

3 Alternatives

3.1 Routes Corridor and Route Alignment Options Considered

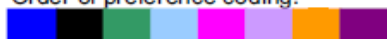
3.1.1 Three potential corridor options for the location of a bypass to the east of Dalry were identified for initial assessment. A fourth corridor was also identified to form a western bypass. This western route was not taken forward as such it would significantly increase the length of the new road, would require to bypass the industrial works to the northwest of Dalry town centre, and would cross two local distributor roads (the B780 and the B714). Given the associated engineering, environmental and economic constraints, this corridor option was not considered further.

3.1.2 For the three route corridor options taken forward for assessment, eight bypass route alignment options were developed and assessed. The locations of these alignment options are shown in Figure 3.1. Seven of the options were along a similar alignment east of Dalry, from Highfield to the north of the town passing beneath Blair Road and over the Glasgow to Ayr railway line and the River Garnock, to Hillend south of Dalry. These seven options were sited approximately equidistant between Blairland housing estate and the Blair Estate woodland. The remaining option (Option 5) followed a more easterly curved alignment as it passed under Blair Road and to the east of Stoopshill Farm, cutting through part of the Blair Estate woodland.

3.1.3 From the assessment of all eight options, key environmental aspects/topic areas were identified where the main potential adverse impacts were predicted. The difference between options was considered and the options graded in order of preference from most to least preferred environmental option, as shown in the graphic below.

Environmental Parameter	Most Preferred					→	Least Preferred		
Landscape and Visual	2	3A	1	1B	1A	3	4	5	
Cultural Heritage	2	1	1B	3	3A	1A	4	5	
Land Use	1	1B	3A	4	1A	2	3	5	
Road Drainage and the Water Environment	1A	2	1	1B	3	5	3	4	
Ecology	1	1B	1A	3	3A	4	2	5	
Vehicle Travellers	1A	3A	1	1B	2	3	4	5	
Pedestrians, etc	2	4	1	1A	1B	3	3A	5	
Planning policies	2	1	1A	1B	3A	3	4	5	
Traffic Noise	4	1	1A	1B	2	3	5	3A	
Air Quality	3A	5	1	1A	4	3	2	1B	

Order of preference coding:



N.B. 1) Options coded the same colour have equal preference.

2) This scoring system does not just count one option as preferred for each environmental parameter but all those options that are equal preferred for any one parameter.

3.2 Selection of Preferred Scheme

3.2.1 Considering all the environmental aspects and the summary above, the following was determined:

- Option 1 – scores as preferred for 2 environmental parameters;
- Option 1A - scores as preferred for 2 environmental parameters;
- Option 1B - scores as preferred for 2 environmental parameters;
- Option 2 - scores as preferred for 5 environmental parameters;
- Option 3 - does not score as preferred for any environmental parameters;
- Option 3A - scores as preferred for 3 environmental parameters;
- Option 4 - scores as preferred for 3 environmental parameters; and
- Option 5 – does not score as preferred for any environmental parameters.

3.2.2 From the comparative assessment of the eight alternative route options no obvious preferred scheme emerged in environmental terms.

3.2.3 For each option, at the individual environmental topic level, there were slight differences where one or other option provided a lesser impact at particular locations. However, none of these in themselves was enough to determine that any one option was substantially better or worse than the others. The exception to this was Option 5 which had the most significant adverse impact in most topic areas across the options considered.

3.2.4 The main differences in the scheme options were with the economic assessment and in terms of engineering of the Overtaking Opportunity and Junction Strategy.

- Options 1A and 3A perform significantly better in terms of economics than the other options. There is a marginal difference between Options 1A and 3A, with Option 1A preferred on NPV and Option 3A on BCRFA.
- Options 1A and 3A both gave good results when assessed for Overtaking Opportunity as they allow guaranteed overtaking due to the use of a WS2+1 cross section.
- In terms of junction strategy Option 3A is preferred over Option 1A due to the location of the south A737 junction.

3.2.5 The Stage 2 report therefore recommended that Option 3A was progressed as the Preferred Scheme due to the identified engineering and economic benefits and take through the Stage 3 Design and Assessment process.