

Detailed Appraisal		D24 Targeted Road Congestion / Environmental Relief Schemes - (Part 4) Enhancements to the A96						
Estimated total Public Sector Funding Requirement:		<i>Capital Costs/grant</i> <i>Annual Revenue Support Present</i> <i>Value of Cost to Gvt</i> <i>BCR/PVB</i>				£10m - £50m - £10m - £50m 2.25 - 3 / £50m - £100m		
Summary Impact on STAG Criteria	Environment Safety Economy Integration Accessibility and Social Inclusion	---	--	-	0	+	++	+++
(Judgement based on available information against a 7pt. scale.)								
Intervention Description:								
This intervention forms Part 4 of D24 aimed at reducing conflicts between strategic and local traffic and impacting on road safety and journey time reliability. The specific improvements would consist of enhancements to the A96 such as a bypass at Nairn.								

Summary: Rationale for Selection
This intervention forms Part 4 of D24 to provide enhancements to the A96.
Enhancements to the A96, such as a bypass around Nairn, would reduce the conflict between local and strategic traffic and improve journey times and journey time reliability along the route.
The environmental impacts this intervention has on cultural heritage and landscape have been identified at the strategic level as part of the Strategic Environmental Assessment. Appropriate mitigation and avoidance measures have been identified and will be further refined should this intervention be taken forward.

Table D24.4.1 STPR Objectives

STPR Objectives	
<p><u>STPR Objective 1:</u> To improve connectivity, particularly by public transport between Inverness City Centre and the growth area to the east including Inverness Airport.</p> <p><u>STPR Objective 2:</u> To improve journey time and increase opportunities to travel, particularly by public transport, between Aberdeen and Inverness.</p> <p><u>STPR Objective 3:</u> Reduce the accident rate and severity rate to current national average.</p>	<p>1: Neutral – This intervention has no impact on improved connections between Inverness City Centre and Inverness Airport.</p> <p>2: Positive – A bypass around Nairn would reduce journey times and improve reliability for journeys between Aberdeen and Inverness as it would remove the conflict between strategic and local traffic within the town. City to city bus services would benefit from the introduction of the bypass along the route.</p> <p>3: Positive – The Aberdeen to Inverness Transport Corridor Study STAG pre-appraisal report identified the A96 through Nairn as a location where accident levels are above the national average. This intervention should therefore provide a significant improvement in terms of safety by removing vehicles, including HGVs from the town.</p>

Table D24.4.2 STAG Criteria

STAG Criteria		
Criteria:	Assessment Summary:	Supporting Information:
Environment:	Moderate Negative Impact / Minor Benefit	The new bypass would have a potentially moderate negative impact on soils and geology. The route of the Nairn bypass could pass through Kildrummie Kames (mixed Site of Special Scientific Interest). Water quality could have minor negative impacts as the Grade A River Nairn would be crossed. There would be minor positive impacts on noise and air quality as the bypass would reduce congestion in the town. However, there would be a slight increase in CO ₂ e overall due to faster moving vehicles on the bypass. There is the potential for impacts (both positive and negative) on cultural heritage, biodiversity and on the rural landscape and townscape as a result of the bypass. However, impacts are uncertain at this stage as there is insufficient information to undertake a full assessment when locational details are unknown.
Safety:	Moderate Benefit	Accident rates for rural single carriageway roads are generally 55 per cent lower than the existing road within Nairn town. Constructing the bypass could lower the accident rate to around the current national average, however accident severity could increase on the new bypass due to increased speeds. Overall improvements such as a bypass of Nairn would provide safety benefits.
Economy:	Major Benefit	<p>Transport Economic Efficiency (TEE): This intervention could improve journey times and journey time reliability for strategic trips on the A96 by removing the conflict and delays. For example local trips within Nairn would benefit from reduced traffic levels and reduced congestion as traffic flows within the town are forecast to reduce by over 70 per cent. These travel time benefits, together with accident savings would provide a benefit to cost ratio of 2.25 to 3, therefore providing very good value for money.</p> <p>Wider Economic Benefits (WEBs): Significant improvements to journey time, reliability and quality could have a positive impact on the efficiency and productivity of businesses using the route to travel between destinations in Inverness, Aberdeen and intermediate settlements. Benefits would accrue from lower cost of travel for freight and business users with improved access to customers and suppliers.</p> <p>Economic Activity and Location Impacts (EALIs): The impacts of improving the route are potentially significant for all sectors and settlements served by the A96. The provision of, for example, a bypass could have economic benefits on the corridor due to the transportation of goods being quicker and more reliable resulting in increased productivity of personnel and vehicles. Sectors which are expected to benefit significantly include manufacturing, construction, retail and distribution industries which rely on the route for movement of goods. However with a potential bypass scenario there could be a reduction in some passing trade for businesses within the town.</p>
Integration:	Minor Negative Impact / Moderate Benefit	<p>Transport Integration: The bypass would not have any significant impact on transport integration within this corridor.</p> <p>Transport and Land Use Integration: This intervention would have a potentially negative effect on the policy of reducing the need to travel as it could encourage longer distance commuting to Aberdeen and Inverness. However, effective links between Inverness and Aberdeen are seen as important to the economy of Inverness and the north east of Scotland and improvements on the A96 could improve these links.</p> <p>Policy Integration: The bypass of Nairn is consistent with the National Planning Framework, SPP17 (Planning for Transport),</p>

		The Moray Structure Plan and the Emerging Moray Local Plan, 2008. Although national aspirations strive for a reduction in road traffic, it is recognised that interventions such as this one could be required to encourage economic growth.
Accessibility and Social Inclusion:	Moderate Benefit	<p>Community Accessibility: Provision of a bypass around Nairn would reduce the volume of traffic using the existing route through the town. This would improve access to the town where the main employment, education, health services, retail and leisure facilities are located.</p> <p>Comparative Accessibility: The bypass intervention would mainly benefit strategic through trips which would be removed from the town centre of Nairn. Local trips would also benefit from the improved access due to the reduced flows within the town.</p>

Table D24.4.3 Key Strategic Outcomes

Key Strategic Outcomes (KSO's)		
Objective:	Assessment Summary:	Supporting Information:
Improve Journey Times and Connections:	Moderate Benefit	A reduction in traffic and congestion levels within the town of Nairn, as a result of the bypass, would improve journey times for all road users including bus services passing through the town. Journey time reliability would also improve.
Reduce Emissions:	Neutral	Increased vehicle speeds on the bypass could contribute to a rise in CO ₂ e emissions, however, this could be offset by a reduction in congestion and CO ₂ e emissions in the town.
Improve Quality, Accessibility and Affordability:	Minor Benefit	The strategic bus services on the A96 would be expected to continue to serve the town. With the reduced volume of traffic within the town, access to bus services would subsequently be improved, potentially resulting in increased opportunities for public transport provision. This intervention would not impact on affordability.

Table D24.4.4 Scottish Government's Strategic Objectives

Scottish Government's Strategic Objectives		
Objective:	Assessment Summary:	Supporting Information:
Safer and Stronger:	Moderate Benefit	Provision of a bypass around Nairn is forecast to reduce the accident rate by approximately 55 per cent although there is likely to be an increase in the severity rate due to increased speeds on the bypass. The reduced volume of traffic within the town, and less conflict between strategic and local traffic and with pedestrians would significantly improve road safety in Nairn. Overall improvements on the A96, such as a bypass of Nairn, would provide safety benefits. It would not impact on the quality, accessibility and affordability of public transport.
Smarter:	Neutral	This intervention is not expected to have significant impact on access to schools, colleges and universities for those living along the corridor.
Wealthier and Fairer:	Moderate Benefit	The provision of a bypass around Nairn would result in reduced journey times for strategic trips along the corridor. A reduction of trips within the town would also improve the flow of public and private transport. This could provide increased travel opportunities for employment, business, leisure and tourism and would improve the links between the towns along this corridor.
Greener:	Neutral	The bypass would help to relieve congestion in Nairn which would reduce bus journey times on the local road network, potentially encouraging greater use of public transport, however the impact on journeys by car would be, at least, proportionally similar to that of buses. The overall impact is therefore considered neutral.
Healthier:	Neutral	This intervention, as currently proposed, could encourage a small modal shift to public transport services, due to improved journey time reliability and quality. There could be a slight improvement in accessibility to health services for some people. However, the overall impact would be marginal.

Table D24.4.5 Implementability Appraisal

Implementability Appraisal	
Technical:	It is unlikely that any untried techniques would be required when implementing any aspects of this intervention, although localised issues might arise during the design stages that would require increased technical capabilities to overcome. There may be some impact to road users during construction, however this could be mitigated during design to minimise any disruptions.
Operational:	The responsibility for operational issues on the proposed measures in this intervention would remain with Transport Scotland and its maintenance contractors. No factors are anticipated to adversely affect the operation of the intervention during its projected life.
Public:	Discussions regarding the bypass of Nairn have taken place for some time. The local communities in the towns and motorists making strategic trips are aware of the delays encountered when passing through the town and are likely therefore to be supportive of the intervention. However potentially negative environmental impacts from the new bypass and a potential reduction in passing trade could provoke a negative reaction from some elements of the community.