

Supplementary Guidance: Strategic Transport Fund [Consultation Draft]

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1. What is the purpose of this guidance?

1.1 The Aberdeen City and Shire city region is expected to be the fastest growing in Scotland over the next 20 years and is being supported by the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan (SDP). One of the most significant ways in which the scale of development can be facilitated is through reducing costs, uncertainty and phasing constraints to the delivery of sites brought about by the need for transport infrastructure.

1.2 Good transport connections are essential to the economic prosperity of the region and the quality of life of the people who live and work here.

1.3 In recognition of the significant existing transport constraints in the area, as well as the need to create capacity for growth, unprecedented investment is being made by the public sector in the city region's transport and other infrastructure. Well over £1bn is being spent on rail, road, bus and active travel infrastructure alone by Transport Scotland, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Nestrans. This ranges from the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route to rail enhancements, park and ride sites and new bridges.

1.4 Although required to allow development of any significant scale to come forward, evidence shows that even with this scale of investment it will not be enough to address all the transport impacts of the significant scale of new housing, office and other development planned for the next 15 years. Evidence has highlighted a number of locations where intervention is needed to mitigate the combined (cumulative) impact of new development. However, the estimated cost of these interventions represents a very small percentage of the cost being borne by the public sector (less than 10%).

1.5 The purpose of this guidance is to set out a mechanism to ensure that the cumulative impact of new development in and around Aberdeen is mitigated in such a way as to facilitate development in the area. It will also result in more proportionate Transport Assessments.

1.6 It is vital that all cumulative impacts are addressed or the effect of the significant scale of new development will be severe congestion on the transport network, contrary to the vision of the plan.

1.7 The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Transport Fund was

established in March 2012 with the adoption of supplementary planning guidance in support of the Aberdeen City and Shire Structure Plan (2009), winning the 'Most Innovative Transport Project of the Year' at the Scottish Transport Awards 2013. The background to the guidance is set out in Appendix 1.

1.8 With the approval of the SDP in March 2014, the opportunity has been taken to refresh the guidance and give it added weight.

2. What is the status of this guidance?

2.1 This is [draft] statutory supplementary guidance in support of the Aberdeen City and Shire SDP (2014). As such, it forms part of the development plan for the purposes of determining planning applications. The intention to prepare this guidance is set out in para 5.9 of the SDP.

3. What is the evidence base for this guidance?

3.1 The Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Cumulative Transport Appraisal (CTA) was carried out by Nestrans and the SDPA, in partnership with Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland in 2010.

3.2 The appraisal demonstrated that new development across the north-east will have an impact on transport infrastructure and that movements rely on a network of road, rail and public transport with a high degree of interdependency between the two council areas. A package of defined transport projects was identified by the CTA (and now established in the SDP) to mitigate the cumulative impacts of new development and the purpose of this guidance is to provide a mechanism for securing contributions from development to fund the delivery of this infrastructure.

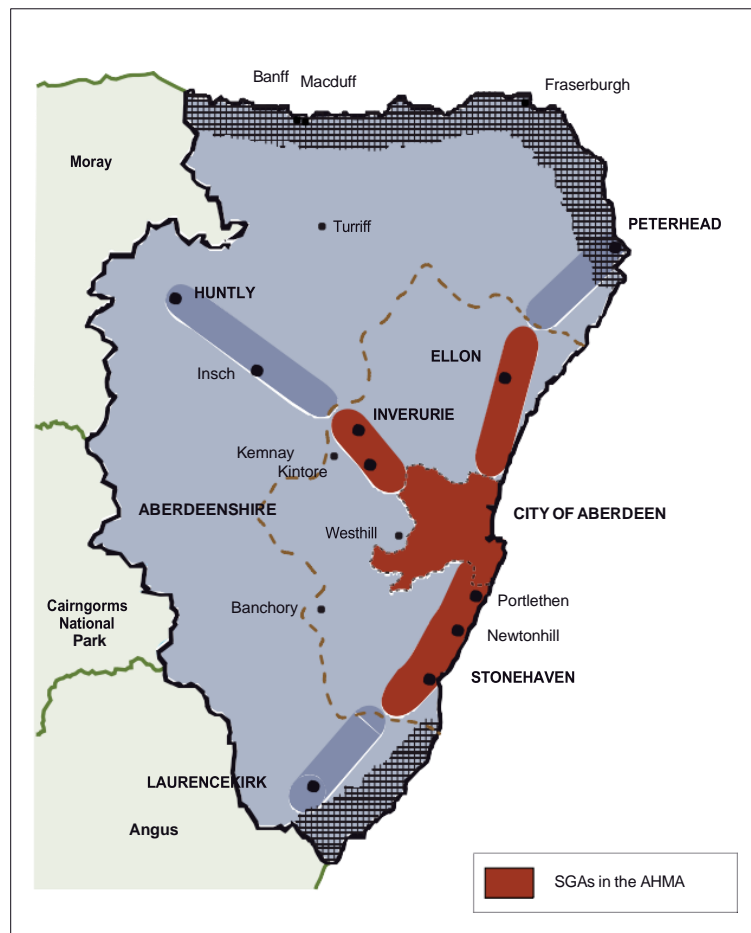
3.3 The projects include road and public transport interventions in a variety of locations where the cumulative impact of new housing and employment uses is likely to cause increased congestion. By sharing the financial burden widely, no one development will be liable for the cost of a specific strategic project or delayed by its implementation. By being upfront about the mechanism for making contributions, developers will have greater certainty over strategic transport requirements.

3.4 More details on the CTA can be found in Appendix 2.

4. Who will be expected to contribute?

4.1 As set out in the Strategic Development Plan, the areas covered by this supplementary guidance are the strategic growth areas (SGAs) within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area (AHMA). These are shown graphically in Figure 1. Within other parts of the AHMA, the level of growth is related to local needs and development and is unlikely to have a significant impact on the wider transport network; sites in such areas will not generally be expected to contribute.

Figure 1: SGAs in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area



4.2 However, any major development on an unallocated site within the AHMA (but outwith the SGAs) will also be liable to make a contribution if it demonstrably increases cumulative impact on the transport network.

4.3 As also established in the plan, all housing, business, industrial, retail and commercial leisure developments within these areas will be expected to make a contribution. This will include 'Sui Generis' uses such as serviced apartments. Thresholds and criteria for contributions are set in Appendix 3.

4.4 All brownfield sites which were vacant in 2007 will be required to make a full contribution. Those that have become vacant since 2007 will receive a proportionate reduction in contribution to recognise the existing trips associated with the site.

4.5 Sites allocated for development before the adoption of the first Local Development Plans in 2012 will also not be required to make STF contributions because their impact would have been accounted for in the baseline. However, any intensification of use on such sites would be expected to contribute.

4.6 There may be instances where a change of use application requires a contribution to the strategic transport fund, such as where the trip generation characteristics of the new use are quite different from the established use. This will be assessed and determined by the relevant roads authority.

4.7 Where sufficient detail is available at the Planning Permission in Principle stage, detailed contributions can be determined then. However, if this is not the case, the principle of STF contributions will generally be established at the Planning Permission in Principle stage, with details of exact contributions determined at the next stage (Matters Specified in Condition applications).

4.8 The purpose of the STF is not to mitigate all impacts on the strategic transport network, but rather to mitigate the cumulative impact at specific 'hotspots' on the network, as identified through the CTA. There will still be a requirement to mitigate impacts specific to the development (defined as local impacts) whether they are on the local or strategic network. The scope of Transport Assessments will be related to the scale of development but developers should discuss the scope of the Assessment at an early stage with the roads authority.

5. How much will the contributions be?

5.1 The appraisal work undertaken to date has been proportionate and based on the approach outlined within Transport Scotland's Development Planning and Management Transport Appraisal Guidance (DPMTAG). However, the potential interventions have not been fully considered in terms of Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), nor has feasibility or detailed engineering design work been undertaken. The precise details and cost of the projects are therefore not currently known, but must be based on previous experience until this is done. The councils may resolve to secure borrowing to allow up-front funding to develop and deliver some projects; costs associated with such borrowing will have to be repaid as monies accrue.

5.2 The contributions set out in Table 1 are based upon delivering the package of interventions identified in the CTA at an estimated cost of £86.6 million with the scale of development proposed up to 2026. These figures will be revisited at the beginning of each financial year and will take account of the Building Cost Information Service (BCIS) 'All In - Tender Price Index'. Contributions will be adjusted accordingly with immediate effect, but will not fall below the 2014/15 baseline figure.

5.3 The STF contributions should be factored into development appraisals by developers at an early stage since the likely levels can be determined well before detailed plans have been drawn up. Both councils will take viability into account in their overall assessment of planning obligations and there may be scope for negotiation around payment schedules where a viability assessment shows that this is necessary.

5.4 Developers can elect to assess and mitigate their cumulative impact outwith the STF, although this will require a considerably more comprehensive Transport Assessment and the design and delivery of the mitigation measures shown to be necessary. This will definitely be more time-consuming and almost certainly more expensive, if it can be achieved at all.

Table 1: Qtr 1 2014/15 contribution levels

RESIDENTIAL		
unit size	per unit	% weighting
1 bedroom	£1,350	60%
2 bedroom	£1,800	80%
3 bedroom	£2,248	100%
4 bedroom	£2,698	120%
5 bedroom+	£3,148	140%
Please note:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the number of bedrooms will be calculated on the basis that a study or other non-public room could be used for that purpose. 		
NON-RESIDENTIAL		
use class	per (or part) 1000m ² GFA	% weighting
Class 1	£16,211	120%
Class 3	£13,509	100%
Class 4	£18,913	140%
Class 5	£12,158	90%
Class 6	£9,457	70%
Class 7	£12,158	90%
Class 11	£12,158	90%
Please note:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These classes are determined by The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997. Sui Generis uses will be treated as the closest equivalent land use in terms of its transport impacts. Contributions will be updated quarterly by the BCIS 'All-In Tender Price Index'. 		

6. How and when will contributions be payable?

6.1 A planning obligation or other legal agreement will normally be used to secure contributions, although in appropriate cases up-front contributions will also be acceptable. In such cases, the receipt will set out the circumstances under which it will be used. These will be paid into a dedicated strategic transport fund.

6.2 Where a planning obligation or other legal agreement, developers will be allowed to defer payment of their contributions until such time as revenue begins to be generated by the site. For residential, payments will be based on quarterly completions in arrears. Mixed use and employment contribution payment dates can be negotiated with the Developer Obligations Team. Construction on many sites will take several years and in these situations contributions will continue to be linked to the BCIS 'All In - Tender Price Index over the duration of the build period.

6.3 On some sites it may be possible for a developer to make 'in kind' contributions to deliver a specific identified intervention; in these limited cases, obligations may be reduced accordingly. Such in-kind improvements may not solve all strategic transport issues so contributions to the strategic transport fund may still be required. This will be subject to negotiations with the planning authorities.

6.4 Due to the length of time it often takes to deliver strategic transport projects, there will be a requirement to hold contributions for a period of up to 20 years. Any un-used contributions will be returned after 20 years if they have not been used by then.

7. How will contributions be used?

7.1 Contributions will only be used to deliver the transport interventions identified in Schedule 2 of the SDP, as set out below:

- A new station at Kintore;
- New bus services and action to give them priority and increase their frequency;
- Junction and capacity improvements on the A96, A944, A956, A90, Kingswells North and Parkhill;
- Safety improvements on the access road to the A93;
- Improvements on the Parkway and Persley Bridge; and
- A link over the river Dee.

7.2 The importance of encouraging active travel (walking and cycling) should be a significant consideration when these interventions are worked up into detailed projects.

7.3 No contributions from development sites will be used to support projects which are predicted to make no use of the infrastructure being provided and therefore are un-related to the development making the contribution. The CTA has shown that the delivery of each of the projects identified above is necessary to make all developments acceptable in planning terms.

7.4 Nestrans as the Regional Transport Partnership will hold and administer contributions in a strategic transport fund. As contributions are received they will be placed into a ring-fenced account. The monies in this account will only be available for delivering the strategic transport projects listed above, including detailed assessment, development and design work. An annual report will be published clearly setting out the balance sheet of the fund and the projects progressed during the year.

7.5 Recommendations about when to deliver each of the interventions will be based on a number of criteria. These include, the order of priority identified in the strategic development plan, scale and urgency of the problem and anticipated phasing of development. These will be agreed by the Nestrans Board following consultation with the councils, SDPA and Transport Scotland.

7.6 The location and scale of interventions required will only change following a thorough review of the CTA and the Strategic Development Plan. More details on the role of Nestrans, prioritisation, monitoring and review of the strategic transport fund can be found in Appendix 4.

Appendix One: Background to the Supplementary Guidance

Link to the Strategic Development Plan / Local Development Plans / Circular

The Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan was approved by Scottish Ministers in March 2014 and sets the framework for growth by setting targets for the level of new housing and employment land to be allocated across the area. The plan directs development towards four strategic growth areas:

- Aberdeen City
- Aberdeen to Peterhead
- Aberdeen to Huntly
- Aberdeen to Laurencekirk

Paragraph 3.9 of the plan highlights that:

“Development in these areas will bring about a significant need for new and improved infrastructure. This will include new or extended primary and secondary schools, open space, improvements to roads and railways as well as walking, cycling and bus networks, and new water and waste-water systems”.

Given the strategic nature of the developments and their effects, which relate to both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire areas, the strategic development plan provides the most appropriate channel to bring forward the proposed approach to cumulative infrastructure.

Paragraphs 5.8 and 5.9 of the Strategic Development Plan go on to state that developers will need to contribute towards this infrastructure and also make contributions towards the wider effects of their development. In particular, it is clearly stated that supplementary guidance will be prepared to allow transport projects which are needed as a result of the combined effect of new development to be funded and delivered (through a ‘Strategic Transport Fund’). The area and types of development to be covered by the

guidance are set out in the plan, along with the projects to benefit from the ‘Fund’.

The approach taken in this supplementary guidance reflects the terms of the Strategic Development Plan as well as the government guidance set out in Circular 3/2012 Planning Obligations and Good Neighbour Agreements (paragraph 20) which states that:

“Planning obligations must be related in scale and kind to the proposed development. Developers may, for example, reasonably be expected to pay for, or otherwise contribute towards the provision of, infrastructure which would not have been necessary but for the development. In assessing such contributions planning authorities may take into account the cumulative impact of a number of proposed developments, and use obligations to share costs proportionately. An effect of such infrastructure investment may be to confer some wider community benefit but contributions should always be proportionate to the scale of the proposed development.”

Prior to the adoption of this supplementary guidance, non-statutory guidance had been in operation covering the same issues since March 2012.

The evidence base (CTA) took account of the capacity of the transport network to accommodate new development as well as the range of transport projects already committed to be delivered over the next 20 years. However, it provides evidence that a number of transport-related mitigation measures are required over and above the committed projects but which cannot be attributed to the impacts of specific developments. On this basis, the SDPA, councils and key partners took a joint decision to find a mechanism for applying the costs of these cumulative items of infrastructure to new development allocated through the structure plan and subsequent LDPs. Fundamentally, this approach seeks to ensure that development in the future does not have a detrimental impact on the transport network.

Appendix Two: Cumulative Transport Appraisal (CTA)

Nestrans, in partnership with the Strategic Development Planning Authority, Aberdeen City Council, Aberdeenshire Council and Transport Scotland commissioned a study to carry out a transport appraisal of the impact of development allocated in the structure plan and emerging LDPs for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The study used modelling to consider the cumulative strategic transport impacts associated with the scale and distribution of development proposals.

The CTA has enabled, for the first time, a strategic overview of the impact of the proposals outlined in the structure plan and emerging LDPs to be taken. The modelling process applies a range of transport infrastructure and planning and development information, along with anticipated changes in demographics and car ownership to calculate and forecast future levels of traffic and travel. The study focused on the overall strategic and cumulative impacts of all developments on the road network as a whole and predicted the impacts of the full scale of development, as outlined in the emerging LDPs, in the year 2023.

As well as anticipated changes in demographics and car ownership, the appraisal work assumed a number of already committed and proposed transport schemes to also be in place by 2023. These included:

- Strategic rail – improved Edinburgh- Aberdeen, Aberdeen-Inverurie and Aberdeen-Inverness services;
- Laurencekirk rail station and rail service changes (now open);
- A956 dual carriageway upgrade (now complete);
- Union Street pedestrianisation and traffic management schemes;
- An A96-to-Aberdeen Airport Link Road;
- A90 Balmedie-Tipperty dualling;
- Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route;
- Proposed new Park & Ride sites and associated bus services;
- Haudagain Roundabout Improvements; and
- The 3rd Don Crossing.

With the scale of development proposed, the appraisal showed that the

implementation of the full structure plan allowances for housing and employment erodes the benefit achieved through the proposed (and in some cases already completed) transport interventions. Congestion is forecast to increase at some locations beyond current day levels, including locations on the A96, A944, A956 and A90 South.

To mitigate the identified impacts associated with development, a series of potential road and public transport interventions were identified and tested. The appraisal showed that this package of interventions can mitigate the traffic impacts associated with the SDP and LDPs at strategic locations across Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire and is predicted to bring congestion levels back down to 2010 levels or better at many locations.

This package of high level options, set out in the table below, represents the scope and scale of intervention that may be required to accommodate the SDP and LDPs. They aim to mitigate the potential congestion impacts and improve the level of public transport accessibility at new developments.

Table 2: Cumulative Infrastructure Requirements

Public Transport
A new station at Kintore
New bus services and action to give them priority and increase their frequency
Road Network (over and above local road infrastructure requirements)
Junction and capacity improvements on the A96, A944, A956, A90, Kingswells North and Parkhill
Safety improvements on the access road to the A93
Improvements to the Parkway and Persley Bridge
A link over the River Dee

It should be noted that the potential interventions identified above have not been fully considered in terms of Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) or subject to detailed engineering design and feasibility and a full appraisal of each location would still be required in order to identify a preferred option. Environmental assessments

detailing the potential constraints associated with each intervention have also not been considered through the CTA.

The study does however provide the evidence to enable a more informed view to be taken with regard to the potential cumulative, cross boundary effects of the SDP and Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils' LDPs and the likely scale of intervention required to mitigate these impacts. The following conclusions can be made from the work that was undertaken:

1. The scale of development proposed in the structure plan, both the high growth allowance and the medium growth requirement scenarios, will have a significant impact on the transport network of the region, particularly in areas approaching and within the city.
2. There are a number of transport interventions already being delivered or in the pipeline, that have been shown will have a significant benefit on the transport network and are being funded by the public sector at a cost of well over £1billion.
3. However, there will be areas across the network which will still cause major concerns with this scale of development in place.

4. A package of transport interventions has been shown to mitigate these impacts and further work will be required to bring these forward.

The CTA is still an appropriate evidence base for this guidance because the strategy and land allowances in the recently approved SDP are almost identical to those in the previous structure plan – and have the same transport impact. The appropriateness of the evidence base was confirmed by Transport Scotland and the Reporters at the SDP Examination. An addendum to the CTA was published in late 2014 which clarified the relationship between development zones and the cumulative interventions.

A new CTA will be prepared in 2015/16 to inform the next Strategic Development Plan's Main Issues Report. This will consider what additional infrastructure is required to facilitate development beyond 2026. This will be integrated into the STF through the review of the SDP and this guidance in 2018/19.

The full report of the CTA study can be found at:

<http://www.nestrans.org.uk/local-development-plan-cumulative-impact-assessment.html>

Appendix Three: The Requirements for Contributions

The requirement for contributions to the Aberdeen City and Shire strategic transport fund will apply to housing, business, industrial, retail and commercial leisure developments in the strategic growth areas within the Aberdeen Housing Market Area boundary as set out in the table below.

Within the Local Growth and Diversification areas, the level of growth is related to local needs and therefore development is unlikely to have an impact on the strategic transport network. Caveats are however included to capture contributions from any development proposals which are an exception to this rule.

Applicants proposing 'sui generis' uses should enter early discussions with the relevant local planning authority to determine whether contributions will be sought and what level these will be. In general, such uses will be treated the same as the closest equivalent use in terms of travel characteristics listed in the table below.

Description of Development	Criteria and / or Threshold
<p>Residential</p> <p>Construction of buildings, structures or erections for use as residential accommodation, including flatted developments.</p>	<p>All development proposals on allocated residential and mixed use sites in the Aberdeen City LDP and Aberdeenshire LDP within the Strategic Growth Areas and the Aberdeen Housing Market Area.</p> <p>All windfall development proposals in the Strategic Growth Areas and the Aberdeen Housing Market Area comprising 5 or more dwellings.</p> <p>All windfall development proposals in the Local Growth and Diversification part of the Aberdeen Housing Market Area comprising 5 or more dwellings where a cumulative impact on the transport network has been demonstrated.</p>
<p>Employment/Commercial (Use Classes 4, 5 and 6)</p> <p>Construction of a building, structure or other erection for use for any of the following purposes–</p> <p>(a) as an office;</p> <p>(b) for research and development of products or processes;</p> <p>(c) for any industrial process; or</p> <p>(d) for use for storage or as a distribution centre.</p>	<p>All development proposals on allocated mixed use and employment sites in the Aberdeen City LDP and Aberdeenshire LDP within the Strategic Growth Area and Aberdeen Housing Market Area.</p> <p>All windfall development proposals in the strategic growth areas and Aberdeen Housing Market Area where the gross floorspace of the building exceeds:</p> <p>(a) Class 4: Business 2,500 m²</p> <p>(b) Class 5: General Industrial 5,000 m²</p> <p>(c) Class 6: Storage, Distribution and Warehousing 10,000 m²</p> <p>All windfall development proposals in the Local Growth and Diversification Area in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, where the above requirements are met and where an impact on the strategic transport network has been identified.</p>
<p>Food and Drink / Hotels / Assembly and Leisure (Use Classes 3, 7 and 11)</p> <p>Construction of a building, structure or other erection for use for any of the following purposes–</p> <p>(a) Cinema, Hotels and Conference Facilities</p> <p>(b) Leisure Facilities – e.g. casinos, bingo or dance halls.</p> <p>(c) Stadia</p>	<p>All development proposals in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, both Strategic Growth Area and Local Growth and Diversification Area, where the gross floorspace of the building is or exceeds 1,000m² and an impact on the strategic transport network has been identified.</p>
<p>Retail (Use Class 1)</p> <p>Construction of a building, structure or erections for use for the retail sale of food and/or non food goods</p>	<p>All development proposals in the Aberdeen Housing Market Area, both Strategic Growth Area and Local Growth and Diversification Area, where the gross floorspace of the building is or exceeds 2,500 m² and an impact on the strategic transport network has been identified.</p>

Note: Use Classes 2 (Financial, professional and other services), 8 (Residential institutions) and 10 (Non-residential institutions) will not be liable for contributions.

Appendix Four: The Role of Nestrans and Fund Management

Strategic Transport Fund Executive Group

This group will be a continuation of the group set up to develop this mechanism for developer contributions to strategic transport infrastructure and include representatives from:

- Nestrans
- Strategic Development Planning Authority
- Aberdeen City Council Planning and Transportation teams
- Aberdeenshire Council Planning and Transportation teams
- Developer Obligations Team for Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils
- Transport Scotland

The decision-making body for this work will be the Nestrans Board which comprises senior councillors from both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils. All decisions made at the Nestrans Board would then be referred to the two councils and Transport Scotland for approval as the relevant roads and planning authorities.

Agreement of all recommendations being put forward to the Nestrans Board would be sought at the Executive group first to ensure that a partnership approach is maintained.

North East Strategic Transport Fund

Nestrans would hold and manage the strategic transport fund which would be ring-fenced to projects needed to address the cumulative impact of the structure plan and LDPs and that have been identified through the CTA modelling process.

Contributions would be received into this fund from developers through

the agreed developer contributions mechanism that is set out in this supplementary guidance.

Prioritisation and delivery

The areas for intervention, as identified in the CTA, will be prioritised based on priority corridors identified in the structure plan, scale and urgency of the problem and anticipated phasing of development. This process will include appropriate levels of consultation, including with the development industry, with recommendations agreed by the Nestrans Board and referred to the two councils for approval.

Further development of the strategic infrastructure requirements would be based on the agreed prioritisation and follow Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) methodology to appraise and help identify a preferred option. The commissioning / undertaking of this work will be managed by Nestrans with input from Transport Scotland, but there will likely be requirement to engage consultants and/or the two councils to carry out much of this work.

A STAG appraisal process will identify the problems, set objectives and set out and appraise the range of potential solutions. Consultation is a key element of the STAG process and will be carried out as appropriate under this guidance. The results of this work will enable a recommendation to be made on a preferred solution for each identified hotspot. Nestrans would lead on this process in close consultation with the Executive Group, involving all partners, with recommendations on preferred schemes reported to the Nestrans Board and to the two councils and Transport Scotland as roads authorities.

Once decisions have been made on a preferred option, each scheme will be required to go through detailed design and costing and the relevant planning and legal processes. Project teams would be set up to manage the delivery of individual interventions.

Annual review and reporting

The Nestrans Board will be updated on a 6 monthly basis on progress towards developing and delivering strategic transport projects. All reports to the Nestrans Board are publicly available on the Nestrans website.

An annual report will be produced and reported to the Nestrans Board and subsequently referred to the two councils setting out:

- Actions and progress from the previous year;
- A financial report on the funding received into the strategic transport fund, what has been spent and on what;
- Actions and priorities for the coming year based on the prioritisation process and delivery plan.

A five year review will be undertaken which will re-run the CTA and include the most up to date information available regarding population, travel to work patterns and development allocations. The priorities will be reviewed and re-assessed on the basis of this analysis to ensure that the priorities and projects remain valid. Any changes to the prioritisation would require to be approved by the Nestrans Board and the two councils and following appropriate consultation with the development industry.

The outcomes of the CTA work will be incorporated into the review of the Regional Transport Strategy and its subsequent reviews and also into the review of the Strategic Development Plan and LDPs, all of which will be subject to appropriate levels of public and stakeholder consultation. Reviews of the supplementary guidance will be tied in with reviews of the Strategic Development Plan. The aim of this is to ensure that the projects that are being taken forward are integrated into the wider strategic aims for the region and part of the overarching strategy for transport in the North East. The STAG process should also ensure that the options that are developed are in line with national, regional and local policy.