant in 2022

TPOs

C.1.3 The TPOs identified during the original study are still considered highly relevant in 2022

Options

Option 1a/b - Option 1a/b: Adjustment of Service 380 bus times to reduce interchange time at Lockerbie Railway Station with additional direct instances of the service, and extended service operating hours later into the evening

- The benefits are limited as it may help existing customers to travel to Lockerbie train station but would result in the additional cost of running an extra bus and would not lessen the number of vehicles on the road

- Bus links have proven unsuccessful elsewhere in Scotland (e.g. Haddington to Wallyford (which was subsequently withdrawn) and St Andrews to Leuchars service, where people still choose to travel by car to the station

Option 3 – Increase direct buses to Edinburgh

- 101/102 was under threat although has been temporarily extended until March 2023. The bus journey is 2hrs 20 minutes

- The bus service would still use the motorway and would be in competition with the X74

- The route would be problematic if it were re-routed to reduce the journey time. The small villages would be deprived to make the services faster

Option 6 - Re-open Beattock Railway Station

- The station should be viewed as a long-term investment and would reduce car use, car parking and carbon emissions

- Economy of Beattock village could improve through improved public transport connections

- Opportunities for employment regeneration and increase in jobs in Beattock

- In the Atkins report from 2002, there was a feasibility study that concluded that a local, two-hourly rail service could be introduced. There are a number of services on the West Coast Mainline which could be moved to serve Beattock instead of Lockerbie (0714 to Glasgow, 1306 to Liverpool Lime Street, 1812 to Manchester)

- There is an ongoing project to introduce a cycle path to the station site meaning that wellbeing could be an additional benefit to opening the station

- Four of the five stations which are currently being delivered across Scotland have been done for under £15 million. Beattock could be delivered for under £15 million and should be considered a long-term project and compared to subsidising the bus service to Lockerbie

- There would be a footfall and revenue reduction at other stations when the new train station is opened but this is the case with all the new stations. It should not be considered a negative impact of the station reopening

Other Comments

- A main aim for Moffat is to widen the age range of residents to support the town and good connectivity of the area is important in attracting people

- Buses are considered to be a solution in the short term, but in the medium to longer term rail is considered to be the better solution - with access to both Edinburgh and Glasgow in around an hour

- Station land is already available, no houses are needing to be demolished. This could reduce the costs of building the station. In addition, land is owned by the community which could be utilised for station parking

Eastriggs and Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal

Addendum

On behalf of **SWestrans**

Document Control Sheet

Project Name: Eastriggs and Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal

Project Ref: 330610675

Report Title: Addendum

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Revision	Date	Description	Prepared	Reviewed	Approved
1					

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1 Background

1.1 Overview

1.1.1 Between 2016 and 2019, Stantec (at the start of the project still Peter Brett Associates) on behalf of SWestrans, undertook, in line with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), the Case for Change, Preliminary Options Appraisal and Detailed Options Appraisal stages for the Eastriggs and Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal. At that time, the STAG appraisal stages were referred to as the Pre-Appraisal, Part 1 and Part 2 stages.

1.1.2 On conclusion of the work in the Autumn of 2019, the final STAG report was submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration, and some feedback was received. However, at the time, Transport Scotland was undertaking the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2). To inform STPR2, Transport Scotland had commissioned the South-West Scotland Transport Study (SWSTS) which encompassed the Dumfries & Galloway region – this was the first stage in researching the case for investment in transport interventions in the South West of Scotland through a STAG Case for Change study. The study was reported in Spring 2019 and took cognisance of the outcomes of the Eastriggs and Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal.

1.1.3 Given the development of STPR2 was ongoing, and the outcomes of the Eastriggs and Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options study were being considered within the STPR development, further independent progression of the Eastriggs study was not undertaken.

1.1.4 The outcomes and recommendations of STPR2, covering the period 2022 to 2042, were reported in early 2022. These recommendations did not include any of the options developed through the Eastriggs and Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options study. As such, SWestrans requested that Transport Scotland now, outwith the STPR process, reconsider the study findings

1.1.5 However, since the Eastriggs study report was submitted to Transport Scotland in Autumn 2019, there have been significant developments in terms of transport policy, transport supply, and travel patterns and behaviours.

1.1.6 The COVID-19 pandemic brought a seismic change in terms of working, shopping and lifestyle habits, the impacts of which are still evolving. The impact on public transport was stark and public transport services and patronage levels are still recovering, and may, given changed working and shopping habits, never recover to their pre-pandemic levels. Given the pandemic, both bus and rail operations and timetables have evolved, and there is a need to bring the study transport baseline up to date to reconsider this where it has been used to evidence the transport problems for the study.

1.1.7 In terms of policy, Transport Scotland's *National Transport Strategy 2* (NTS2) was published in early 2020 and the Scottish Government's updated *Climate Change Plan* (2020) set out revised climate change targets including: reducing car kilometres by 20% and phasing out the need for petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030, and supporting all transformational active travel projects. Furthermore, the *Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland* (2022) publication outlines the route map to achieving the 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030 and describes the key sustainable travel behaviours which make up the framework, including investing in the public transport network.

1.1.8 Given these significant changes, Stantec on behalf of SWestrans, has developed this Addendum to the STAG report prior to its review by Transport Scotland. The purpose of the Addendum is to review the previous findings and update key data and outcomes in respect to changes since the original report was submitted in 2019. This Addendum should be read in conjunction with the original report.

1.2 This Report

1.2.1 It is noted that the original study analysed data pre-pandemic, which included station surveys to inform transport demand, as well as a range of stakeholder and public engagement activities. Repeating these data collection and engagement activities would come at a significant cost and could not be considered proportionate.

1.2.2 It is however recognised that:

- the rationale for the Eastriggs station re-opening option was never premised on high passenger volumes and was focussed on the connectivity benefits (suggesting that re-doing station surveys is unlikely to alter the underpinning narrative)

- Pandemic impacts certainly will have changed travel patterns and the way people work and live, but this is still settling down post-pandemic. As such, collecting data now would be a risk

- The objectives set for the study are still considered to hold true

1.2.3 Given the above and taking a more pragmatic and proportionate approach, this Addendum to the main report includes:

1.2.4 Given the above and taking a more pragmatic and proportionate approach, this Addendum to the main report includes:

- A discussion on the pandemic impacts in terms of travel patterns and travel behaviours, and again whether the outcomes of this are likely to strengthen or weaken the problems and opportunities previously identified

- A discussion on the ongoing uncertainty around working patterns and lifestyle choices due to COVID

- A discussion on the updated policy context since the report was prepared in relation to the Climate Change Plan, NTS2 and Transport Scotland targets in respect of vehicle kilometre reductions and the route to net zero and how this strengthens or weakens the case for investment

- A discussion on broadly what has changed in terms of the transport supply side and also any updates with regards to development planning, and whether the outcomes of this analysis strengthen or weaken the problems and opportunities previously identified

1.3 Outcomes of original STAG work

1.3.1 As a succinct overview, the problems and opportunities identified, Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) set and options developed, as part of the previous study are noted below.

Problems and Opportunities

1.3.2 The original STAG work identified and evidenced five problems:

- PR1: Lack of direct strategic public transport routes

- PR2: Long journey times relative to neighbouring towns

- PR3: Limited bus operating hours

- PR4: Poor integration between bus and rail

- PR5: Poor quality active travel links

Objectives

1.3.3   Two TPOs were set for the study:

- TPO 1: Reduce public transport journey times to improve access to key, commutable employment and educational centres from Eastriggs

- TPO 2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week

Options

1.3.4   Seven options were developed for the study. Of these, the three shown in bold below were taken through the full appraisal process.

- **Option 1a: RailBus to Lockerbie railway station: dedicated bus from Eastriggs which integrates with train arrival and departure times at Lockerbie Railway Station**

- Option 1b: Alterations to existing bus services to better serve Dumfries, Annan, Gretna Green and Carlisle railway stations

- Option 1c: Extending the existing bus Service 383 to connect Eastriggs to Lockerbie

- **Option 3: Later running, increased Sunday services and express services between Eastriggs, Carlisle & Dumfries**

- Option 4: Direct bus services to Edinburgh & Glasgow

- Option 5: Increased promotion and further development and support for local community transport

- **Option 6: Re-open Eastriggs Railway Station**

- Option 7: Improved cycling infrastructure between Eastriggs, Annan and Gretna

2 Policy Updates

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 As noted in the introduction, there has been significant evolution in the policy context since the original study report was submitted to Transport Scotland in 2019, most notably Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), the Scottish Government's updated *Climate Change Plan* and Transport Scotland's *Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland* (2022) publication. The latter publication is at the heart of the policy evolution with the crucial objective of taking measures to reduce Scotland's contribution to climate change, ultimately contributing to the delivery of the Scottish Government's legal commitment to deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

2.1.2 This focus on emissions reductions represents a major shift in emphasis on the transport strategy work which has occurred before, both in Dumfries & Galloway and nationally. In the past, transport planning and investment has more typically been based on models which provide infrastructure and services to meet current and forecast future demand. The emerging new approach is focused instead on reducing the need to travel, making better use of existing assets and, where a journey is required, ensuring that this is made by active travel or public transport where possible.

2.1.3 The remainder of this section discusses the changed policy landscape and how this may impact on the study and its findings.

2.2 National Policy

NTS2

2.2.1 In February 2020, Transport Scotland published its NTS2 which set out a vision for Scotland's transport system over the 20-years to 2040, including a statement of transport's contribution to achieving net zero by 2045. Its 'Vision' is:

'We will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors'

2.2.2 The NTS2 establishes two 'hierarchies' which define the principles upon which future transport investment decision making and services should be planned. The 'Sustainable Travel Hierarchy' defines the priority which will be given to each mode of transport in future investment planning and is shown in the figure below.

Figure 2.1: NTS2 Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

2.2.3   The Sustainable Travel Hierarchy prioritises walking & wheeling and cycling, with investment to support the single occupant private car being the lowest priority.

2.2.4   It is clear that **the options developed through the Eastriggs Sustainable Transport study prioritise active travel and accessible public transport connections, whilst at the same time discouraging car journeys**. As such, **the options are aligned with national transport policy**.

2.2.5   The NTS2 Sustainable Investment Hierarchy, as shown in Figure 2:2, establishes a set of steps to be followed when planning investment in transport provision. This focuses on how to reduce unsustainable travel, where journeys must be made. The implication of this hierarchy is that investment in new infrastructure should only be considered once a wider package of options to reduce the need to travel, reduce the need to travel unsustainably, optimise use of existing infrastructure, influence travel behaviour or manage demand have been explored. Given the rural nature of the study area, trips relating to employment, education and healthcare can be considered trips which 'must be made'. Therefore, with respect to the investment hierarchy, ensuring these can me made sustainably is essential.

Figure 2:2: Sustainable Investment Hierarchy[1]

STPR2

2.2.6   The recent publication of the draft STPR2 outlines the delivery plan for the vision, priorities and outcomes that are set out in the NTS2. A final list of recommendations is included, each appraised in line with STAG. This report will inform transport investment in Scotland from 2022 to 2042 by providing evidence-based recommendations for future transport investment decisions. The objectives of STPR2 are consistent to those listed within the NTS2 and across other government transport policy and are:

■   Taking climate action

■   Addressing inequalities & improving accessibility

■   Improving health & wellbeing

■   Supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth

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[1] National Transport Strategy 2, Transport Scotland

■ Improving safety and resilience

2.2.7 Based on the objectives listed above, the report makes 45 strategic recommendations. The most relevant to the development of this study are listed in the table below. It is noted that new stations and other improvements to the Glasgow South West Line were not specifically noted in the recommendations.

Table 2.1: Relevant STPR2 Recommendations

	Recommendations	Commentary
3	Village-Town Active Travel Connections	Consideration of the options developed for this study in light of this recommendation is important. Option 7 is '*Improved cycling Infrastructure between Eastriggs Annan and Gretna'*, which falls clearly under recommendation 3. Option 7 was not progressed through the STAG process as a stand-alone option given: • The option did not score highly against the TPOs • The option was considered unlikely to help significantly alleviate the key transport problems identified However, this option could be considered through the STPR process. It is also noted that a new Active Travel Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway (2022 – 2027) is currently being developed (the strategy is draft at present). Within the draft strategy aspirations are noted for links to connect Eastriggs with Annan and Gretna, with these links prioritised 1st and 5th out of the 64 noted links considered through a prioritisation exercise (with the initial prioritisation exercise based on a high-level non-engineering assessment of existing infrastructure, opportunities and constraints on the links with each scored on feasibility, value for money (cost/population) and strategic fit). Given the option is being progressed through the development and delivery of the Active Travel Strategy, it is not recommended that Option 7 is reconsidered as part of this study.
4	Connecting Towns by Active Travel	
5	Long-distance Active Travel Network	
8	Increasing Active Travel to School	
20	Investment in Demand Responsive Transport and Mobility as a Service	Option 5 (*Increased promotion and further development and support of Community Transport*) was sifted out of the STAG appraisal work given work was being undertaken by the Public Social Partnership (PSP) to explore healthcare and social transport solutions. Since the original STAG report submission, progress has been made by the PSP around three pilot projects: • Transport Service Developments • Health and Social Care Transport Solutions • Capability/Capacity Building of Community Transport Operators A range of progress has been made including: • Securing funding from South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) that will enable the purchase of an electric accessible people carrier, scheduling software and the employability pathway project development • The continuation of the two Health Transport volunteer car schemes operated by Annandale Community Transport Services (ACTS) and Galloway Community Transport (GCT)

Recommendations	Commentary
	• Feeding into the new model for sustainable public transport development where it is envisaged that community transport will play an important role • On-going support to the members of the community transport network • Review of community transport fleet • On-going discussions with key stakeholders to scope out the best way forward for the Health and Social Care hub • Continuing development and establishing a new community transport social enterprise Given the above, Option 5 is still considered out of scope here given the work already progressing through the PSP.

National Planning Framework 4

2.2.8   The National Planning Framework 4 is currently in the draft consultation phase, with the final draft to be published in late 2022. The plan sits under a National Spatial Strategy, which is guided by four overarching principles:

■   Sustainable places – where we reduce emissions and restore and better connect biodiversity

■   Liveable places – where we can live better, healthier lives

■   Productive places – where we have greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy

■   Distinctive places - where we recognise and work with our assets

2.2.9   The draft NPF4 outlines a wide range of plans and developments across five areas of Scotland. Dumfries and Galloway is located within the Southern Sustainability Area. Two of the proposed transport objectives within this area are:

■   22. Create a low-carbon network of towns – Settlements across this area provide services to surrounding rural communities. The towns are well placed to be models of sustainable living. Quality of life for people living in the area will depend on this network in the future and it should be used for the basis of a tailored response to the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. In terms of this study, as noted above in Table 2.1, work is progressing to develop a new Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy, which is currently in draft form. To inform this, work has been undertaken to develop a range of 'short paths' which concentrate on linking 16 towns and settlements in the region, with Gretna and Annan included in the list of towns. An initial list of nearly 100 links has been filtered to 64 paths priorities for development. These include links connecting Eastriggs to both Annan and Gretna with the link between connecting to Annan **ranked first** through the Active Travel Strategy prioritisation exercise.

■   25. Strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity, with the NPF4 noting '*The area's low-carbon future will depend on supporting modal shift and reducing car use, given current dependence on the car and the need to improve access to services, education and employment. **Public transport, including the bus network, will play an important role in decarbonisation and developing innovative solutions and linkages to the rail system**. Active travel should be supported with wheeling, walking and cycling within and between towns and other communities linked to strategic routes for tourists and visitors.*' **The section marked in bold is pertinent as it strengthens the rationale for this**

study's Option 1a, Option 3 and Option 6 which all improve sustainable transport connectivity, with Option 1a providing a link to the rail network.

Transport (Scotland) Act

2.2.10   The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 is an important legal framework that was designed to help make Scotland's transport network cleaner and more accessible. The law grants new powers to local authorities in the areas of bus provision, parking, low emission zones, road works, smart ticketing, and Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs).

2.2.11   The creation of new powers for RTPs allows for more local provision of bus services and will create new opportunities for increased public transport connectivity and **strengthens the potential for the provision of Option 1a and Option 3 within this study**.

A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2022 – 23

2.2.12   The Scottish Government's Programme for Scotland sets out the Government's ambitions for each fiscal year. The document provides strategies and policies across all departments of Government, including transport. Within this year's document, there is a focus on Scotland's transition to a Net Zero Nation in a fair and just way. There are six policy interventions that could strengthen the development of options for the study. Three of these policies come from '*Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Climate Change Plan 2018- 2032*':

- Removing the majority of diesel buses from public transport by the end of 2023

- Reducing car kilometres by 20% by 2030

- Decarbonising Scotland's railways by 2035

2.2.13   The remaining three policies within the Programme for Scotland came from the Bute House Agreement between the Scottish National Party and the Scottish Green Party:

- Phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030

- Nationwide free bus travel for young people under the age of 22

- Spending at least £320 million or 10% of the total transport budget on active travel (beginning in 2024-2025)

2.2.14   The vision for increased spending on active travel and free bus travel for under 22s promotes these modes of transport and further strengthens the case for investment in the options coming through this study.

Consultation on the 20% Reduction in Car KMs: Route Map

2.2.15   The commitment to reduce car kilometres by 20% within the Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Climate Change Plan (2018 – 2032) policy document is a defining aspect of Scotland's net zero future. Transport Scotland recently published their stakeholder consultation report along with a route map.

2.2.16   The framework recognises that any solution must include a holistic framework of interventions to provide car-use reduction options for different trip types in different geographical areas. To encourage the reduction in car usage, the framework outlines the need for a behaviour change by users through positive messaging. This has led to the development of four desired behaviours, of which one is '*switching modes*' noting that '*switching to walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport may be more feasible if a local destination has already been chosen. Active modes and public transport provide opportunities for physical activity which*

benefits health and mental wellbeing'. Again, **this policy context further strengthens the rationale for the options appraised through this study**.

A Network fit for the Future: Draft Vision for Scotland's Public Electric Vehicle Charging Network

2.2.17   Transport Scotland published a draft vision for Scotland's public electric vehicle (EV) charging network in late January 2022. The plan aims to encourage the uptake of zero emission vehicles through increasing the number of publicly available EV chargers.

2.2.18   Since 2013, £50 million has been invested into ChargePlace Scotland's network of available chargers creating a network of over 2,100 charge points. Some 12.7% of new cars purchased in 2021 were EVs, with Transport Scotland estimating 500,000 to 1 million EVs will be on Scotland's roads by 2030. To deliver the infrastructure for EVs the vision outlines four main objectives one of which is to Integrate with Scotland's Sustainable Transport System.

2.2.19   While no individual electric vehicle charging option was developed as part of this study, **the inclusion of such infrastructure as part of Option 6 'Re-open Eastriggs Railway Station' should be considered**.

National Strategy for Economic Transformation

2.2.20   The Scottish Government's Delivering Economic Prosperity strategy document was published in March 2022 and sets out Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation. The strategy includes a number of Policy Programmes of Action of which one action is 'Productive Businesses and Regions'. The aim of this policy programme is to *make 'Scotland's businesses, industries, regions, communities and public services more productive and innovative'*.

2.2.21   The strategy recognises that productivity is driven by a multitude of factors, including the quality of infrastructure and connectivity, and seeks to address current geographical disparities to deliver prosperity for all Scotland's people and places. Under the 'Skilled Workforce' programme of action the strategy states the opportunity for creating a more diverse workforce, but that the **barriers faced by some, including transport needed to be addressed in order to unlock business productivity and economic prosperity**. Project 13 'Expand Scotland's Available Talent Pool, at all Skills Levels, to Give Employers the Skills Pipeline They Need to Take Advantage of Opportunities' notes the action to '*systemically address Scotland's labour market inactivity challenges'* with the action to identify, amongst other factors, what steps can be taken to bring more individuals into the labour market including through transport provision. **This policy context further strengthens the rationale for the options appraised through this study which provide strategic linkages to urban conurbations where employment opportunities are more focused.**

2.3   Regional Policy

Regional Spatial Strategy

2.3.1   The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 established a new duty for planning authorities to produce a Regional Spatial Strategy with Local Development Plans. The indicative Regional Spatial Strategies (iRSS) have been used in the development of the NPF4 to ensure closer integration between land-use and transport planning in the region.

2.3.2   The South of Scotland iRSS covers the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway and notes '***Rail Improvements - Glasgow South Western Line and New Stations'*** among the Strategic Development Projects.

2.3.3   The iRSS highlights the importance of increasing connectivity across the region noting that good transport infrastructure and strong connections between communities and settlements are important to ensure that there are no barriers to participation.

South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy

2.3.4   The South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy (SOSRES) was published by the South of Scotland Economic Partnership in September 2021 with a subsequent Delivery Plan (2022 – 2025) published in November 2021. The 10-year strategy sets out a clear vision for how the partnership wants the region's economy to look and work in the future and focuses on making the South of Scotland "Green, Fair and Flourishing".

2.3.5   The SOSRES has six priority themes:

- Skilled and Ambitious People

- Innovative and Enterprising

- Rewarding and Fair Work

- Cultural and Creative Excellence

- Green and Sustainable Economy

- Thriving and Distinct Communities

2.3.6   Theme six incorporates a transport priority and recognises the need to '*to support the greening of our transport and deliver against Scotland's legally binding targets to reduce and eliminate our carbon footprint*'. The strategy further recognises the need for the region to '*rapidly enhance sustainable transport connectivity within key locations, establish new and innovative models of public transport delivery and build on road, rail and active travel investments, to improve connections within and outwith the South of Scotland'*.

2.3.7   The Delivery Plan for the Thriving and Distinct Communities theme includes Action 6(D) which states 'One of the key challenges and barriers in the South of Scotland is the lack of good transport connectivity'. The plan states the action to undertake a strategic high level review of transport proposals, and includes note of 'potential new station facilities in the region; potential public transport improvements; and active travel.' **The option proposals developed through the Eastriggs study clearly align with this action from the SOSRES Delivery Plan.**

Borderlands Growth Deal

2.3.8   The Borderlands Growth Deal was published in March 2021. The deal is the result of a collaboration between the Scottish and United Kingdom governments and acts as a framework for investment for developing the economies of Carlisle, Cumbria, Dumfries and Galloway, Northumberland, and the Scottish Borders.

2.3.9   The plan's shared ambition is to: *'[Ensure] the Borderlands [reaches] its potential for everyone, delivering green growth and attracting new businesses and investment. We will improve our connectivity, deliver skills and innovation, and improve our places to support their longer-term resilience. We will attract new residents and welcome more visitors to enjoy the beautiful natural environment of our vibrant, inclusive region.'*

2.3.10   The plan identifies three key solutions which aim to increase economic growth within the region:

- Narrowing the productivity gap

- Increasing the working age population

- Delivering inclusive growth

2.3.11   The plan focuses on delivering on the following investment themes, with those elements highlighted in bold particularly pertinent to this study:

- Enabling infrastructure – **increasing** digital and **transport connectivity**

- Improving places – **revitalising rural areas**, towns and cities to attract people to live, work and visit. With Eastriggs within commutable distance of both Dumfries and Carlisle, **this is particularly pertinent to the study and strengthens the case for investment in strategic transport links to the study area.**

- Supporting business, innovation and skills – simulating business growth to create a more diverse regional economy

- Encouraging green growth – capitalising on the green credentials of the Borderlands region and to facilitation decarbonisation and the creation of new high value jobs supporting low carbon energy generation. It is noted that the deal states *'£20.8 million will be invested into the site of the former nuclear power station at Chapelcross, Annan. This site will be developed as a strategic employment site, with a focus on high-quality, green energy-focused industry'*. Chapelcross is approximately 5km from Eastriggs and the development of the site will create opportunities for employment with sustainable access to the site from Eastriggs important in enabling the employment opportunities this may present to be realised by those within the Eastriggs community.

Regional Transport Strategy

2.3.12   Work to develop the next Regional Transport Strategy got underway in early 2022, with the *Case for Change* report published in April 2022.

2.3.13   The strategy set out 6 strategic Transport Planning Objectives:

- **TPO1:** To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs

- **TPO2:** To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region

- **TPO3:** To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region

- **TPO4:** To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region

- **TPO5:** To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan

- **TPO6:** To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region

2.3.14   The Case for Change notes the fragile nature of the bus network. The COVID-19 impacts, and the stagnant SWestrans budget to support services means the bus network is even more fragile now than when the original STAG reports were reported in Autumn 2019 (this is

2.4   Local Policy

Active Travel Strategy 2022-2027

2.4.1   Dumfries and Galloway's new Active Travel Strategy is currently being developed and is due to be published in Autumn 2022 and sim to '*aims to provide an overarching approach to improving active travel infrastructure and culture within Dumfries and Galloway to better respond to sustainability challenges and meet carbon reduction targets'*. The strategy's principles are **Collaboration**, **Integration**, and **Diversity** and the strategy focuses on the principal of 20-minute neighbourhoods while acknowledging the rural context of Dumfries and Galloway.

2.4.2   The strategy contains eight Strategic Areas of Action where further work is required *to develop local strategic plans to deliver actions on active tourism, key settlement connections, mobility hubs, regeneration of existing paths, old railway tracks, and other major infrastructures with the vision of benefiting corridors and satellite communities in the long term*.

2.4.3   As noted above, to inform this, work has been undertaken to develop a range of 'short paths' which concentrate on linking 16 towns and settlements in the region.   Links to connect Eastriggs with Annan and Gretna, were prioritised 1st and 5th out of the 64 noted links for development, highlighting the importance of these connections.

Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)

2.4.4   The Dumfries and Galloway LDP2 was released in October 2019 and is the Council's key strategic land use planning document. The purpose of this plan is to set out a long-term strategy and a policy framework to guide future development, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and regeneration of rural areas. Part of the Plan's vision is for '*A viable rural economy and community characterised by ready access to higher education and opportunities for knowledge transfer*'. **The ability to reach employment opportunities further afield if suitable strategic public transport connectivity were available was noted during engagement for the study**.

2.4.5   Data relating to the LDP2 is presented in Appendix B although it is noted that this has not fundamentally altered since the original study report was prepared.

2.5   Summary

2.5.1   Recent changes across the policy landscape, most notably around climate change, present decision makers with the rationale and justification to implement the changes and behavioural change catalysts required to help contribute towards lowering carbon emissions from transport.

2.5.2   This strong underpinning policy context offers strengthened opportunities for successfully developing and implementing sustainable transport schemes.

2.5.3   Furthermore, the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 provides new opportunities for Local Authorities to develop Bus Services Improvement Partnerships and the powers to make Local Services Franchises (replacing Quality Contract Schemes (QCSs)).

2.5.4   In summary, **recent policy updates all strengthen the rationale for the options developed and appraised in this study.**

3 Pandemic Impacts and Ongoing Uncertainty

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath has introduced a high degree of uncertainty into all aspects of transport planning. Whilst the short-term picture (during the pandemic and the various levels of restriction) is well understood, there remains some uncertainty regarding the structural (permanent) changes in peoples' behaviour now that the pandemic is largely behind us.

3.1.2 This section discusses the pandemic's impacts on public transport alongside ongoing uncertainty relating to the pandemic as well as recent cost of living impacts.

3.2 COVID-19 Pandemic

Impact on the Bus Network

3.2.1 Dumfries and Galloway is served by 10 different bus operators, operating both commercial and supported services, with some council operated services.

3.2.2 Whilst some scheduled services operate without subsidy, the extent of the commercially operated network in Dumfries and Galloway is limited.

3.2.3 During the COVID-19 pandemic there was a significant decline in passengers, although services were required to run for essential workers. During this period, the Scottish Government put in place the COVID-19 Support Grant (CSG) and the COVID-19 Support Grant – Restart (CSG-R). The CSG grant was implemented in April / May 2020 and provided eligible commercial operators payments at the levels forecast prior to the impact of COVID-19. These payments were based on the estimated level of financial compensation received from the National Concessionary Transport Scheme (NCTS) pre-COVID and the pre-COVID level of financial funding received from the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG). The grant required operators to deliver around 30% (25-35%) of pre-COVID service levels for the period of the scheme, to maintain core services and to liaise with local authorities and health boards to determine which services should be operated.

3.2.4 The CSG-R grant is an additional grant to increase bus services back to pre-COVID levels. The grant was available for operators to claim from June 2020 and ended on the 31 March 2022. This grant was replaced by the Network Support Grant (NSG), which is intended to last until the end of the 2022 / 23 financial year. The NSG pays operators monthly and is divided into two sub-schemes, NSG and NSG Plus. This grant is only eligible to operators who are either operating a local bus service as defined in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985 or operating a community transport service possessing a Section 19 or Section 22.

3.2.5 The NSG Plus scheme is intended to help offset lost revenue while patronage recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSG Plus rate will be subject to review and adjustment as patronage and revenue recovers. **The Scottish Government announced the NSG Plus rate (79.4p/km) would reduce in July 2022 to 44.4p/km then cease in October 2022 with operators required to opt-in to the NSG rate of 14.4p/km thereafter. Beyond this, it is unknown whether government will provide any additional funding which may threaten the viability of the bus network**.

Supported Services

3.2.6 It was noted in the original STAG reporting that, two-thirds of bus routes operating in Dumfries and Galloway operate with partial or full subsidy, and this subsidy is reducing due to competing pressures on local authority budgets. There is uncertainty regarding how much funding will be available in the future. For commercially run services, the overall viability of

services is only achievable if passenger numbers are maintained. As such, the overall bus network and operation across the region is fragile and even minor changes to routes or services (or any new competition with rail), which have the potential to tie up resources or affect patronage, can have major consequences for the viability of the network.

3.2.7   As was also noted in the original STAG reports, the funding available to support bus services had been declining year on year. Since the original STAG report, newly available data from 2019/20 and 2020/21 is shown in the table below which, while showing a small cash increase in the budget available in 2020/21, does highlight there is still a 7% cash decrease in subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21 (this reduction will be greater in real terms). During this period, total bus kilometres have reduced by 16.8%. Supported services have seen a larger reduction in bus kilometres (-18.6%) when compared to commercial services (-13.9%). These declines reflect the COVID-19 pandemic, however, there was still a decline in bus mileage pre-COVID, albeit at a slower pace. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shifting travel-to-work patterns, **the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen**.

Table 3.1: Subsidy Spent on Supported Bus Services and Bus Mileage

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Subsidy (£'000)	£3,736	£3,531	£3,400	£3,395	£3,400	£3,472
Change in subsidy compared to previous year		-5.5%	-3.7%	-0.1%	+0.1%	+2.1%
Commercial milage (km)	3,709,195	3,668,843	3,762,063	3,757,383	3,619,269	3,192,425
Change in commercial milage compared to previous year		-1.1%	+2.5%	-0.1%	-3.7%	-11.8%
Supported (km)	5,372,340	4,855,325	5,167,167	5,004,795	5,091,427	4,371,526
Change in supported milage compared to previous year		-9.6%	6.4%	-3.1%	1.7%	-14.1%
Total (km)	9,091,535	8,524,168	8,929,230	8,762,178	8,710,696	7,563,951
Change in total milage compared to previous year		-6.2%	4.7%	-1.9%	-0.6%	-13.1%

3.2.8   The table below shows passenger numbers for 2019, 2020 and 2021 for all commercial and supported services across the Dumfries and Galloway area.

Table 3.2: Bus Passengers (2019 - 2021)

Type	2019	2020	2021
Supported	1,671,934	798,782	1,030,633
Commercial	3,084,354	1,448,278	1,554,462
Total	**4,756,288**	**2,247,060**	**2,585,095**

3.2.9   When compared to pre-COVID usage figures, commercial services have seen a 50% decrease in passengers, supported services a 38% decrease, with an overall decrease of 46% in passenger numbers. Further analysis provided by SWestrans (to inform the Regional Transport Strategy Case for Change) shows that the passenger decline is based on a

reduction of Adults (17%), Children (41%) and Concessions (50%). At the UK level, bus travel (excluding London) is now around 70% of pre-pandemic levels.[2]

3.2.10 **There is a risk of further reductions in supported service provision due to the rising subsidy costs and a stagnant budget to fund such services. This is likely to make implementing new services that require subsidy (such as this study's Option 1a and 3) even more challenging.**

Impacts on Rail Network

3.2.11 The COVID pandemic and the ongoing changes to working patterns and commuting have significantly impacted on the rail network. To highlight this, passengers per annum by station between 2017 and 2021, for all stations located in the region based on Office and Road and Rail (ORR) estimates on passenger entries and exits, is shown in the figure below.

Figure 3:1: Passengers per annum by station (2017 – 2021, ORR)

3.2.12 The patronage figures are significantly impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with large drop-offs evident at all stations in 2020/21, equating to an over 86% reduction at all stations. At the UK level, rail travel is now around 80% of pre-pandemic levels.

Long Term Travel Behaviour Changes

3.2.13 As noted in the introduction to this section, while the short-term picture (during the pandemic and the various levels of restriction) is well understood, there remains uncertainty regarding the structural (permanent) changes in peoples' behaviour once the pandemic is behind us.

3.2.14 The Office for National Statistics recently published the article '*Is hybrid working here to stay*' which analysed data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OLS) to consider peoples future plans to both work from home and in the workplace[3]. Data for the OLS was collected in February 2022, after government guidance to work from home when possible was lifted.

3.2.15 More than eight in 10 workers who had to work from home during the pandemic said they planned to hybrid work. Since then, the proportion of workers hybrid working has risen from 13% in early February 2022 to 24% in May 2022. The percentage working exclusively from home has fallen from 22% to 14% in the same period.[3]

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[2] Transport use during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[3] Is hybrid working here to stay? - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

3.3 Cost of Living increases including increased fuel costs

3.3.1 Prices in the UK are currently rising at the fastest rate in 40 years. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), UK inflation jumped to 9.4% in the 12 months to June from 9.1% in May.[4]

3.3.2 Between June 2021 and June 2022, the cost of petrol and diesel increased significantly. The Petrol Retailers Association note that customers bought 15% less fuel in 2021 as a result of the pandemic[5]. Given this, retailers had to make higher profits on each litre sold to cover their costs. Therefore, fuel prices were already rising before the invasion of Ukraine (which started in February 2022), and the ongoing sanction against Russia, the world's second largest oil exporter[6], has exacerbated the issue.

3.3.3 In June 2022, petrol and diesel sales fell by 4.3%[7] from May indicating people were cutting back on spending due to concerns over what they could afford.

3.3.4 This increased cost of living, and particularly fuel can have a significant impact on rural communities where the only way to access employment and education is often with a car. In addition, businesses and services in these areas require staff to be able access their place of work, again often by car as the only viable travel option.

3.3.5 The significantly increased fuel costs have a number of potential impacts:

- It becomes financially unviable to commute to work or education out of the area, reducing opportunities and could lead to increased deprivation and / or out migration from the area as a result

- It becomes financially unviable to attend social activities out of the area, increasing social isolation

- Businesses and essential services cannot attract staff and are no longer able to operate in the area and close / relocate elsewhere

- Visitors choose not to come to the area given the cost of travel, impacting on the local economy

3.3.6 However, given this, **there is a clear opportunity that increasing fuel costs could accelerate a switch to more sustainable transport modes if they were available, and that enabling access to and from rural areas by sustainable transport has the ability to prevent some of the potential negative impacts**.

3.3.7 It should however be recognised that the rising cost of fuel will also be impacting on the operational costs for public transport operators and as such the costs of bus and rail fares is likely to be impacted to some degree.

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[4] Inflation: Fuel, milk and eggs push prices up at fastest rate in 40 years - BBC News

[5] Fuel prices: Why is petrol so expensive in the UK? - BBC News

[6] https://www.investopedia.com/articles/company-insights/082316/worlds-top-10-oil-exporters.asp

[7] Cost of living: Fuel and clothing at top of family spending cuts - BBC News

4 Problems and Opportunities Update

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section replicates, where pertinent, the original STAG report Section 2.4 *Key Problems and Opportunities Identified* and updates the data and commentary. The updates take cognisance of refreshed Summer 2022 data, as presented in Appendix A in relation to transport supply analysis, updated development data as presented in Appendix B and the commentary in the previous chapters.

4.2 Key Problems and Opportunities Identified

4.2.1 From the original study engagement exercise, the key problems and opportunities for the study area, as perceived by the public and the key stakeholders were reviewed and assessed before being collated into a succinct list of problems and opportunities, for which data was analysed.

4.2.2 The key transport problems and opportunities identified were as follows:

- PR1: Lack of direct strategic public transport routes

- PR2: Long journey times relative to neighbouring towns

- PR3: Limited bus operating hours

- PR4: Poor integration between bus and rail

- PR5: Poor quality active travel links

4.2.3 Each of these is presented below, alongside the updated evidence of the problems where this has altered given the new analysis undertaken. This section does not seek to fully replicate the original report but builds on the previous reporting and should be read in conjunction with the original report narrative.

PR1: Lack of direct strategic public transport routes

PR2: Long journey times relative to neighbouring towns

4.2.4 Public transport connections directly serving Eastriggs are limited to the bus as there is no railway station in the town.

Key Evidence

In terms of existing strategic public transport connections:

- There are still no direct connections to **Edinburgh**

- There are still no direct connections to **Glasgow**

- There are still no direct connections to **Lockerbie**

- There are still regular direct connections to **Dumfries:** on bus Service 79 operating between Dumfries and Carlisle with the timetable in 2022 similar to that in 2019

- There are still regular direct connections to **Carlisle:** on bus Service 79 operating between Dumfries and Carlisle, with the timetable in 2022 similar to that in 2019

4.2.5   Overall, the public transport connections, and journey times, to and from Eastriggs have not changed since the original STAG report was published in Autumn 2019.

Key Economic and Social Impacts

4.2.6   While Eastriggs' public transport connections have not altered since 2019, recent rises in the cost of living, including fuel costs, are likely to specifically impact those relying on private vehicle to access employment, education and social activities.

4.2.7   It was noted in the original STAG report that there are few employment opportunities in Eastriggs itself, so people now need to travel further afield for work. Rising fuel costs are likely to make travel to such opportunities by private vehicle even more prohibitive.

PR3: Limited bus operating hours

4.2.8   Bus services do not operate consistently across the week, with a much more limited Sunday service.

Key Evidence

4.2.9   Hours of operation of the bus services to and from Eastriggs have not significantly changed since 2019 and the narrative around this problem therefore remains as it was in the original STAG report.

PR4: Poor integration between bus and rail

4.2.10   In terms of integration between bus and rail, there are problems relating to:

- Poor integration between bus and rail timetables

- A lack of physical integration between bus stops and railway stations with the rail network not easily accessible, especially for those with limited mobility

Key Evidence

4.2.11   Considerable analysis was undertaken to inform this in the original report. This has not been re-done. However, given the similar number of bus services serving Eastriggs in 2022 compared to 2019, it can be surmised that this problem has remained the same.

PR5: Poor quality active travel links

4.2.12   Consultation highlighted there are concerns over the safety of active travel routes in the area.

Key Evidence

4.2.13   As noted in Chapter 2, the new Active Travel Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway (2022 – 2027) is currently being developed. Within the draft strategy aspirations are noted for links to connect Eastriggs with Annan and Gretna, with these links prioritised 1st and 5th out of the 64 noted links considered through a prioritisation exercise (with the initial prioritisation exercise based on a high-level non-engineering assessment of existing infrastructure, opportunities and constraints on the links with each scored on feasibility, value for money (cost/population) and strategic fit). Given the option is being progressed through the development and delivery of the Active Travel Strategy, it is noted that this problem is being addressed.

5   Transport Planning Objectives

5.1.1   Given the additional points raised in the previous section in relation to the problems and opportunities, the TPOs originally set for the study are still felt to be pertinent and remain as:

- TPO 1: Reduce public transport journey times to improve access to key, commutable employment and educational centres from Eastriggs

- TPO 2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week

6   Options

6.1   Introduction

6.1.1   This section adds additional commentary to the appraisal of the options where appropriate and should be read in conjunction with the original report appraisal tables. The commentary here does not replace the original appraisal but adds to it.

6.2   Updated Appraisal – Additional Points

6.2.1   The table below sets out additional appraisal points against each option, given the updated policy context, the updated transport data and the additional engagement undertaken. While the original appraisal work was undertaken against the STAG criteria at that time, the points below are made against the relevant refreshed STAG criteria as of February 2022. Where a revised STAG score is noted, the original report scoring against the criterion, if applicable, is indicted in brackets.

6.2.2   It is noted that the appraisal against the Environment, and Health, Safety and Wellbeing (with elements previously covered through the Environment and Safety criteria) criteria are not presented in the table below as there is not considered to be any material change to the original appraisal.

Table 6.1: Additional Appraisal Points

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
TPO1: Reduce public transport journey times to improve access to key, commutable employment and educational centres from Eastriggs TPO2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week	All	Unchanged	Given the rising cost of fuel, increasing public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week more cost effectively is even more important that it was in 2019.
Climate Change	1a	1	The Climate Change Scotland Act (2019) includes a target date of 2045 for achieving net-zero carbon as well as a target of 75% reduction against 1990 emissions levels by 2030. The options are likely to encourage some modal shift from private car to bus and rail. As a result, there will be some reduction in vehicle carbon emissions.
	3	1	
	6	1	

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
			It is noted that under Option 6, the station construction would generate embodied carbon. In addition, an increase in the number of buses would generate emissions (on the assumption that the vehicles used were not zero-emission).
Economy	1a	1	As discussed in Section 2, the *South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy* Thriving and Distinct Communities theme Delivery Plan states '*One of the key challenges and barriers in the South of Scotland is the lack of good transport connectivity'*. The *Borderlands Growth Deal* includes *'potential new station facilities in the region; potential public transport improvements; and active travel'*. One of the plan's focusses is on *revitalising rural areas to attract people to live, work and visit*. All the options seek to support good transport connectivity with Option 6 relating to *potential new station facilities.* Improved transport links connecting the area would help capitalise on the above and ensure inclusive growth in the area. This is especially important given the lack of employment opportunities within Eastriggs.
	3	1	A new station at Eastriggs is most likely to capitalise on the above given the quicker public transport connections that would be provided between Eastriggs and Dumfries and Carlisle. It is also noted that in October 2020, through the development of high-speed rail in the UK, that the old Ministry of Defence site at Eastriggs was identified as the "*most operationally suitable, cost-effective and least environmentally impactful solution*", for a high-speed train "stabling" facility[8]. Subsequently, in July 2021, an application was made to convert the old Ministry of Defence site to house rolling stock from the nearby rail line[9], to use the depot to house locomotives, cars and coaches. It was noted that such a site could create up to 100 jobs, **underpinning the importance of public transport connections to Eastriggs in the future**.
	6	-2	The scores for all options have been increased from those presented in the original STAG report. It is noted that the negative scores originally given against this criteria took account of the subsidy requirements against the options through the analysis undertaken to inform the Detailed Options Appraisal. These are discussed in the Cost to Government section below and the economy scores here reflect just the economic benefits / impacts.

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[8] High-speed train 'stabling' facility proposed near Gretna - BBC News
[9] New life sought for old Eastriggs ammunition depot - BBC News

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
Equality and Accessibility	All	-	The importance of *delivering inclusive growth* is one of the *Borderland Growth Deal's* three key solutions to increase economic growth in the region. All the options will provide an increased benefit over the existing 2022 situation compared to that of 2019. This is particularly important in enabling inclusive access to employment opportunities, education and healthcare appointments, as well as enabling participation in social activities. It is noted that the increase in fuel prices has a likely greater impact in the rural area with those relying on the car to travel to employment or education more greatly impacted. While the above is noted, as the appraisal scores as noted in the original STAG report are already high, and the appraisal scores remain unchanged.
Cost to Government	1a		The analysis undertaken in the original study estimated the bus service would require £230k annually in subsidy to 'break-even'. At that time this equated to 7% of SWestrans total bus subsidy funding available. As noted in Table 4.1, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shifting travel patterns, the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen between 2015 and 2021. There has also been a 7% reduction in the subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21. Given this, it is likely to even more challenging to implement this option.
	3		The analysis undertaken in the original study estimated the bus service would require £170k in subsidy to 'break-even'. At that time this equated to 5% of SWestrans total bus subsidy funding available. As noted above, the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen and there has been a 7% reduction in the subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21. Given this it is likely to be harder to secure additional subsidy for this service.
	6		It is worth drawing out some similarities with Reston station, situated on the East Coast Main Line, which opened on 23rd May 2022. Reston is a small village in the rural Scottish Borders located between Berwick-Upon-Tweed and Dunbar, but within commutable reach of both Edinburgh and Newcastle for employment and education. The economic appraisal (core scenario) as presented in the *East Linton & Reston Stations Business Case (WSP, December 2020)* returned a negative Net Present Value, driven by the disbenefits to long distance train passengers due to the introduction of the additional stop at Reston (and thus increased end-to-end journey times). The appraisal of the scheme concluded that the station re-opening was *very poor value for money, with moderate integration and accessibility and social inclusion benefits* but that the scheme performed well against the study objectives (which related to improving access to reliable public transport to enable travel to Edinburgh and Newcastle and increasing the sustainable transport mode share). Drawing parallels between this study and the business case, the analysis presented within the business case also noted: • the East Berwickshire area having an ageing population which will need greater access to health facilities • a lower proportion of residents in professional occupations than the Scotland average • low household incomes compared to the Scottish average

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
			- lower levels of school leavers going into further and higher education compared to the regional averages - lower than average house prices compared to the national average This is similar to the characteristics of the Eastriggs study area. The business case notes '*The new stations will also deliver substantial social benefits through greater access to cultural activities and educational facilities, particularly for younger people for whom a lack of transport may be a barrier'.* This reflects the comments made through this study's engagement programme when it was noted that many young people in the area attend college and university in both Dumfries and Carlisle. It was also noted that many young people in Eastriggs are in the catchment area to attend Annan Academy. At present, all travel has to be made by bus which can limit social opportunities for young people. The poor connectivity of the area was felt to be a key driver in the area's inability to retain young people locally as they need to move elsewhere to access higher education opportunities and employment. The business case also noted the Borders Railway investment has brought significant benefit to the Borders area served by the line. The above narrative and decision to re-open Reston Station present a clear parallel position where **the importance of the opportunities with regards to accessibility and social inclusion outweigh the value for money of a scheme from a purely economic perspective. Such a narrative is highly relevant to support the case for Eastriggs Station reopening.** It is also worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts of Brexit have had a significant impact on the cost of building materials[10]. This is likely to persist into the future and would increase the costs associated with the station build and as such reduce the estimated BCR for this option.
Risk & Uncertainty	All		There are a range of additional risks and uncertainties which have the potential to impact on all the options. These include: - The ongoing uncertainty around public transport patronage and whether it recovers to pre-pandemic levels – this has the potential to reduce the revenue associated with the options and in particular would increase the subsidy costs associated with Options 1a and Option 3 - The ongoing cost of living increases including the cost of fuel and how this may impact in potentially increasing public transport usage. This would likely reduce the subsidy costs associated with Options 1a and Option 3 and generate a more positive BCR for Option 6. However, the likely impact of rising fuel costs would also increase the operational costs for the services, potentially increasing the subsidy required. - Future shift to alternative fuels presents a number of uncertainties with a risk that the transition to alternative fuel sources is seen as a panacea to transport emissions and that people choose to use their electric car more often on this basis – this would impact negatively on public transport usage - Future automation of the transport system, referring to a myriad of technologies which range from automated car features to modifications across a transport network which integrates information and communication for different modes. Automated vehicles have the potential to make everyone 'car available' and in doing so there is scope for vehicle kilometres travelled by private car to increase, and as a result public transport patronage decline. This would have a negative impact on the sustainable transport options developed for this study.

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[10] [Materials Price Rise Across The UK In 2022 | Checkatrade](#)

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
	1a		On-going uncertainty around the reducing SWestrans budget to fund supported services which may impact on the ability to implement the options.
	3		
	6		As noted above, the cost of building materials has risen significantly over the last few years with high prices likely to persist. This creates uncertainty around the capital cost associated with the station build. It is noted that the construction of Reston station cost approximately £20million although this station is situated on the East Coast Main Line.

7   Summary

7.1   Overview

7.1.1   This Addendum has reviewed the previous findings as presented in the *Eastriggs and the Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options study* and updated the key data analysis and outcomes in respect to changes since the original report was submitted to Transport Scotland in 2019.

7.1.2   The Addendum has considered the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in national, regional and local policy since the original report was prepared.

7.2   Conclusions

7.2.1   There have been significant policy changes since the original reports were published and there are significant new targets in relation to Climate Change and transport's role in reducing carbon emissions, namely the national target for net zero by 2045 and the target for a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030.

7.2.2   This strong underpinning policy context offers a strengthened rationale and opportunities for successfully developing and implementing sustainable transport schemes.

7.2.3   The options developed within this study seek to improve public transport connections, and **clearly support the national policy objectives**. Moreover, the options also seek to support **inclusive growth** by providing public transport connections which:

- enable travel out of the area for work, education, health and leisure activities

- support sustainable inward travel to the area to support the economic sustainability of the rural community of Eastriggs and the surrounding villages

7.2.4   The analysis of 2022 transport supply side data shows public transport services have remained similar when compared to 2019, highlighting the identified problems still remain.

7.2.5   Whilst bus and rail patronage remain suppressed below pre pandemic levels, the connectivity problems previously identified, transport planning objectives set, options developed, and options appraisal and appraisal outcomes presented within the original study reporting still hold true. The need for better connections is now stronger given the reduction in services since 2019. It this however acknowledged that there is a risk that the already low patronage forecast in the original STAG report may reduce further as the structural impacts of the pandemic become established.

Appendix A   Transport Travel and Trends

A.1   Introduction

A.1.1   The purpose of this Appendix is to provide an update and comparison of the key transport travel and trends between the original reporting for the study in August 2019 and the Summer of 2022.

A.2   Existing Bus Services

A.2.1   There are two existing services providing bus connectivity for Eastriggs. Service 79, operated predominantly by Stagecoach (Houstons provide some services, running as Service 379) which runs from Dumfries to Carlisle via Annan and passes through Eastriggs. Service 179 operated Stagecoach runs from Annan to Carlisle also passing through Eastriggs. Both routes are commercial in nature.

A.2.2   On Monday – Saturday, the services together provide a half hourly service between Eastriggs and Carlisle (with a journey time of approximately 45-60 minutes) and an hourly service between Eastriggs and Dumfries (with a journey time of approximately 45 minutes). This is the same as in 2019. The first departure from Eastriggs to Dumfries is at 05:51 (20 minutes earlier than 2019) and the last departure from Dumfries to Eastriggs is 22:45 while the first departure from Eastriggs to Carlisle is 06:00 and the last departure from Carlisle to Eastriggs is 21:57, as per 2019.

A.2.3   Sunday services are slightly less frequent. There are seven departures from Eastriggs to Carlisle and six to Dumfries. The first departure from Eastriggs to Carlisle is at 09:40 (10 minutes earlier than 2019) and the last departure from Carlisle to Eastriggs is at 21:15 (previously 18:20 in 2019), while the first departure from Eastriggs to Dumfries is 11:01 and the last departure from Dumfries is 22:45, as per 2019.

A.2.4   While services 79 and 179 connect to Annan and Gretna Green there are no direct bus services to either rail station, as was also the case in 2019.

A.2.5   The original STAG reported noted that in addition to the above scheduled services, Annandale Transport Initiative provide a range of community transport services in the area including group transport services, a door to door dial-a-ride service for those who experience difficulty using conventional bus services and a twice monthly service to Carlisle operated under a Section 22 permit. These community transport services are still offered in 2022.

A.2.6   Table A.1 compares the number of buses to key destinations from Eastriggs in both 2019 and 2022.

Table A.1: Bus Service Frequency Changes

To	Number of weekday bus services	
	2019	2022
Glasgow	0	0
Edinburgh	0	0
Dumfries	15	15
Carlisle	28	31

A.2.7   The table shows the similar bus connections from Eastriggs in 2022 compared to 2019.

A.3 Existing Rail Services

A.3.1 The nearest railway stations are Annan, 6kms to the west and Gretna Green, 8kms east of Eastriggs, both of which are on the Glasgow South Western Line.

A.3.2 From both stations **there are hourly services southbound to Carlisle, which was previously two hourly in 2019**. There is an hourly service to Dumfries, with a two hourly service northbound beyond Dumfries to Kilmarnock and Glasgow Central. No southbound trains now extend beyond Carlisle to Newcastle, whereas in 2019, a few trains per day extended.

A.3.3 Table A.2 shows the typical journey times and adult fares from Annan and Gretna Green to a range of destinations comparing 2019 and 2022 fares.

Table A.2: Approximate Journey Times and Typical Fares

From	To	Approximate Journey Time (minutes)	Anytime single		Anytime return		Off-peak return	
			2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
Annan	Carlisle	22	£7.70	£8.30	£11.60	£12.60	£5.40	£5.70
	Dumfries	17	£5.40	£5.90	£8.70	£9.30	£5.10	£5.40
	Glasgow Central	130	£17.60	£19.10	£34.90	£37.90	£21.70	£23.00
	Edinburgh	130 - 210	£75.50	£82.20	£151.00	£168.40	£81.50	£89.20
Gretna Green	Carlisle	14	£5.10	£5.50	£8.60	£9.20	£5.40	£5.70
	Dumfries	25	£9.30	£10.20	£13.70	£14.80	£5.10	£5.40
	Glasgow Central	140	£17.60	£19.10	£34.90	£37.90	£21.70	£23.00
	Edinburgh	120 - 220	£75.50	£84.20	£151.00	£168.40	£151.00	£89.20

A.3.4 Rail fares have nearly all increased between 2019 and 2022, with the Anytime fares to Edinburgh having increased the most.

Appendix B   Development

B.1   Housing and Employment Development

B.1.1   Table B.3 outlines the Local Development Plan (LDP) allocations and the Housing Land Audit (HLA) indicative build out rates for Eastriggs. The total allocation is very similar to that reported in the original STAG report.

Table B.3: Eastriggs Local Development Plan Allocation and Housing Land Audit Indicative Build Out Rates[11]

| Location | Site | LDP Allocation up to 2026 (units) | Completions | | | | | | | | | | | |
			2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18	2018 - 19	2019 - 20	2020 - 21	2021 - 22	2022 - 23	2023 - 24	2024 -25	2025 - 26	2026 - 27	Post 2026
Eastriggs	Gillwood Road	10	0	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Victoria Gardens	11	0	0	0	0	10	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Land northwest of Stanfield Farm	27	0	3	5	5	10	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Stanfield Farm	200	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	140
	Stanfield Farm Phases 1 - 3	n/a	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	248	1	4	5	5	20	20	15	10	10	10	10	10	140

B.1.2   Overall, Eastriggs is allocated for 248 houses up to 2026 (in the original STAG report allocation was for 245 housing units), split across five sites with 108 completions anticipated over the period 2015-2026.

B.1.3   Allocated employment land in the Eastriggs study area has not changed since the original STAG report was produced.

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[11] Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2019 and Dumfries and Galloway Housing Land Audit 2020

Thornhill and Surrounding Area Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal

Addendum

On behalf of **SWestrans**

Document Control Sheet

Project Name: Thornhill Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal

Project Ref: **330610675**

Report Title: **Addendum**

Date: **24th August 2022**

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For and on behalf of Stantec UK Limited				

Revision	**Date**	**Description**	**Prepared**	**Reviewed**	**Approved**
1					

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1   Background

1.1   Overview

1.1.1   Between 2016 and 2019, Stantec (at the start of the project still Peter Brett Associates) on behalf of SWestrans, undertook, in line with the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), the Case for Change, Preliminary Options Appraisal and Detailed Options Appraisal stages for the Thornhill Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal. At that time, the STAG appraisal stages were referred to as the Pre-Appraisal, Part 1 and Part 2 stages.

1.1.2   On conclusion of the work in the Autumn of 2019, the final STAG report was submitted to Transport Scotland for consideration, and some feedback was received. However, at the time, Transport Scotland was undertaking the Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (STPR2). To inform STPR2, Transport Scotland had commissioned the South-West Scotland Transport Study (SWSTS) which encompassed the Dumfries & Galloway region – this was the first stage in researching the case for investment in transport interventions in the South West of Scotland through a STAG Case for Change study. The study was reported in Spring 2019 and took cognisance of the outcomes of the Thornhill Sustainable Transport Options STAG Appraisal.

1.1.3   Given the development of STPR2 was ongoing, and the outcomes of the Thornhill Sustainable Transport Options study were being considered within the STPR development, further independent progression of the Thornhill study was not undertaken.

1.1.4   The outcomes and recommendations of STPR2, covering the period 2022 to 2042, were reported in early 2022. These recommendations did not include any of the options developed through the Thornhill Sustainable Transport Option study. As such, SWestrans requested that Transport Scotland now, outwith the STPR process, reconsider the study findings.

1.1.5   However, since the Thornhill Sustainable Transport Options study report was submitted to Transport Scotland in Autumn 2019, there have been significant developments in terms of transport policy, transport supply, and travel patterns and behaviours.

1.1.6   The COVID-19 pandemic brought a seismic change in terms of working, shopping and lifestyle habits, the impacts of which are still evolving. The impact on public transport was stark and public transport services and patronage levels are still recovering, and may, given changed working and shopping habits, never recover to their pre-pandemic levels. Given the pandemic, both bus and rail operations and timetables have evolved, and there is a need to bring the study transport baseline up to date to reconsider this where it has been used to evidence the transport problems for the study.

1.1.7   In terms of policy, Transport Scotland's *National Transport Strategy 2* (NTS2) was published in early 2020 and the Scottish Government's updated *Climate Change Plan* (2020) set out revised climate change targets including: reducing car kilometres by 20% and phasing out the need for petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030, and supporting all transformational active travel projects. Furthermore, the *Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland* (2022) publication outlines the route map to achieving the 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030 and describes the key sustainable travel behaviours which make up the framework, including investing in the public transport network.

1.1.8   Given these significant changes, Stantec on behalf of SWestrans, has developed this Addendum to the STAG report prior to its review by Transport Scotland. The purpose of the Addendum is to review the previous findings and update key data and outcomes in respect to changes since the original report was submitted in 2019. This Addendum should be read in conjunction with the original report.

1.2   This Report

1.2.1   It is noted that the original study analysed data pre-pandemic, which included station surveys to inform transport demand, as well as a range of stakeholder and public engagement activities. Repeating these data collection and engagement activities would come at a significant cost and could not be considered proportionate.

1.2.2   It is however recognised that:

- the rationale for the Thornhill station re-opening option was never premised on high passenger volumes and was focussed on the connectivity benefits (suggesting that re-doing station surveys is unlikely to alter the underpinning narrative)

- Pandemic impacts certainly will have changed travel patterns and the way people work and live, but this is still settling down post-pandemic. As such, collecting data now would be a risk

- The objectives set for the study are still considered to hold true

1.2.3   Given the above and taking a more pragmatic and proportionate approach, this Addendum to the main report includes:

- A discussion on the pandemic impacts in terms of travel patterns and travel behaviours, and again whether the outcomes of this are likely to strengthen or weaken the problems and opportunities previously identified

- A discussion on the ongoing uncertainty around working patterns and lifestyle choices due to COVID

- A discussion on the updated policy context since the report was prepared in relation to the Climate Change Plan, NTS2 and Transport Scotland targets in respect of vehicle kilometre reductions and the route to net zero and how this strengthens or weakens the case for investment

- A discussion on broadly what has changed in terms of the transport supply side and also any updates with regards to development planning, and whether the outcomes of this analysis strengthen or weaken the problems and opportunities previously identified

- The outcomes of further consultation with the Thornhill Station Action Group (TSAG), a key stakeholder in the study, to confirm whether the identified problems and opportunities, study objectives, and options are still pertinent

1.3   Outcomes of original STAG work

1.3.1   As a succinct overview, the problems and opportunities identified, Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) set and options developed, as part of the previous study are noted below.

Problems and Opportunities

1.3.2   The original STAG work identified and evidenced seven problems:

- PR1: Poor strategic public transport frequency

- PR2: Long strategic public transport journey times

- PR3: Lack of sufficiently direct public transport services

- PR4: Limited Bus Operating Hours

- PR5: Poor Integration between Bus and Rail

- PR6: Large gaps in the rail timetable

- PR7: Lack of direct and safe cycling on A76

Objectives

1.3.3   Three TPOs were set for the study:

- TPO 1: Enable an effective day trip by public transport to key education, retail and social opportunities in Glasgow, Ayr, Edinburgh and Carlisle

- TPO 2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week

- TPO 3: Increase the inbound public transport catchment to support education, tourism and local businesses

Options

1.3.4   Eight options were developed for the study. Of these, the three shown in bold below were taken through the appraisal process.

- **Option 1a: RailBus to Dumfries and Lockerbie**

- Option 1b: Extension of Service 246 to include a stop at Dumfries Railway Station – with adjustment of the timetable to reduce interchange time between bus and rail arrival/departure times

- Option 1c: An extension of the existing Service 81 operating between Dumfries and Lockerbie to extend to Thornhill

- Option 2: Bus priority measures in Dumfries town centre

- **Option 3: Earlier & later (and Sunday) services between Thornhill, Moniaive & Dumfries**

- Option 4: Direct bus connections to Glasgow

- Option 5: Increased promotion and further development and support of Community Transport

- **Option 6: Re-open Thornhill Railway Station**

- Option 7: Re-open Closeburn Railway Station

- Option 8: Improved off-road cycling infrastructure between Thornhill and Dumfries

2 Policy Updates

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 As noted in the introduction, there has been significant evolution in the policy context since the original study report was submitted to Transport Scotland in 2019, most notably Scotland's National Transport Strategy 2 (NTS2), the Scottish Government's updated *Climate Change Plan* and Transport Scotland's *Reducing car use for a healthier, fairer and greener Scotland* (2022) publication. The latter publication is at the heart of the policy evolution with the crucial objective of taking measures to reduce Scotland's contribution to climate change, ultimately contributing to the delivery of the Scottish Government's legal commitment to deliver net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

2.1.2 This focus on emissions reductions represents a major shift in emphasis on the transport strategy work which has occurred before, both in Dumfries & Galloway and nationally. In the past, transport planning and investment has more typically been based on models which provide infrastructure and services to meet current and forecast future demand. The emerging new approach is focused instead on reducing the need to travel, making better use of existing assets and, where a journey is required, ensuring that this is made by active travel or public transport where possible.

2.1.3 The remainder of this section discusses the changed policy landscape and how this may impact on the study and its findings.

2.2 National Policy

NTS2

2.2.1 In February 2020, Transport Scotland published its NTS2 which set out a vision for Scotland's transport system over the 20-years to 2040, including a statement of transport's contribution to achieving net zero by 2045. Its 'Vision' is:

'We will have a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors'

2.2.2 The NTS2 establishes two 'hierarchies' which define the principles upon which future transport investment decision making and services should be planned. The 'Sustainable Travel Hierarchy' defines the priority which will be given to each mode of transport in future investment planning and is shown in the figure below.

Figure 2.1: NTS2 Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

2.2.3   The Sustainable Travel Hierarchy prioritises walking & wheeling and cycling, with investment to support the single occupant private car being the lowest priority.

2.2.4   It is clear that **the options developed through the Thornhill Sustainable Transport study prioritise active travel and accessible public transport connections, whilst at the same time discouraging car journeys**. As such, **the options are aligned with national transport policy**.

2.2.5   The NTS2 Sustainable Investment Hierarchy, as shown in Figure 2:2, establishes a set of steps to be followed when planning investment in transport provision. This focuses on how to reduce unsustainable travel, where journeys must be made. The implication of this hierarchy is that investment in new infrastructure should only be considered once a wider package of options to reduce the need to travel, reduce the need to travel unsustainably, optimise use of existing infrastructure, influence travel behaviour or manage demand have been explored. Given the rural nature of the study area, trips relating to employment, education and healthcare can be considered trips which 'must be made'. Therefore, with respect to the investment hierarchy, ensuring these can me made sustainably is essential.

Figure 2:2: Sustainable Investment Hierarchy[1]

STPR2

2.2.6   The recent publication of the draft STPR2 outlines the delivery plan for the vision, priorities and outcomes that are set out in the NTS2. A final list of recommendations is included, each appraised in line with STAG. This report will inform transport investment in Scotland from 2022 to 2042 by providing evidence-based recommendations for future transport investment decisions. The objectives of STPR2 are consistent to those listed within the NTS2 and across other government transport policy and are:

- Taking climate action

- Addressing inequalities & improving accessibility

- Improving health & wellbeing

- Supporting sustainable and inclusive economic growth

- Improving safety and resilience

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[1] National Transport Strategy 2, Transport Scotland

2.2.7   Based on the objectives listed above, the report makes 45 strategic recommendations. The most relevant to the development of this study are listed in the table below. It is noted that new stations and other improvements to the Glasgow South West Line were not specifically noted in the recommendations.

Table 2.1: Relevant STPR2 Recommendations

	Recommendations	Commentary
3	Village-Town Active Travel Connections	Consideration of the options developed for this study in light of these recommendations is important. Option 8 is '*Improved off-road cycling infrastructure between Thornhill and Dumfries'*, which falls clearly under STPR2 recommendation 4 and recommendation 5. It is noted that Option 8 was sifted out of the STAG appraisal as the route would be unlikely to be used for commuting or education purposes (given the distance to Dumfries, the main employment centre) and the likely low demand is highly unlikely to be able to justify the cost of a direct off-road route with the required lighting. However, it is noted that a new Active Travel Strategy for Dumfries and Galloway (2022 – 2027) is currently being developed (the strategy is draft at present). Within the draft strategy Thornhill is noted as a local 'hub' with aspirations for links to connect Thornhill to the surrounding villages with improved active travel links.
4	Connecting Towns by Active Travel	Within the draft strategy a Thornhill to Penpont connection is ranked 12th of 64 connections considered through a prioritisation exercise (initial prioritisation exercise was based on a high-level non-engineering assessment of existing infrastructure, opportunities and constraints on the links with each scored on feasibility, value for money (cost/population) and strategic fit). Work is ongoing, funded through Sustrans, to develop the Thornhill to Penpont link. Other links connecting to Thornhill include those from Closeburn (prioritised 23rd), Greenhead (prioritised 24th), Gatelawbridge (prioritised 42nd), Cample (prioritised 43rd), and Keir Mill (prioritised 48th). In addition, the N76 In Motion Community Energy Scotland project is working to develop sustainable transport solutions and networks with, and for, a partnership of community trusts connected by, or near to, the A76, including New Cumnock Development Trust, Kirkconnel and Kelloholm Development Trust, Sanquhar Enterprise Company, Kier, Penpoint and Tynron Development Trust, Nith Valley Leaf Trust and Moniaive Initiative. Ideas being developed include Demand Responsive Transport, Community Transport, Car Share and cycle pool facilities.
5	Long-distance Active Travel Network	Given all the above are being progressed through the development and delivery of the Active Travel Strategy, it is not recommended that Option 8 is reconsidered as part of this study. It is also noted that all **these active travel routes provide access to Thornhill as the local 'hub' destination. In this regard, enabling strategic transport connections onwards from Thornhill are important**.
8	Increasing Active Travel to School	It is also noted that Option 8 '*Improved off-road cycling infrastructure between Thornhill and Dumfries'*, would support STPR2 recommendation 8 through providing access to Wallace Hall Academy in Thornhill from villages located to the south of Thornhill (e.g. Closeburn).
10	Expansion of 20mph	Thornhill lies on the A76 trunk road. At present the speed limit through the town is 30mph and the town could be a candidate for this recommendation, however, this would not score well against the study criteria and as such, an option of this nature is not

Recommendations		Commentary
		recommended for inclusions as part of this study and should be developed under STPR2.
20	Investment in Demand Responsive Transport and Mobility as a Service	Option 5 (*Increased promotion and further development and support of Community Transport*) was sifted out of the STAG appraisal work given work was being undertaken by the Public Social Partnership (PSP) to explore healthcare and social transport solutions. Since the original STAG report submission, progress has been made by the PSP around three pilot projects: • Transport Service Developments • Health and Social Care Transport Solutions • Capability/Capacity Building of Community Transport Operators A range of progress has been made including: • Securing funding from South of Scotland Enterprise (SOSE) that will enable the purchase of an electric accessible people carrier, scheduling software and the employability pathway project development • The continuation of the two Health Transport volunteer car schemes operated by Annandale Community Transport Services (ACTS) and Galloway Community Transport (GCT) • Feeding into the new model for sustainable public transport development where it is envisaged that community transport will play an important role • On-going support to the members of the community transport network • Review of community transport fleet • On-going discussions with key stakeholders to scope out the best way forward for the Health and Social Care hub • Continuing development and establishing a new community transport social enterprise Given the above, Option 5 is still considered out of scope here given the work already progressing through the PSP.
37	Improving active travel on trunk roads through communities	Thornhill lies on the A76 trunk road. As noted above, Option 8 '*Improved off-road cycling infrastructure between Thornhill and Dumfries'*, however given the rationale for sifting out of this appraisal (as noted above in this table) and the ongoing work to developed the Active Travel Strategy (again noted above this table), Option 8 is still not considered suitable for progression as part of this study.

National Planning Framework 4

2.2.8   The National Planning Framework 4 is currently in the draft consultation phase, with the final draft to be published in late 2022. The plan sits under a National Spatial Strategy, which is guided by four overarching principles:

■   Sustainable places – where we reduce emissions and restore and better connect biodiversity

■   Liveable places – where we can live better, healthier lives

■   Productive places – where we have greener, fairer and more inclusive wellbeing economy

■   Distinctive places - where we recognise and work with our assets

2.2.9   The draft NPF4 outlines a wide range of plans and developments across five areas of Scotland. Dumfries and Galloway is located within the Southern Sustainability Area. Two of the proposed transport objectives within this area are:

- 22. Create a low-carbon network of towns – Settlements across this area provide services to surrounding rural communities. The towns are well placed to be models of sustainable living. Quality of life for people living in the area will depend on this network in the future and it should be used for the basis of a tailored response to the 20-minute neighbourhood concept. In terms of this study, as noted above in Table 2.1, work is progressing to develop a new Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy, which is currently in draft form. To inform this, work has been undertaken to develop a range of 'short paths' which concentrate on linking 16 towns and settlements in the region, of which Thornhill is one such town. An initial list of nearly 100 links has been filtered to 64 paths priorities for development. These include links to Thornhill from Penpont, Closeburn, Greenhead, Gatelawbridge and Keir Mill as noted in Table 2.1. **Thornhill is the 'hub' of these active travel connections. Onward strategic connections from this 'hub' are therefore important to establish Thornhill as a 'destination' within the local rural area.**

- 25. Strengthen resilience and decarbonise connectivity, with the NPF4 noting '*The area's low-carbon future will depend on supporting modal shift and reducing car use, given current dependence on the car and the need to improve access to services, education and employment. **Public transport, including the bus network, will play an important role in decarbonisation and developing innovative solutions and linkages to the rail system**. Active travel should be supported with wheeling, walking and cycling within and between towns and other communities linked to strategic routes for tourists and visitors.*' **The section marked in bold is pertinent as it strengthens the rationale for this study's Option 1a, Option 3 and Option 6** which all improve sustainable transport connectivity, with Option 1a providing a link to the rail network.

Transport (Scotland) Act

2.2.10   The Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 is an important legal framework that was designed to help make Scotland's transport network cleaner and more accessible. The law grants new powers to local authorities in the areas of bus provision, parking, low emission zones, road works, smart ticketing, and Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs).

2.2.11   The creation of new powers for RTPs allows for more local provision of bus services and will create new opportunities for increased public transport connectivity and **strengthens the potential for the provision of Option 1a and Option 3 within this study**.

A Fairer, Greener Scotland: Programme for Government 2022 – 23

2.2.12   The Scottish Government's Programme for Scotland sets out the Government's ambitions for each fiscal year. The document provides strategies and policies across all departments of Government, including transport. Within this year's document, there is a focus on Scotland's transition to a Net Zero Nation in a fair and just way. There are six policy interventions that could strengthen the development of options for the study. Three of these policies come from '*Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Climate Change Plan 2018- 2032*':

- Removing the majority of diesel buses from public transport by the end of 2023

- Reducing car kilometres by 20% by 2030

- Decarbonising Scotland's railways by 2035

2.2.13   The remaining three policies within the Programme for Scotland came from the Bute House Agreement between the Scottish National Party and the Scottish Green Party:

■ Phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030

■ Nationwide free bus travel for young people under the age of 22

■ Spending at least £320 million or 10% of the total transport budget on active travel (beginning in 2024-2025)

2.2.14 The vision for increased spending on active travel and free bus travel for under 22s promotes these modes of transport and further strengthens the case for investment in the options coming through this study.

Consultation on the 20% Reduction in Car KMs: Route Map

2.2.15 The commitment to reduce car kilometres by 20% within the Securing a Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero: Climate Change Plan (2018 – 2032) policy document is a defining aspect of Scotland's net zero future. Transport Scotland recently published their stakeholder consultation report along with a route map.

2.2.16 The framework recognises that any solution must include a holistic framework of interventions to provide car-use reduction options for different trip types in different geographical areas. To encourage the reduction in car usage, the framework outlines the need for a behaviour change by users through positive messaging. This has led to the development of four desired behaviours, of which one is '*switching modes*' noting that '*switching to walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport may be more feasible if a local destination has already been chosen. Active modes and public transport provide opportunities for physical activity which benefits health and mental wellbeing*'. Again, **this policy context further strengthens the rationale for the options appraised through this study**.

A Network fit for the Future: Draft Vision for Scotland's Public Electric Vehicle Charging Network

2.2.17 Transport Scotland published a draft vision for Scotland's public electric vehicle (EV) charging network in late January 2022. The plan aims to encourage the uptake of zero emission vehicles through increasing the number of publicly available EV chargers.

2.2.18 Since 2013, £50 million has been invested into ChargePlace Scotland's network of available chargers creating a network of over 2,100 charge points. Some 12.7% of new cars purchased in 2021 were EVs, with Transport Scotland estimating 500,000 to 1 million EVs will be on Scotland's roads by 2030. To deliver the infrastructure for EVs the vision outlines four main objectives one of which is to Integrate with Scotland's Sustainable Transport System.

2.2.19 While no individual electric vehicle charging option was developed as part of this study, **the inclusion of such infrastructure as part of Option 6 'Re-open Thornhill Railway Station' should be considered**.

National Strategy for Economic Transformation

2.2.20 The Scottish Government's Delivering Economic Prosperity strategy document was published in March 2022 and sets out Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation. The strategy includes a number of Policy Programmes of Action of which one action is 'Productive Businesses and Regions'. The aim of this policy programme is to make '*Scotland's businesses, industries, regions, communities and public services more productive and innovative*'.

2.2.21 The strategy recognises that productivity is driven by a multitude of factors, including the quality of infrastructure and connectivity, and seeks to address current geographical disparities to deliver prosperity for all Scotland's people and places. Under the 'Skilled Workforce' programme of action the strategy states the opportunity for creating a more diverse

workforce, but that the **barriers faced by some, including transport needed to be addressed in order to unlock business productivity and economic prosperity**. Project 13 'Expand Scotland's Available Talent Pool, at all Skills Levels, to Give Employers the Skills Pipeline They Need to Take Advantage of Opportunities' notes the action to '*systemically address Scotland's labour market inactivity challenges*' with the action to identify, amongst other factors, what steps can be taken to bring more individuals into the labour market including through transport provision. **This policy context further strengthens the rationale for the options appraised through this study which provide strategic linkages to urban conurbations where employment opportunities are more focused.**

2.3   Regional Policy

Regional Spatial Strategy

2.3.1   The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 established a new duty for planning authorities to produce a Regional Spatial Strategy with Local Development Plans. The indicative Regional Spatial Strategies (iRSS) have been used in the development of the NPF4 to ensure closer integration between land-use and transport planning in the region.

2.3.2   The South of Scotland iRSS covers the Scottish Borders and Dumfries and Galloway and notes '***Rail Improvements - Glasgow South Western Line and New Stations'*** among the Strategic Development Projects.

2.3.3   The iRSS highlights the importance of increasing connectivity across the region noting that good transport infrastructure and strong connections between communities and settlements are important to ensure that there are no barriers to participation.

South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy

2.3.4   The South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy (SOSRES) was published by the South of Scotland Economic Partnership in September 2021 with a subsequent Delivery Plan (2022 – 2025) published in November 2021. The 10-year strategy sets out a clear vision for how the partnership wants the region's economy to look and work in the future and focuses on making the South of Scotland "Green, Fair and Flourishing".

2.3.5   The SOSRES has six priority themes:

- Skilled and Ambitious People

- Innovative and Enterprising

- Rewarding and Fair Work

- Cultural and Creative Excellence

- Green and Sustainable Economy

- Thriving and Distinct Communities

2.3.6   Theme six incorporates a transport priority and recognises the need to '*to support the greening of our transport and deliver against Scotland's legally binding targets to reduce and eliminate our carbon footprint*'. The strategy further recognises the need for the region to '*rapidly enhance sustainable transport connectivity within key locations, establish new and innovative models of public transport delivery and build on road, rail and active travel investments, to improve connections within and outwith the South of Scotland'.*

2.3.7   The Delivery Plan for the Thriving and Distinct Communities theme includes Action 6(D) which states 'One of the key challenges and barriers in the South of Scotland is the lack of good

transport connectivity'. The plan states the action to undertake a strategic high level review of transport proposals, and includes note of 'potential new station facilities in the region; potential public transport improvements; and active travel.' **The option proposals developed through the Thornhill study clearly align with this action from the SOSRES Delivery Plan.**

Borderlands Growth Deal

2.3.8   The Borderlands Growth Deal was published in March 2021. The deal is the result of a collaboration between the Scottish and United Kingdom governments and acts as a framework for investment for developing the economies of Carlisle, Cumbria, Dumfries and Galloway, Northumberland, and the Scottish Borders.

2.3.9   The plan's shared ambition is to: *'[Ensure] the Borderlands [reaches] its potential for everyone, delivering green growth and attracting new businesses and investment. We will improve our connectivity, deliver skills and innovation, and improve our places to support their longer-term resilience. We will attract new residents and welcome more visitors to enjoy the beautiful natural environment of our vibrant, inclusive region.'*

2.3.10   The plan identifies three key solutions which aim to increase economic growth within the region:

- Narrowing the productivity gap

- Increasing the working age population

- Delivering inclusive growth

2.3.11   The plan focuses on delivering on the following investment themes, with those elements highlighted in bold particularly pertinent to this study:

- Enabling infrastructure – **increasing** digital and **transport connectivity**

- Improving places – **revitalising rural areas**, towns and cities to attract people to live, work and visit. With Moffat a key tourist draw in Dumfries & Galloway, and within commutable distance of both Edinburgh and Glasgow (especially so if working under a hybrid modal where commuting is only require part time), **this is particularly pertinent to the study and strengthens the case for investment in strategic transport links to the study area.**

- Supporting business, innovation and skills – simulating business growth to create a more diverse regional economy

- Encouraging green growth – capitalising on the green credentials of the Borderlands region and to facilitation decarbonisation and the creation of new high value jobs supporting low carbon energy generation

Regional Transport Strategy

2.3.12   Work to develop the next Regional Transport Strategy got underway in early 2022, with the *Case for Change* report published in April 2022.

2.3.13   The strategy set out 6 strategic Transport Planning Objectives:

- **TPO1:** To facilitate and encourage safe active travel for all by connecting communities and travel hubs

- **TPO2:** To improve the quality and sustainability of public transport within, and to / from the region

- **TPO3:** To widen access to, and improve connectivity by public transport within and to / from the region

- **TPO4:** To improve integration between all modes of travel and freight within and to / from the region

- **TPO5:** To provide improved, reliable, resilient, and safe road-based connectivity for the movement of people and goods within the region, and to key locations including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Carlisle and Cairnryan

- **TPO6:** To reduce the impact of transport on the people and environment of the region

2.3.14 The Case for Change notes the fragile nature of the bus network. The COVID-19 impacts, and the stagnant SWestrans budget to support services means the bus network is even more fragile now than when the original STAG reports were reported in Autumn 2019 (this is discussed in greater detail in Section 3).

2.4 Local Policy

Active Travel Strategy 2022-2027

2.4.1 Dumfries and Galloway's new Active Travel Strategy is currently being developed and is due to be published in Autumn 2022 and aims to *'provide an overarching approach to improving active travel infrastructure and culture within Dumfries and Galloway to better respond to sustainability challenges and meet carbon reduction targets'*. The strategy's principles are **Collaboration**, **Integration**, and **Diversity** and the strategy focuses on the principal of 20-minute neighbourhoods while acknowledging the rural context of Dumfries and Galloway.

2.4.2 The strategy contains eight Strategic Areas of Action where further work is required *to develop local strategic plans to deliver actions on active tourism, key settlement connections, mobility hubs, regeneration of existing paths, old railway tracks, and other major infrastructures with the vision of benefiting corridors and satellite communities in the long term*.

2.4.3 As noted above, to inform this, work has been undertaken to develop a range of 'short paths' which concentrate on linking 16 towns and settlements in the region, of which Thornhill is one such town. **With Thornhill the 'hub' of five active travel connections to 'satellite' villages, onward strategic connections from this destination 'hub' are important**.

Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2)

2.4.4 The Dumfries and Galloway LDP2 was released in October 2019 and is the Council's key strategic land use planning document. The purpose of this plan is to set out a long-term strategy and a policy framework to guide future development, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and regeneration of rural areas. Part of the Plan's vision is for '*A viable rural economy and community characterised by ready access to higher education and opportunities for knowledge transfer*'. **The ability to reach educational opportunities in Glasgow and Edinburgh, Dumfries and Carlisle was noted during engagement for the study**.

2.4.5 Data relating to the LDP2 is presented in Appendix B although it is noted that this has not fundamentally altered since the original study report was prepared.

2.5 Summary

2.5.1 Recent changes across the policy landscape, most notably around climate change, present decision makers with the rationale and justification to implement the changes and behavioural change catalysts required to help contribute towards lowering carbon emissions from transport.

2.5.2   This strong underpinning policy context offers strengthened opportunities for successfully developing and implementing sustainable transport schemes.

2.5.3   Furthermore, the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 provides new opportunities for Local Authorities to develop Bus Services Improvement Partnerships and the powers to make Local Services Franchises (replacing Quality Contract Schemes (QCSs)).

2.5.4   In summary, **recent policy updates all strengthen the rationale for the options developed and appraised in this study.**

3 Pandemic Impacts and Ongoing Uncertainty

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath has introduced a high degree of uncertainty into all aspects of transport planning. Whilst the short-term picture (during the pandemic and the various levels of restriction) is well understood, there remains some uncertainty regarding the structural (permanent) changes in peoples' behaviour now that the pandemic is largely behind us.

3.1.2 This section discusses the pandemic's impacts on public transport alongside ongoing uncertainty relating to the pandemic as well as recent cost of living impacts.

3.2 COVID-19 Pandemic

Impact on the Bus Network[2]

3.2.1 Dumfries and Galloway is served by 10 different bus operators, operating both commercial and supported services, with some council operated services.

3.2.2 Whilst some scheduled services operate without subsidy, the extent of the commercially operated network in Dumfries and Galloway is limited.

3.2.3 During the COVID-19 pandemic there was a significant decline in passengers, although services were required to run for essential workers. During this period, the Scottish Government put in place the COVID-19 Support Grant (CSG) and the COVID-19 Support Grant – Restart (CSG-R). The CSG grant was implemented in April / May 2020 and provided eligible commercial operators payments at the levels forecast prior to the impact of COVID-19. These payments were based on the estimated level of financial compensation received from the National Concessionary Transport Scheme (NCTS) pre-COVID and the pre-COVID level of financial funding received from the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG). The grant required operators to deliver around 30% (25-35%) of pre-COVID service levels for the period of the scheme, to maintain core services and to liaise with local authorities and health boards to determine which services should be operated.

3.2.4 The CSG-R grant is an additional grant to increase bus services back to pre-COVID levels. The grant was available for operators to claim from June 2020 and ended on the 31 March 2022. This grant was replaced by the Network Support Grant (NSG), which is intended to last until the end of the 2022 / 23 financial year. The NSG pays operators monthly and is divided into two sub-schemes, NSG and NSG Plus. This grant is only eligible to operators who are either operating a local bus service as defined in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985 or operating a community transport service possessing a Section 19 or Section 22.

3.2.5 The NSG Plus scheme is intended to help offset lost revenue while patronage recovers from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. The NSG Plus rate will be subject to review and adjustment as patronage and revenue recovers. **The Scottish Government announced the NSG Plus rate (79.4p/km) would reduce in July 2022 to 44.4p/km then cease in October 2022 with operators required to opt-in to the NSG rate of 14.4p/km thereafter. Beyond this, it is unknown whether government will provide any additional funding which may threaten the viability of the bus network**.

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[2] SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy 2022, Case for Change Report, April 2022, SWestrans - Dumfries and Galloway Council - Regional Transport Strategy

Supported Services

3.2.6   It was noted in the original STAG reporting that, two-thirds of bus routes operating in Dumfries and Galloway operate with partial or full subsidy, and this subsidy is reducing due to competing pressures on local authority budgets. There is uncertainty regarding how much funding will be available in the future. For commercially run services, the overall viability of services is only achievable if passenger numbers are maintained. As such, the overall bus network and operation across the region is fragile and even minor changes to routes or services (or any new competition with rail), which have the potential to tie up resources or affect patronage, can have major consequences for the viability of the network.

3.2.7   As was also noted in the original STAG reports, the funding available to support bus services had been declining year on year. Since the original STAG report, newly available data from 2019/20 and 2020/21 is shown in the table below which, while showing a small cash increase in the budget available in 2020/21, does highlight there is still a 7% cash decrease in subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21 (this reduction will be greater in real terms). During this period, total bus kilometres have reduced by 16.8%. Supported services have seen a larger reduction in bus kilometres (-18.6%) when compared to commercial services (-13.9%). These declines reflect the COVID-19 pandemic, however, there was still a decline in bus mileage pre-COVID, albeit at a slower pace. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shifting travel-to-work patterns, **the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen**.

Table 3.1: Subsidy Spent on Supported Bus Services and Bus Mileage

Year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Subsidy (£'000)	£3,736	£3,531	£3,400	£3,395	£3,400	£3,472
Change in subsidy compared to previous year		-5.5%	-3.7%	-0.1%	+0.1%	+2.1%
Commercial milage (km)	3,709,195	3,668,843	3,762,063	3,757,383	3,619,269	3,192,425
Change in commercial milage compared to previous year		-1.1%	+2.5%	-0.1%	-3.7%	-11.8%
Supported (km)	5,372,340	4,855,325	5,167,167	5,004,795	5,091,427	4,371,526
Change in supported milage compared to previous year		-9.6%	6.4%	-3.1%	1.7%	-14.1%
Total (km)	9,091,535	8,524,168	8,929,230	8,762,178	8,710,696	7,563,951
Change in total milage compared to previous year		-6.2%	4.7%	-1.9%	-0.6%	-13.1%

3.2.8   The table below shows passenger numbers for 2019, 2020 and 2021 for all commercial and supported services across the Dumfries and Galloway area.

Table 3.2: Bus Passengers (2019 - 2021)

Type	2019	2020	2021
Supported	1,671,934	798,782	1,030,633
Commercial	3,084,354	1,448,278	1,554,462
Total	**4,756,288**	**2,247,060**	**2,585,095**

3.2.9   When compared to pre-COVID usage figures, commercial services have seen a 50% decrease in passengers, supported services a 38% decrease, with an overall decrease of 46% in passenger numbers. Further analysis provided by SWestrans (to inform the Regional

Transport Strategy Case for Change) shows that the passenger decline is based on a reduction of Adults (17%), Children (41%) and Concessions (50%). At the UK level, bus travel (excluding London) is now around 70% of pre-pandemic levels.[3]

3.2.10 **There is a risk of further reductions in supported service provision due to the rising subsidy costs and a stagnant budget to fund such services. This could result in fewer services connecting rural towns, such as Thornhill, to economic and leisure opportunities and public services**.

Impacts on Rail Network

3.2.11 The COVID pandemic and the ongoing changes to working patterns and commuting have significantly impacted on the rail network. To highlight this, passengers per annum by station between 2017 and 2021 for all stations located in the region based on Office and Road and Rail (ORR) estimates on passenger entries and exits, is shown in the figure below.

Figure 3:1: Passengers per annum by station (2017 – 2021, ORR)

3.2.12 The patronage figures are significantly impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, with large drop-offs evident at all stations in 2020/21, equating to an over 86% reduction at all stations. At the UK level, rail travel is now around 80% of pre-pandemic levels.

Long Term Travel Behaviour Changes

3.2.13 As noted in the introduction to this section, while the short-term picture (during the pandemic and the various levels of restriction) is well understood, there remains uncertainty regarding the structural (permanent) changes in peoples' behaviour once the pandemic is behind us.

3.2.14 The Office for National Statistics recently published the article '*Is hybrid working here to stay*' which analysed data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OLS) to consider peoples future plans to both work from home and in the workplace[4]. Data for the OLS was collected in February 2022, after government guidance to work from home when possible was lifted.

3.2.15 More than eight in 10 workers who had to work from home during the pandemic said they planned to hybrid work. Since then, the proportion of workers hybrid working has risen from 13% in early February 2022 to 24% in May 2022. The percentage working exclusively from home has fallen from 22% to 14% in the same period.[4]

[3] Transport use during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

[4] Is hybrid working here to stay? - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

3.2.16   Increased home working during the pandemic also encouraged people to reassess their lifestyle priorities and where they live. There is a need and desire for larger properties, with additional rooms to allow for a separate 'office' and a likely reduced need in the future to commute on a daily basis. These two key factors have driven up interest in both larger properties and more rurally located properties further from key employment centres. Indeed, the population of Dumfries and Galloway rose by 0.3% from mid-2020 to mid 2021[5] (whereas the population of the region had previously been in slow decline since 2011). **Thornhill is situated within commutable distance of the key employment centres of Glasgow, Dumfries and Carlisle and is particularly attractive if that commute were only to me made once or twice a week under a 'hybrid' working arrangement.** While people may be travelling less, they may well be travelling further and strategic transport links and even more important in this regard.

3.3   Cost of Living increases including increased fuel costs

3.3.1   Prices in the UK are currently rising at the fastest rate in 40 years. According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), UK inflation jumped to 9.4% in the 12 months to June from 9.1% in May.[6]

3.3.2   Between June 2021 and June 2022, the cost of petrol and diesel increased significantly. The Petrol Retailers Association note that customers bought 15% less fuel in 2021 as a result of the pandemic.[7] Given this, retailers had to make higher profits on each litre sold to cover their costs. Therefore, fuel prices were already rising before the invasion of Ukraine (which started in February 2022) and the ongoing sanction against Russia, the world's second largest oil exporter[8], has exacerbated the issue.

3.3.3   In June 2022, petrol and diesel sales fell by 4.3%[9] from May indicating people were cutting back on spending due to concerns over what they could afford.

3.3.4   This increased cost of living, and particularly fuel can have a significant impact on rural communities where the only way to access employment and education is often with a car. In addition, businesses and services in these areas require staff to be able access their place of work, again often by car as the only viable travel option.

3.3.5   The significantly increased fuel costs have a number of potential impacts:

- It becomes financially unviable to commute to work or education out of the area, reducing opportunities and could lead to increased deprivation and / or out migration from the area as a result

- It becomes financially unviable to attend social activities out of the area, increasing social isolation

- Businesses and essential services cannot attract staff and are no longer able to operate in the area and close / relocate elsewhere

- Visitors choose not to come to the area given the cost of travel, impacting on the local economy

3.3.6   However, given this, **there is a clear opportunity that increasing fuel costs could accelerate a switch to more sustainable transport modes if they were available, and that**

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[5] [City populations fall in latest estimates | National Records of Scotland (nrscotland.gov.uk)](#)

[6] [Inflation: Fuel, milk and eggs push prices up at fastest rate in 40 years - BBC News](#)

[7] [Fuel prices: Why is petrol so expensive in the UK? - BBC News](#)

[8] [https://www.investopedia.com/articles/company-insights/082316/worlds-top-10-oil-exporters.asp](#)

[9] [Cost of living: Fuel and clothing at top of family spending cuts - BBC News](#)

enabling access to and from rural areas by sustainable transport has the ability to prevent some of the potential negative impacts.

3.3.7   It should however be recognised that the rising cost of fuel will also be impacting on the operational costs for public transport operators and as such the costs of bus and rail fares is likely to be impacted to some degree.

4 Problems and Opportunities Update

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 This section replicates, where pertinent, the original STAG report Section 2.4 *Key Problems and Opportunities Identified* and updates the data and commentary. The updates take cognisance of refreshed Summer 2022 data, as presented in Appendix A, in relation to transport supply analysis, updated development data as presented in Appendix B and the commentary in the previous chapters. In addition, a meeting was held with Thornhill Station Action Group to discuss whether the problems and opportunities, objectives and options developed originally remained pertinent. Appendix C presents the key points from the discussion.

4.2 Key Problems and Opportunities Identified

4.2.1 From the original study engagement exercise, the key problems and opportunities for the study area, as perceived by the public and the key stakeholders were reviewed and assessed before being collated into a succinct list of problems and opportunities, for which data was analysed.

4.2.2 The key transport problems identified were as follows:

- PR1: Poor strategic public transport frequency

- PR2: Long strategic public transport journey times

- PR3: Lack of direct public transport services

- PR4: Limited bus operating hours

- PR5: Poor integration between bus and rail

- PR6: Large gaps in the rail timetable

- PR7: Lack of direct and safe cycling routes on A76

4.2.3 Each of these is presented below, alongside the updated evidence of the problems where this has altered given the new analysis undertaken. This section does not seek to fully replicate the original report but builds on the previous reporting and should be read in conjunction with the original report narrative.

PR1: Poor Strategic Public Transport Frequency

PR2: Long Strategic Public Transport Journey Times

PR3: Lack of Direct Public Transport Services

4.2.4   Public transport connections directly serving Thornhill are limited to the bus as there is no rail station in the town.

Key Evidence

4.2.5   In terms of existing strategic public transport connections:

- A single bus service 102 connects Thornhill to **Edinburgh** directly (with details provided in A.2.1). The service had been due to be discontinued in August 2022. However, local campaigners staged protests[10] to campaign for the 'vital link' and a funding extension was secured to enable the service to run until March 2023.[11] **The longer-term future of the service remains unknown.** It is also noted that the travel time of the service remains long at around 2.5 hours.

- There are still no direct connections to **Glasgow**

- There are still no direct connections to **Ayr**

- There are still no direct connections to **Carlisle**

4.2.6   Appendix A highlights changes to bus services to/from Thornhill in 2019 and 2022.

4.2.7   A comparison with the most local town of Sanquhar in terms of the number of connections is shown in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Strategic public transport connections from Thornhill and Sanquhar

	Strategic Location	Number of direct daily public transport connections			
		Thornhill		Sanquhar	
		2019	2022	2019	2022
To…	Glasgow	0	0	10	8
	Edinburgh	1	1	0	0
	Ayr	0	0	0	0
	Carlisle	0	0	10	7

4.2.8   Updated 2022 transport supply side data is presented in Appendix A and shows similar bus connections in 2022 to 2019.

4.2.9   **Given the above, problems PR1, PR2 and PR3 remain pertinent in 2022**.

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[10] Protest staged along threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route - BBC News
[11] Threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route secures funding lifeline - BBC News

Key Economic and Social Impacts

4.2.10   From both the original initial public engagement, and the Public Event and associated feedback from the online survey, the existing level of transport connectivity was felt to be causing a number of economic and social problems in the local communities, as set out in the original STAG report. These were discussed with Thornhill Station Action Group in July 2022. It was confirmed that the originally identified economic and social issues as set out in the original reports remained true. The following additional comments were made:

- **Limiting visitors to the area.** The lack of direct public transport links was felt to be a constraint on tourism in the area. Thornhill has seen an increase in the number of international visitors travelling to the area and some have mentioned the lack of public transport connections to elsewhere in the region. This will discourage more from travelling to the area unless they have access to a car and therefore has a negative impact on the local tourism economy

- **Access to Employment and Cost of Fuel.** The recent increase in fuel prices was felt to have an impact, especially in the rural area and many rely on the car to travel to Dumfries as there is a lack of public transport. The cost of this has now increased and limits the hours / type of work people can do (i.e. it was felt better to do 2 long days than four part time days to reduce commuting). The increased fuel cost was also felt to be impacting on visitor numbers to the area, reinforced through the lack of public transport as an alternative.

PR4: Limited Bus Operating Hours

4.2.11   Bus services:

- Do not operate across the entire day, often with the last service running in the early evening

- Do not operate across the week, with limited (or no) Saturday and Sunday service

4.2.12   This remains true in 2022.

Key Evidence

4.2.13   A number of bus services connect Thornhill and the surrounding villages (Moniaive, Tynron, Keir Mill, Gatelawbridge, Leadhills, Wanlockhead, Kirkton and Auldgirth) to Dumfries.

4.2.14   Table 4.2 shows all bus services, with a comparison between 2019 and 2022, which serve Thornhill setting out:

- The first bus departure to Dumfries / Sanquhar

- The last bus departure back from Dumfries / Sanquhar

- The number of connections of the service a day

4.2.15   The table shows limited changes to the operating day.

Table 4.2: Bus Operating Hours from and to Thornhill

To / From	Service	Serving	Weekday						Saturday						Sunday					
			First connection to		Last connection back)		No. services (each direction)		First connection to		Last connection back)		No. services (each direction)		First connection to		Last connection back)		No. services (each direction)	
			2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
Dumfries	202	Dumfries - Dunscore - Moniaive – Thornhill	07:15	07:15	17:45	17:45	5	5	07:15	07:15	17:45	17:45	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
	212	Moniaive - Tynron - Keir Mill – Thornhill	09:00	09:00	16:15	16:15	6	6	09:00	09:00	16:15	16:15	5	5	-	-	-	-	-	-
	213	Thornhill - Gatelawbridge - Park – Dumfries	09:00	09:00	14:10	14:20	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	236	Dumfries - Kirkton - Auldgirth – Thornhill	07:52	07:52	17:45	17:40	8	7	07:52	07:52	17:45	17:40	8	7	14:15	14:22	17:20	17:25	1 - 2	1 - 2
	246	Dumfries - Thornhill – Cumnock	07:02	07:02	20:30	20:30	13	13	07:02	07:02	20:30	20:30	11	12	10:22	10:22	20:30	20:30	4-5	4-5
Sanquhar	246	Thornhill – Sanquhar - Cumnock	06:25	06:25	21:25	22:02	9	9	06:25	06:25	21:25	22:02	9	9	11:00	11:00	21:25	22:02	6	6

PR5: Poor Integration between Bus and Rail

4.2.16 In terms of integration between bus and rail, there are problems relating to:

- Poor integration between bus and rail timetables

- A lack of physical integration between bus stops and rail stations with the rail network not easily accessible, especially for those with limited mobility

Key Evidence

4.2.17 Considerable analysis was undertaken to inform this in the original report. This has not been re-done. However, given the reduced number of bus services in 2022 compared to 2019, it can be surmised that this problem has at best remained the same, but most likely worsened in terms of access to the rail station at Dumfries, especially for the villages local to Thornhill for whom direction connections to both Dumfries and Thornhill have lessened.

PR6: Large Gaps in Rail Timetables

4.2.18 Analysis of the results of the Public Event online survey undertaken during the original STAG work highlighted large gaps in the rail timetable causing problems.

Key Evidence

4.2.19 There were large gaps in the rail timetable in 2019 meaning travel by rail at certain times of the day was difficult. Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 compare the northbound and southbound train times at Sanquhar in 2019 and 2022.

4.2.20 In 2019, there were large timetable gaps:

- Between approximately 09:00 and 12:00, and 16:00 and 19:00 northbound

- Before 08:30 and between 14.30 and 17.30 southbound

4.2.21 Following a change to the ScotRail timetable in 2021, the frequency of services is more consistent across the day, with an average of a two-hour gap between trains. However, there has been a reduction in the number of services operating from 10 per day to eight per day in each direction. The operating day is now shorter in the northbound direction with the first train not until after 07:00 and the last train before 22:00 (previously the first train northbound was before 06:00 and the last train was after 22:00).
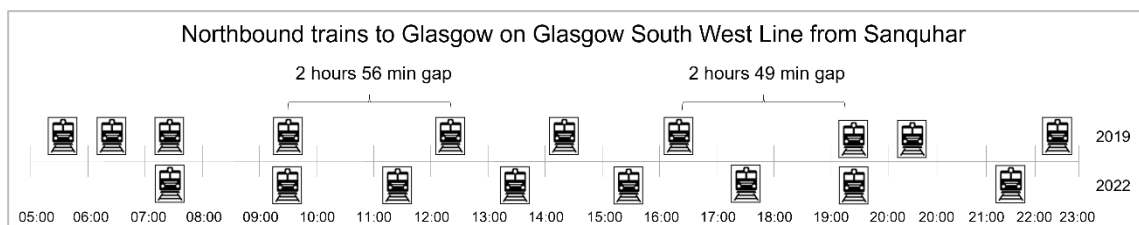

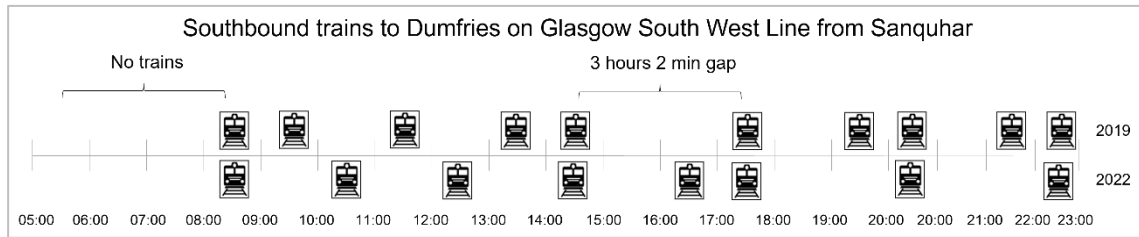Figure 4.1: Northbound trains from Sanquhar

Figure 4.2: Southbound trains from Sanquhar

Key Economic and Social Impacts

4.2.22 It was noted during the engagement exercise for the original study that the large gaps in the rail timetable limited the ability of people in Thornhill to use the rail network (through access at the nearest station at Sanquhar) for travel both north and southbound. The removal of such large gaps between services is likely to reduce this issue, however the shortening of the operating day in the northbound direction and the reduction from 10 to eight trains in both directions means there are fewer overall rail connections from Sanquhar and the ability to use the train to travel to Glasgow has been reduced in this respect. The loss of early and late running trains is likely to impact on the ability to reach certain employment opportunities as the first train (at 07:13) does not arrive in Glasgow until approximately 08:36.

PR7: Lack of Direct and Safe Cycling Routes on A76

4.2.23 Consultation highlighted that:

- It was felt there were a lack of safe cycling routes serving the local area

- There were places local people would like to be able to reach by bike but couldn't. These included:

  o Dumfries

  o Castle Douglas

4.2.24 The ongoing work to develop the new Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy, as well as the N76 In Motion Community Energy Scotland project, as set out in Chapter 2 is noted.

4.2.25 The development of the Active Travel Strategy included the development and prioritisation of a number of active travel links linking communities. As noted in Chapter 2, active travel routes linking Thornhill to surrounding villages are in the strategy and the Thornhill to Penpont link is being progressed. As noted in Chapter 2, other links connecting to Thornhill and prioritised include links to Closeburn, Greenhead, Gatelawbridge, Cample, and Keir Mill. The N76 In Motion Community Energy Scotland project is also establishing a cycle pool in the area. Given this, there will be a step change in safe cycling routes and facilities serving the local area.

4.2.26 As noted in Chapter 2, **the local active travel routes being developed will provide access to Thornhill as a local 'hub' destination. In this regard, enabling strategic transport connections onwards from Thornhill are important**.

4.2.27 In terms of the longer distance connection to Dumfries, as noted in the original report, the option would be unlikely to be used for commuting purposes (given the distance to Dumfries, the main employment centre) and the likely low demand is highly unlikely to be able to justify the cost of a direct off-road route with the required lighting, given the routes rural location. However, such a link should be considered under recommendation 5, '*Long-distance Active Travel Network'*, within the delivery of STPR2.

5 Transport Planning Objectives

5.1.1   Given the points raised in the previous section in relation to the problems and opportunities, the TPOs originally set for the study are still felt to be pertinent and remain as:

- TPO 1: Enable an effective day trip by public transport to key education, retail and social opportunities in Glasgow, Ayr, Edinburgh and Carlisle

- TPO 2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week

- TPO 3: Increase the inbound public transport catchment to support education, tourism and local businesses

5.1.2   This was further agreed through discussion with Thornhill Station Action Group.

6   Options

6.1   Introduction

6.1.1   This section adds additional commentary to the appraisal of the options where appropriate and should be read in conjunction with the original report appraisal tables. The commentary here does not replace the original appraisal but adds to it.

6.2   Updated Appraisal – Additional Points

6.2.1   The table below sets out additional appraisal points against each option, given the updated policy context, the updated transport data and the additional engagement undertaken. While the original appraisal work was undertaken against the STAG criteria at that time, the points below are made against the relevant refreshed STAG criteria as of February 2022. Where a revised STAG score is noted, the original report scoring against the criterion, if applicable, is indicted in brackets.

6.2.2   It is noted that the appraisal against the Environment, and Health, Safety and Wellbeing (with elements previously covered through the Environment and Safety criteria) criteria are not presented in the table below as there is not considered to be any material change to the original appraisal.

Table 6.1: Additional Appraisal Points

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
TPO1: Enable an effective day trip by public transport TPO2: Provide public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week TPO3: Increase the inbound public transport catchment	All	Unchanged	Given the similar public transport connections in 2022 compared to 2019, all the options still provide benefit over the existing situation. Given the rising cost of fuel, increasing the inbound public catchment to support local businesses through enabling visitors to reach the area (TPO3) more cost effectively is even more important that it was in 2019. It would also better support public transport connectivity which enables travel to and from the area across the day and across the week.
Climate Change	1a	1	The Climate Change Scotland Act (2019) includes a target date of 2045 for achieving net-zero carbon as well as a target of 75% reduction against 1990 emissions levels by 2030. Private car ownership and use is high in the study area. The options are likely to encourage some modal shift from private car to bus and rail. As a result, there will be some reduction in vehicle carbon emissions. This is likely to be greatest under Option 6 where direct access will be available to Dumfries and Glasgow with travel times much
	3	1	
	6	2	

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
			less than at present and much less than under the other options. The ability to reach the area by rail directly is also more likely to encourage visitors to the area using public transport from the major urban conurbations of Glasgow, Dumfries and Carlisle. It is noted that under Option 6, the station construction would generate embodied carbon. In addition, an increase in the number of buses would generate emissions (on the assumption that the vehicles used were not zero-emission).
Economy	1a	1	As discussed in Section 2, the *South of Scotland Regional Economic Strategy* Thriving and Distinct Communities theme Delivery Plan states '*One of the key challenges and barriers in the South of Scotland is the lack of good transport connectivity'.* The *Borderlands Growth Deal* includes *'potential new station facilities in the region; potential public transport improvements; and active travel'.* One of the plan's focusses is on *revitalising rural areas to attract people to live, work and visit.* All the options seek to support good transport connectivity with Option 6 relating to *potential new station facilities.*
	3	1	During the additional engagement undertaken with the Thornhill Station Action Group in July 2022 (see Appendix C), it was noted that international visitors have commented on the lack of public transport connections to attractions in the region, and people are struggling to use public transport to visit the area. In addition, the number of new people moving into the area (as a result of lifestyle changes during the pandemic) was noted. Improved transport links connecting the area would help capitalise on the above and ensure inclusive growth in the area. A new station at Thornhill is most likely to capitalise on the above given the connections to the major urban areas of Dumfries and Glasgow, enabling commuting for employment and education as well as providing sustainable travel connections for visitors the area, including for day trips.
	6	-1	The scores for all options have been increased from those presented in the original STAG report. It is noted that the negative scores originally given against this criteria took account of the subsidy requirements against the options through the analysis undertaken to inform the Detailed Options Appraisal. These are discussed in the Cost to Government section below and the economy scores here reflect just the economic benefits / impacts.

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
Equality and Accessibility	All	-	The importance of *delivering **inclusive** growth* is one of the *Borderland Growth Deal's* three key solutions to increase economic growth in the region. As noted above, there is a shorter rail operating day in 2022 compared to 2019 (especially with the loss of later running rail services). **All the options will therefore provide an increased benefit over the existing 2022 situation compared to that of 2019**. This is particularly important in enabling inclusive access to employment opportunities, education and healthcare appointments, as well as enabling participation in social activities. During the additional engagement undertaken with the Thornhill Station Action Group in July 2022 (Appendix C), it was noted that increased fuel prices have an impact in rural areas and many rely on the car to travel to Dumfries as there is a lack of public transport. With rising fuel costs, an example from member of the community was given where, as a result of rising prices, this was limiting the hours / type of work someone could undertake (i.e., it was noted to be better to do two long days than four part time days to reduce commuting costs). It was also noted by Thornhill Station Action Group that Thornhill needed to be a 'liveable' place with the ability to sustain its community. Improved strategic links connecting the community and providing equitable accessibility to work, education and social activities is required. While the above is noted, as the appraisal scores as noted in the original STAG report are already high, and the appraisal scores remain unchanged.
Cost to Government	1a		The analysis undertaken in the original study estimated the bus service would require £240k – £250k annually in subsidy to 'break-even'. At that time this equated to 8% of SWestrans total bus subsidy funding available. As noted in Table 3.1, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and shifting travel patterns, the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen between 2015 and 2021. There has also been a 7% reduction in the subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21. Given this, it is likely to even more challenging to implement this option.
	3		The analysis undertaken in the original study estimated the service would require £42k in subsidy to 'break-even'. As noted above, the subsidy per-passenger for supported routes has significantly risen and there has been a 7% reduction in the subsidy provided by SWestrans to support bus services between 2015/16 to 2020/21. Given this it is likely to be harder to secure additional subsidy for this service. In addition, the existing bus service (Service 102) had been due to be withdrawn in August 2022. Local campaigners staged protests[12] to campaign for the 'vital link' and a funding extension was secured to enable the service to run until March 2023.[13] **The longer-term future of the service remains uncertain**. Given the above, the appetite for increasing the frequency of the service may be very limited.

[12] Protest staged along threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route - BBC News

[13] Threatened Dumfries to Edinburgh bus route secures funding lifeline - BBC News

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
		6	It is worth drawing out some similarities with Reston station, situated on the East Coast Main Line, which opened on 23rd May 2022. Reston is a small village in the rural Scottish Borders located between Berwick-Upon-Tweed and Dunbar, but within commutable reach of both Edinburgh and Newcastle for employment and education. The economic appraisal (core scenario) as presented in the *East Linton & Reston Stations Business Case (WSP, December 2020)* returned a negative Net Present Value, driven by the disbenefits to long distance train passengers due to the introduction of the additional stop at Reston (and thus increased end-to-end journey times). The appraisal of the scheme concluded that the station re-opening was *very poor value for money, with moderate integration and accessibility and social inclusion benefits* but that the scheme performed well against the study objectives (which related to improving access to reliable public transport to enable travel to Edinburgh and Newcastle and increasing the sustainable transport mode share).
			The Business Case for the station noted a number of key problems including low frequency buses with long journey times to key urban centres, compounded by short operating days which effectively precluded residents from using public transport to commute for employment, education and leisure activities. **Such a set of problems are similar to the Thornhill narrative**. The noted opportunities in the business case to capitalise on the tourism potential of the area also hold true for Thornhill.
			Drawing further parallels between this study and the business case, the analysis presented within the business case also noted: the East Berwickshire area having an ageing population which will need greater access to health facilities and the lower proportion of working age residents than the Scotland average. This is similar to the characteristics of the Thornhill study area.
			The business case notes '*The new stations will also deliver substantial social benefits through greater access to cultural activities and educational facilities, particularly for younger people for whom a lack of transport may be a barrier'.* This reflects the comments made through this study's engagement with local Wallace Hall Academy students. The business case also noted the Borders Railway investment has brought significant benefit to the Borders area served by the line.
			The above narrative and decision to re-open Reston Station present a clear parallel position where **the importance of the opportunities with regards to accessibility and social inclusion outweigh the value for money of a scheme from a purely economic perspective. Such a narrative is highly relevant to support the case for Thornhill Station reopening.**
			It is also worth noting that the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts of Brexit have had a significant impact on the cost of building materials[14]. This is likely to persist into the future and would increase the costs associated with the station build and as such reduce the estimated BCR for this option.
Risk & Uncertainty	All		There are a range of additional risks and uncertainties which have the potential to impact on all the options. These include: • The ongoing uncertainty around public transport patronage and whether it recovers to pre-pandemic levels – this has the potential to reduce the revenue associated with the options and in particular would increase the subsidy costs associated with Options 1a and Option 3 • The ongoing cost of living increases including the cost of fuel and how this may impact in potentially increasing public transport usage. This would likely reduce the subsidy costs associated with Options 1a and

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[14] [Materials Price Rise Across The UK In 2022 | Checkatrade](#)

Criteria	Option	Revised Score (if changed)	Key Points
			Option 3 and generate a more positive BCR for Option 6. However, the likely impact of rising fuel costs would also increase the operational costs for the services, potentially increasing the subsidy required. • Future shift to alternative fuels presents a number of uncertainties with a risk that the transition to alternative fuel sources is seen as a panacea to transport emissions and that people choose to use their electric car more often on this basis – this would impact negatively on public transport usage • Future automation of the transport system, referring to a myriad of technologies which range from automated car features to modifications across a transport network which integrates information and communication for different modes. Automated vehicles have the potential to make everyone 'car available' and in doing so there is scope for vehicle kilometres travelled by private car to increase, and as a result public transport patronage decline. This would have a negative impact on the sustainable transport options developed for this study.
	1a		On-going uncertainty around the reducing SWestrans budget to fund supported services which may impact on the ability to implement the options.
	3		
	6		As noted above, the cost of building materials has risen significantly over the last few years with high prices likely to persist. This creates uncertainty around the capital cost associated with the station build. It is noted that the construction of Reston station cost approximately £20million although this station is situated on the East Coast Main Line.

7 Summary

7.1 Overview

7.1.1 This Addendum has reviewed the previous findings as presented in the *Thornhill Sustainable Transport Options study* and updated the key data analysis and outcomes in respect to changes since the original report was submitted to Transport Scotland in 2019.

7.1.2 The Addendum has considered the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and changes in national, regional and local policy since the original report was prepared.

7.2 Conclusions

7.2.1 There have been significant policy changes since the original reports were published and there are significant new targets in relation to Climate Change and transport's role in reducing carbon emissions, namely the national target for net zero by 2045 and the target for a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030.

7.2.2 This strong underpinning policy context offers a strengthened rationale and opportunities for successfully developing and implementing sustainable transport schemes.

7.2.3 The options developed within this study seek to improve public transport connections, and **clearly support the national policy objectives**. Moreover, the options also seek to support **inclusive growth** by providing public transport connections which:

- enable travel out of the area for work, education, health and leisure activities

- support sustainable inward travel to the area to support the economic sustainability of the rural community of Thornhill and the surrounding villages

7.2.4 The analysis of 2022 transport supply side data shows public transport services have deteriorated compared to 2019, exacerbating the previously identified problems and increasing the need for improved connections to ensure sustainable and equitable access to opportunities.

7.2.5 Whilst bus and rail patronage remain suppressed below pre pandemic levels, the connectivity problems previously identified, transport planning objectives set, options developed, and options appraisal and appraisal outcomes presented within the original study reporting still hold true. The need for better connections is now stronger given the reduction in services since 2019. It this however acknowledged that there is a risk that the already low patronage forecast in the original STAG report may reduce further as the structural impacts of the pandemic become established.

Appendix A   Transport Travel and Trends

A.1   Introduction

A.1.1   The purpose of this Appendix is to provide an update and comparison of the key transport travel and trends between the original reporting for the study in August 2019 and the Summer of 2022.

A.2   Existing Bus Services

A.2.1   The existing services to/from the Thornhill study area include:

- **Service 101/102/200 Dumfries - Thornhill/Moffat – Edinburgh (Stagecoach West Scotland / DG Buses) -** there is one daily departure (Monday to Saturday) from Dumfries to Edinburgh via Thornhill of services 101/102/200 (departing Dumfries at 0911) and one departure from Edinburgh to Dumfries via Thornhill (departing Edinburgh at 1720). There is only one service in each direction on a Sunday. The journey time between Edinburgh and Thornhill is 150 minutes and between Dumfries and Thornhill is 25 minutes. **The timetable in 2022 remains similar to that in 2019**.

- **Service 202 Dumfries - Dunscore - Moniaive – Thornhill (Houston's Coaches) -** Service 202 connects Dumfries to Thornhill via Moniaive on Monday - Saturday, with:

  o   Two services daily connecting Dumfries Railway Station to Moniaive and a further 4 services connecting Dumfries (from other town locations) with Moniaive. These services connect with Service 212 in Moniaive for onward travel to Thornhill

  o   Two services per day from Dumfries (Whitesands) direct to Thornhill (at 1555 and 1735). No Sunday service, as per 2019.

  o   Two services daily connecting Moniaive to Dumfries Rail Station and a further three services connecting Moniaive with Dumfries (from other town locations). These services connect with Service 212 from Thornhill

  o   One service per day from Thornhill direct to Dumfries (Railway Station) (at 0715) and no Sunday service, as per 2019.

- Service 212 Moniaive - Tynron - Keir Mill – Thornhill (Brownriggs Coaches) - Service 212 connects Moniaive to Thornhill, with:

  o   Three services from Moniaive to Thornhill Monday – Friday (departing Moniaive at 0935 and 1125 and 1315) and four services daily from Thornhill to Moniaive (departing Thornhill at 0910, 1240, 1410 and 1625).

  o   **On a Saturday, there is a reduction in frequency with one less service in each direction** (the 1315 from Moniaive and the 1240 from Thornhill not running).

  o   A journey time of 30 minutes, as per 2019

- Service 213 Thornhill - Gatelawbridge - Park – Dumfries (DG Buses) - Service 213 connects Thornhill with Dumfries, with:

  o   five departures from Gatelawbridge Monday to Friday

  o   seven services from Thornhill to Gatelawbridge.

- o   A journey time of approximately 45 minutes, as per 2019.

- ■   Service 236 Dumfries - Kirkton - Auldgirth – Thornhill (Stagecoach West Scotland / Houstons Coaches / McCalls Coaches) - **there continue to be nine** services a day from Dumfries**, with:**

  - o   the first and last services departing Dumfries, Whitesands at 0645 and 1740 respectively (similar length of operating day to 2019).

  - o   In the reverse direction, **seven services per day (previously eight in 2019)**, with the first and last service departing Penpont at 0745 and 1833 and Thornhill at 0752 and 1840 (15 minutes earlier than 2019).

  - o   A journey time of approximately 30-40 minutes, as per 2019.

  - o   Two services operate on a Sunday from Dumfries, with one service to Dumfries. Note that no Sunday services call at Penpont – with Thornhill the first/last calling point. **This is similar to 2019.**

- ■   **Service 246 Dumfries - Thornhill - Cumnock (Stagecoach West Scotland / Houstons Coaches) -** there are 13 services a day (Monday to Saturday) between Dumfries and Thornhill, as per 2019.The journey time between Dumfries and Thornhill is approximately 25 minutes and the journey time between Thornhill and Cumnock is approximately 65 minutes, as per 2019.

A.2.2   Table A.1 compares the number of buses to key destinations from Thornhill in both 2019 and 2022.

Table A.1: Bus Service Frequency Changes

To	Number of weekday bus services	
	2019	2022
Glasgow	0	0
Edinburgh	1	1
Dumfries	36	35

A.2.3   The table shows a similar bus service from Thornhill to Dumfries in 2022 compared to 2019.

A.2.4   In addition to the above timetabled services, Thornhill and District Community Transport offer a range of community transport services including group individual transport services for those who have difficulty using conventional bus routes. The community transport provision is now back up and running at capacity post pandemic.

A.3   Existing Rail Services

A.3.1   Table A.2 shows the typical journey times and adult fares from Sanquhar and Dumfries to a range of destinations and notes the fares in 2019 and 2022.

Table A.2: Approximate Journey Times and Typical Fares

From	To	Approximate Journey Time (minutes)	Anytime single		Anytime return		Off-peak return	
			2019	2022	2019	2022	2019	2022
Sanquhar	Dumfries	27	£5.80	£6.30	£10.00	£10.90	£7.10	£7.50
	Carlisle	70	£12.00	£13.00	£20.30	£22.00	£16.70	£17.70
	Kilmarnock	40	£10.60	£11.50	£13.50	£14.60	10.70	£11.40
	Glasgow	80	£14.40	£15.60	£24.30	£26.40	£19.70	£21.00
	Newcastle	160	£33.30	£36.00	£52.70	£57.20	£43.00	£45.80
	Ayr	150	£10.60	£11.50	£13.50	£14.60	£10.50	£11.20
Dumfries	Sanquhar	26	£5.80	£6.30	£10.00	£10.90	£7.10	£7.50
	Carlisle	40	£11.80	£12.80	£19.10	£20.70	£15.70	£16.70
	Kilmarnock	65	£17.30	£18.80	£26.40	£28.50	£21.70	£23.00
	Glasgow	110	£17.60	£19.10	£34.90	£37.90	£21.70	£23.00
	Newcastle	150	£22.70	£36.30	£52.70	£57.40	£43.00	£46.90
	Ayr	100	£18.90	£19.60	£28.60	£31.00	£23.30	£24.70

A.3.2   Rail fares have nearly all increased between 2019 and 2022.

Appendix B   Development

B.1   Housing and Employment Development

B.1.1   The table below outlines the Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan (LDP) allocations and the Housing Land Audit (HLA) indicative build out rates for the Thornhill study area. A revised LDP was adopted in October 2019, following the finalisation of the original STAG report. The table below has been updated accordingly from the data presented in the original STAG report. It is noted that the overall housing allocation has not changed significantly although there is a new development noted at Broomfield Meadow in Moniaive with 10 housing units allocated.

B.1.2   Allocated employment land in the Thornhill study area remains unchanged.

Stantec

Table B.3: Study Area Local Development Plan Allocation and Housing Land Audit Indicative Build Out Rates[15]

Location	Site	LDP Allocation up to 2029 (units)	LDP Allocation beyond 2029	Completions												
				2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	Post 2026
Thornhill	Wallace Hall	31	0	0	0	0	0	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	Hospital Brae	112	0	0	0	12	12	12	12	12	1	0	0	0	0	0
	Boatbrae	64	0	0	0	12	12	12	12	12	4	0	0	0	0	0
	Queensberry Beeches	0	103	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	103
	Queensberry Park	0	122	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25	25	72
	Gallows Knowe	47	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	47
	Corstorphine Road	7	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Gallamair, East Back	n/a	n/a	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Penpont	West of Bogg Road	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	0	0
	Main Street	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	4	0	0	0
Closeburn	Woodend Way	33	0	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Moniaive	Chapel Street	50	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	10	10	0	0	0
	Broomfield Meadow	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	2	2	0
	Total	**378**	**225**	**48**	**6**	**27**	**60**	**59**	**33**	**34**	**15**	**10**	**10**			

[15] Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2019 and Dumfries and Galloway Housing Land Audit 2020

Appendix C   Further Engagement

C.1   Stakeholder Engagement

C.1.1   An individual discussion was held with the Thornhill Station Action Group with the key points from the meeting outlined below.

Active Travel and Climate Change

- Aim to create smart and sustainable villages, mobility hubs, improving accessibility in rural areas and demand responsive transport

- Work being done to make Thornhill an active travel hub to create links between Thornhill and four different neighbouring areas, Closeburn, Carronbridge, Gatelawbridge and Penpont. The pathway between Thornhill and Penpont is funded by Sustrans and is under planning. This is predominantly driven by enabling active travel access to Wallace Hall Academy, but the links will benefit all.

- The Council's Active Travel strategy is currently being revised

- N76 in Motion (through Community Energy Scotland) are developing Thornhill as the hub in terms of Demand Responsive Transport, carpools and a cycle pool (already in place)

- A rail station is a destination in itself and would help underpin Thornhill as the 'hub' with the active travel links to the town supporting this

- A train station will help reduce the number of people travelling by car. It is 12 or 14 miles to a train station in Sanquhar or Dumfries

- Thornhill is a hub in the sense that it has all the amenities and services (shops and services as well as three pubs) so is a natural hub and would encourage people into the town

- COP22 underlines the need and urgency to do something. The station site is existing, and the infrastructure is already in place which is only going to deteriorate with time.

- Inflation is going to mean that to invest in the station reopening is likely to cost more in the future

Bus Services

- The bus network across the region it still fragile, if not more so now than in 2019.

- Lack of integration with rail services etc. is still an issue

- Review of the 101 and 102 bus services was undertaken with the service due to be withdrawn but a cross authority agreement has enabled it to remain, for now.

- SWestrans supported bus services budget is still reducing with a plan to reduce the number of bus services and encourage community transport (DRT).

- There is still no direct bus service between Thornhill and Glasgow.

- Bus service 246 is every 2 hours and there is no integration with rail times.

- Rail would offer a far better longer-term solution

Demand for a station

- A new housing development to be located behind the health centre would substantially increase the population of Thornhill. The developer, Dumfries & Galloway Housing Association, has planning permission to build up to 150 housing units

- It is difficult for people to buy a house in the area due to few people moving away for work as they can now work from home

- Housing stock in Thornhill is limited, not much on the market - anecdotally, people are moving into the area – rural migration due to COVID

- There is an increase in international visitors to the area and some have commented on the lack of transport connections to attractions in the region. People are struggling to visit the area by public transport

Social Impact

- Increase in fuel prices has an impact, especially in a rural area and many rely on the car to travel to Dumfries as there is a lack of public transport with the cost of this now increased and limited the hours / type of work people can do (i.e. better to do 2 long days than four part time days to reduce commuting). The increased fuel cost was also felt to be impacting on visitor numbers to the area, reinforced through the lack of public transport as an alternative

- Thornhill needs to be a 'liveable' place

- The post office is operating currently part time only

COVID Travel Behavioural Changes

- Some have made the shift to home delivery for supermarket shopping rather than driving to Dumfries for large food shops

- No knowledge of hybrid working / impact on commuting patterns

Transport Planning Objectives

C.1.2   Still considered to be the correct TPOs for the study

Options

C.1.3   Still considered to be the correct options for the study – with a greater weighting on Options 3 and 6.

REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT 2022/2023 FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 August 2022

1.   Reason for Report
To provide the Board with an update on the Partnership's 2022/23 monitoring and forecast outturn position based on the period ending 31 August 2022.

2.   Background
The Scottish Government provide revenue funding to SWestrans, with Dumfries and Galloway Council also providing funding. SWestrans requisitions funding from Dumfries and Galloway Council in respect of payments required for public bus service contracts.

3.   Key Points
3.1   The **Appendix** shows the revenue budget summary for SWestrans. The published expenditure budget for 2022/23 of £4,447,289 was agreed by the Board on 25 March 2022. It is vital to the economic wellbeing of the Partnership and its stakeholders that the financial resources are managed effectively, and expenditure and income is delivered in line with the approved budget.

3.2   This report forms part of the financial governance and stewardship framework, which ensures that the financial position of the Partnership is acknowledged, understood and quantified on a regular basis. It provides assurance to the members of the Board that resources are being managed effectively and allows corrective action to be taken where necessary.

3.3   Board Members will note that based on the financial performance to date, it is forecast that a balanced budget will be delivered.

4.   Consultations
The Proper Officer has been consulted and is in agreement with its terms.

5. Implications	
Financial	As laid out in the report
Policy	No policy implications from this report
Equalities	No equalities implications from this report
Climate Change	No climate change implications from this report
Risk Management	The monitoring relates to the known risks R04 – Capital funding R06 – Overspending R07 – Revenue funding R12 – Third Party liabilities R14 – Withdrawal of DGC Governance support R15 – Cyber crime

6.   Recommendation
Members of the Board are asked to note the forecast outturn for the revenue budget as at 31 August 2022.

Janet Sutton - Report Author Finance Officer Tel: 01387 260105 Date of Report: 2 September 2022 File Ref:	Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower, Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN

APPENDIX - Monitoring Report 2022/23 for the period ending 31 August 2022.

SOUTH WEST OF SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP
REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING AS AT 31 August 2022

	FINAL OUTTURN 2021/22 £	PUBLISHED BUDGET 2022/23 £	BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS 2022/23 £	ADJUSTED BUDGET 2022/23 £	ACTUAL EXPENDITURE TO 31/08/22 £	PROJECTED OUTTURN 2022/23 £	VARIANCE 2022/23 £
EXPENDITURE							
Staff Costs	84,007	249,348		249,348	0	249,348	0
Transport Costs	10,016	0		0	0	0	0
Supplies & Services	0	0		0	0	0	0
Administration Costs	61,392	21,153		21,153	18,500	21,153	0
Payments	4,027,155	4,128,038		4,128,038	2,013,165	4,128,038	0
Central Support	43,391	48,750		48,750	0	48,750	0
Capital Charges	264,452			0	102,229	0	0
Total Expenditure	**4,490,413**	**4,447,289**	**0**	**4,447,289**	**2,133,894**	**4,447,289**	**0**
INCOME							
Scottish Government Funding	259,250	259,250		259,250	123,250	259,250	0
D&G Council Funding	100,000	100,000		100,000	0	100,000	0
Other Contributions	4,131,163	4,088,039		4,088,039	0	4,088,039	0
Total Income	**4,490,413**	**4,447,289**	**0**	**4,447,289**	**123,250**	**4,447,289**	**0**
NET EXPENDITURE	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**2,010,644**	**0**	**0**

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CAPITAL EXPENDITURE PROGRAMME 2022/23 – 2024/25 UPDATE

1.   Reason for Report

This report provides the Board with an update on the Capital Programme and seeks agreement to progressing with public/stakeholder engagement on the Lockerbie Rail Station (Phase 2) parking design.

2.   Background

2.1   As reported to the Board at its meeting on 24 June 2022, the SWestrans Capital Programme for 2022/23 to 2024/25 is shown in Table 1 below:

SWestrans Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25	**Total Budget Allocated 2022/23**	**Total Budget Allocated 2023/24**	**Total Budget Allocated 2024/25**	**Total**
	£	£	£	£
Local Bus Network	526,149	560,000	840,000	1,926,149
Rail Station Parking	435,645	250,000	0	685,645
Active Travel Network	584,717	600,000	400,000	1,584,717
TOTAL	**1,546,511**	**1,410,000**	**1,240,000**	**4,196,511**

Table 1 – SWestrans Capital Programme 2022/23 – 2024/25

2.2   At its meeting on 26 March 2021, the Board agreed to £100k funding support to Keir, Penpont and Tynron Development Trust (KPTDT) over financial years 2021/22 and 2022/23 as match funding for the development and delivery of an active travel path between Penpont and Thornhill. £50k was released in 2021/22 with the remaining £50k subject to confirmation that KPTDT were awarded the requested 70% grant from Sustrans for path construction costs.

3.   Key Points – Capital Programme

3.1   Each of the elements of the Capital Programme for 2022/23 are discussed in paragraphs 3.2 to 3.9.

Local Bus Network - Buses

3.2   Local Bus Network – the 2 outstanding buses ordered in 2021 arrived in August 2022 and were immediately used on local bus services from 8 August 2022. There was an urgent need to secure a high-quality second-hand vehicle to replace an existing asset that had been assessed as unviable to repair. As our vehicle assets are now in an aligned programme with the Dumfries and Galloway Council the purchase of this second-hand vehicle required to meet the strict criteria set by their Transport and Operations Manager in consultation with the Lead Officer. The 39-seat low-floor accessible bus is less than 5 years old and was purchased for some £93,000. The vehicle was delivered and in service from mid-August.

3.3   There continues to be significant delay in the production and delivery of new vehicles with the time from order to build now likely to be 12 to 18 months.

Therefore, the intended purchase of a new EV low floor bus to replace an existing leased bus asset this year, although in progress, will not incur spend in 2022/23.

3.4   One of our existing bus assets (1 x 16 seat) is at the end of its life and needs replaced as soon as possible. Therefore, following discussions with the Council, procurement of a replacement is being progressed with the new asset likely to arrive in November 2022.

Local Bus Network – Bus Shelter Programme
3.5   New and replacement bus shelters are provided by SWestrans through its Capital Programme. Work is underway to review the existing agreed bus shelter renewal/replacement programme and it is intended that this will be complete and brought to the next Board meeting in November.

Rail Station Parking
3.6   The 2 phases of parking development at Lockerbie Station continue with Phase 3 (Sydney Place) involving the provision of additional parking to the east of the railway on course to be fully delivered during 2022/23.

3.7   A draft design for Phase 2 is attached at the **Appendix** and there will be a visualisation of the completed design shown at today's meeting. This design provides a rationalisation of the existing car park outside the station and as previously advised construction of Phase 2 can only take place once Phase 3 is complete to ensure appropriate compensatory parking is available.

Active Travel Network
3.8   Work continues to deliver of the agreed elements of the Regional Active Travel Fund that were reported to the Board at its meeting on 24 June 2022.

3.9   KPTDT confirmed on 22 August 2022 that Sustrans had awarded 70% of the construction costs for Phase1a of the Penpont to Thornhill Active Travel Path and advised that construction was likely to commence in October. Therefore, the remaining £50k match funding agreed by SWestrans was released.

4. Implications	
Financial	Regular reports will be brought to the Board on the progress with the capital programme during 2022/23.
Policy	None. This work fulfils SWestrans policy objectives.
Equalities	Provision of good quality infrastructure will enhance travel choice and experience for those with protected characteristics.
Climate Change	Provision of good quality infrastructure that enhances opportunity for increased uptake of active and sustainable travel will have a positive impact on climate change objectives.
Risk Management	Progression of the Capital Programme relates to two known risks: R02 – Public image R04 – Capital Funding.

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5.   Recommendations

Members of the Board are asked to:

5.1   note the update on the Capital Programme for 2022/23; and

5.2   note the draft design of Lockerbie Rail Station Parking Phase 2 and agree that public and stakeholder engagement on the design as shown at the Appendix is undertaken.
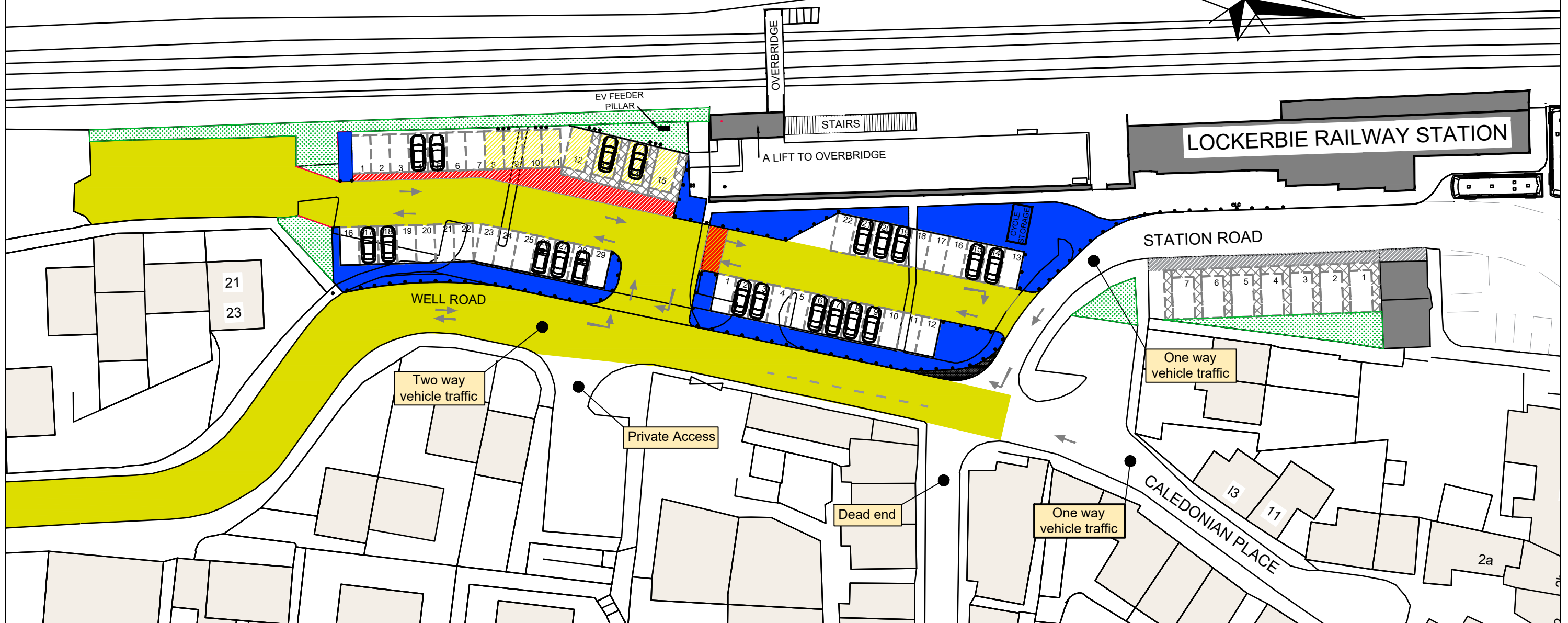

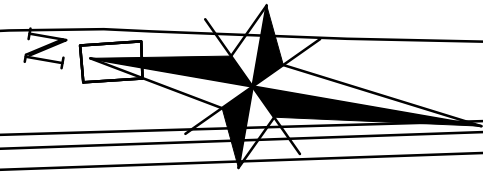| Douglas Kirkpatrick - Report Author Tel: 01387 260136 Date of Report: 9 September 2022 File Ref: SW2/meetings/2022	Approved by: Douglas Kirkpatrick Lead Officer South West of Scotland Transport Partnership Cargen Tower Garroch Business Park Dumfries DG2 8PN

Appendix – Draft design Lockerbie Rail Station Parking Phase 2

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LOCKERBIE CAR PARK REARRANGEMENT PROPOSAL
CONSULTATION DRAWING
SCALE 1:500

OVERBRIDGE

EV FEEDER PILLAR

STAIRS

A LIFT TO OVERBRIDGE

LOCKERBIE RAILWAY STATION

CYCLE STORAGE

STATION ROAD

WELL ROAD

Two way vehicle traffic

Private Access

One way vehicle traffic

Dead end

One way vehicle traffic

CALEDONIAN PLACE

NOTE:

THIS OPTION ACCOMMODATES 51 No PARKING SPACES WITH 8 No ELECTRICAL CHARGING POINTS (4 No FOR DISSABLED AND 4 No NON-DISSABLED USERS).

EXISTING LAYOUT CAN ACHIEVE 46 No PARKING SPACES (INCLUDING 4 No DISSABLED SPACES) IF CAR PARKING IS MARKED OUT TO RECOGNIZED STANDARD BAY DIMENSIONS.

LEGEND:

GREEBN SPACE

TWO WAY STREET

ALTERED FOOTWAY

PROPOSED CROSSING POINTS FOR PEDESTRIANS ON THE ROAD

NEW OVER-RUN AREA

BOLLARD

CAR PARKING

CAR PARK SPACES WITH ELECTRICAL CHARGING POINTS

DISABLED CAR PARKING SPACE

VEHICLE MANOEUVRING IN / OUT / WITHIN THE CAR PARKING

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CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

1.   Reason for Report

This report provides the Board with proposed meeting dates for 2023 and asks for consideration to be given to Board meeting arrangements.

2.   Considerations

2.1   Board meetings are agreed for 2022 with the next meeting scheduled for 25 November 2022. Board meetings for 2023 have yet to be agreed. The schedule and frequency of meetings have been reviewed and it is considered that the current pattern of 5 meetings per year services the business needs of the Board.

2.2   It is proposed that the current pattern of meetings is extended as set out in Table 1 below. All meetings would take place at 10.30am on a Friday in the Council Hall, English Street, Dumfries:

Date
27 January 2023
31 March 2023
30 June 2023
29 September 2023
24 November 2023

Table 1 – Proposed Calendar of meetings

2.3   Standing Order 7.5 provides for hybrid meetings recognising that all Board members may not be present in the same place.

2.4   Due to restrictions that were in place during the Covid Pandemic, SWestrans Board meetings were mostly fully on MS Teams with invites extended to public who wished to attend.

2.5   The previous Board determined that the meetings would not be recorded.

2.6   Benchmarking with other RTPs has confirmed arrangements in place elsewhere with most either livestreaming or recording the meetings and making them available online afterwards or considering doing so.

2.7   Hybrid arrangements allows for members of the public to now attend in person.

2.8   The Board are asked to consider the options presented in Table 2 below concerning meeting arrangements:

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Options	Detail	Comments
Option 1 – Continue current arrangements	Hybrid meetings not recorded. Invites extended to interested parties on Teams and public can attend in person	Costs for hybrid meetings can be met within budget
Option 2 – Revert to pre-covid arrangements	All meetings in person only with no recording – public can attend in person	Public attendance maintained but not easily accessible
Option 3	Hybrid meetings recorded and made available online after the meeting Invites extended to interested parties	Costs for hybrid meetings can be met within budget Meetings more accessible
Option 4	Hybrid meetings recorded and livestreamed on YouTube – public can watch the livestream online or attend in person	Requires own YouTube account Costs for hybrid meetings can be met within budget Meetings accessible in real time
Option 5	MSTeams only meeting – invites extended to interested parties.	Virtual attendance not supported at a central venue Recording made available after the meeting No additional costs associated with a fully online meeting – Board members at different locations

Table 2 – SWestrans Board meeting options

2.9   Dependent upon the preferred option it may be appropriate for the decision to be reflected in the Standing Orders, it is proposed that any amendments are made by the Secretary with the agreement of the Board.

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3.   Recommendations

Members of the Board are asked to:

3.1   agree the Calendar of meetings for 2023 as set out in Table 1;

3.2   consider the options concerning Board meeting arrangements presented in Table 2 and determine a preferred option; and

3.3   remit the Secretary to update Standing Orders to reflect the agreed meeting arrangements.

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| Claire Rogerson - Report Author
Tel:01387 260024

Date of Report: 9 September 2022
File Ref: SW2/meetings/2022 | Claire Rogerson
Secretary to the Board
The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership
English Street
Dumfries
DG1 2DD | |

REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

1.   Reason for Report

This report seeks the Board's nominations to service on two outside bodies as the RTP's representative: West Coast Rail 250 and South West Scotland Community Rail Partnership.

2.   Considerations

2.1   SWestrans has been represented on a number of outside bodies by Councillor Board members of SWestrans. When nominated to represent the RTP on these bodies, the appointment has been the subject of decision by the Board.

West Coast Rail 250

2.2   The West Coast Rail 250 group campaigns for improved and environmentally sustainable rail services along the West Coast Main Line to support economic growth and employment, thereby strengthening the social cohesion of communities along the WCML rail corridor. The group is a non-party-political organisation, which has long-established and excellent working relationships with Network Rail, the relevant Train Operating Companies, and the Department for Transport. The General Council of the group meets every four months.

2.3   SWestrans currently has no representative on West Coast Rail 250.

South West Scotland Community Rail Partnership (SWSCRP)

2.4   The SWSCRP is a voluntary, not-for-profit organisation that seeks to engage with communities and help people to get the most from their railways. It aims to promote social inclusion and sustainable travel by collaborating with train operators to bring about real improvements in terms of bringing stations back to life and making travel by rail an enjoyable experience. The SWSCRP meets three times per year.

2.5   SWestrans currently has no representative on the SWSCRP.

3.   Financial Implications

The costs of subscribing to the various organisations are as detailed below and these and other costs are accommodated within the SWestrans revenue budget:
- West Coast Rail 250 - £350 p.a.
- South West Scotland Community Rail Partnership – nil.

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4.   Recommendation

Members of the Board are asked to consider nomination of Members to represent SWestrans on: West Coast Rail 250 and South West Scotland Community Rail Partnership.

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Report   **South West of Scotland Transport Partnership**   **23 September 2022**

| Douglas Kirkpatrick - Report Author
Tel: 01387 260136

Date of Report: 9 September 2022
File Ref: SW2/Meetings/2022 | Douglas Kirkpatrick
Lead Officer
South West of Scotland Transport Partnership
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