

# NES TRANS

DELIVERING A MODERN TRANSPORT SYSTEM  
FOR NORTH EAST SCOTLAND

March 2003



Cllr Len Ironside



Cllr Alison McInnes



Jennifer F Craw



Amanda Harvie

## CONTENTS

Foreword	3	The MTS in Detail - Key Strands and Projects	13	Assessment Against Government's Transport Objectives	28
Need for Regional Transport Perspective and Strategy	4	Western Peripheral Route	14	Costs and Value for Money	30
Purpose of Regional Transport Strategy	6	Strategic Roads	16	Next Steps	31
The Vision : Objectives for the Strategy	8	Park & Ride	17		
The Need for a Modern Transport System (and consideration of options)	10	Buses	18		
Links to Local Transport Strategies and Other Plans	12	Crossrail	19		
		Strategic Rail	20		
		Rail Freight	21		
		Airport/Access to Airport	22		
		Ports/Maritime Transport	23		
		Urban Environment	24		
		Cycling, Walking and Safety	25		
		Travel Plans/Travel Awareness	26		
		Maintenance of Existing Network	27		

Improving our transport infrastructure is arguably the greatest challenge currently facing the north east of Scotland. Transport shortcomings to and within the region cause delay and frustration to the movement of people and goods. They also seriously threaten the future economic competitiveness of the region.

These concerns led representatives of the public and private sectors to come together almost four years ago to shape and help deliver a regional transport strategy to meet the future needs of the north east. The partnership between Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils, Scottish Enterprise Grampian and Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce has developed into a more formal regional transport partnership with the active support of the Scottish Executive. Since summer 2001, it has been constituted as the North East Scotland Transport Partnership – NESTRANS. Strategic direction is via a Board comprising leading representatives from the partners, technical work is managed through the four partner organisations and since March 2002 has been assisted through a NESTRANS office with a full-time co-ordinator.

NESTRANS has developed what it believes to be the most appropriate transport strategy to address the north east's transport needs, a balanced and integrated ten year strategy titled the Modern Transport System, or MTS. This strategy and certain of its key projects have recently been comprehensively analysed through the Scottish Executive's new STAG appraisal methodology.

Much has been achieved over the last year. In March 2002, the Scottish Executive listed "Fixing Aberdeen's Congestion" as one of its top ten transport priorities in the *Transport Delivery Report*. Through various debates in the Scottish Parliament, the economic importance to Scotland of tackling transport issues in the north east has been acknowledged. Funding support from the Executive has been secured for improvements to surface access around the Airport, for traffic measures to improve the environment in the City Centre and in the main Aberdeenshire towns, and for other public transport, cycling and walking schemes.

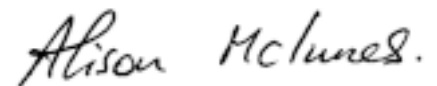
But the most significant advance came in January 2003 with the First Minister's endorsement of the MTS and commitment for the Executive to deliver the Western Peripheral Project (WPR) as a strategic road, bearing the large part of its cost.

These commitments now provide us with the springboard to detail the WPR and other MTS projects and take them from concept to fruition on the ground.

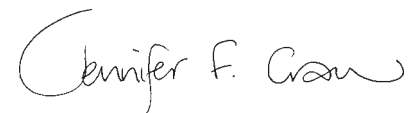
This report explains the MTS strategy, summarises progress to date and sets out the programme for progressing the strategy and its key projects through the remainder of this decade. Through NESTRANS, we are committed to redressing the "transport deficit" of recent years, and providing a transport infrastructure for the north east to meet the needs of the 21st century.



Councillor Len Ironside  
Leader  
Aberdeen City Council



Councillor Alison McInnes  
Chair  
Infrastructure Services  
Committee  
Aberdeenshire Council



Jennifer F Crow  
Chief Executive  
Scottish Enterprise  
Grampian



Amanda Harvie  
Chief Executive  
Aberdeen and Grampian  
Chamber of Commerce

## NEED FOR REGIONAL TRANSPORT PERSPECTIVE AND STRATEGY

Comprising the local authority areas of Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, the north east is generally acknowledged as a distinct region in Scotland. Covering 6,500 square kilometres, or 8% of Scotland, it is an area of contrasts with rolling agricultural lands, the Grampian Mountains and a strikingly beautiful coastline.

With a population of 440,000 the settlement structure is dominated by Aberdeen with just under half the regional population. The next major settlements are Peterhead (18,000), Fraserburgh (12,800), Inverurie and Stonehaven (both about 10,000), yet 85% of the population of Aberdeenshire lives in small towns, rural villages and hamlets. Of Aberdeenshire's population of nearly a quarter of a million, approximately half live within the travel to work commuter belt around Aberdeen and there are over 90,000 daily cross-boundary movements including commuting both into and out of the City.

Currently about 60% of all employment in the north east is located in Aberdeen. There are around 40,000 jobs (or 17% of total employment in the area) in the oil and gas sector, which continues to make a major contribution to the health of the Scottish and UK economy. Service sector employment accounts for many more jobs, and other important sectors include

construction, agriculture and fishing. Past economic benefits have not spread in equal measure to all parts of the area, partly because of inadequacies in the transport network. The Buchan area has suffered disproportionately from job losses in recent years as a result of the relocation of manufacturing industries and will also experience the impacts of inevitable changes in the fishing and farming industries, particularly following the fishing restrictions imposed by the European Union in December 2002.

Aberdeen acts as the local and regional "capital" for areas beyond its boundaries. It provides health, education and other specialist support services not only to the north east but also the Northern Isles. It is the main focus of sea and air connections to the Northern Isles of Orkney and Shetland and for the oil and gas facilities in the northern sector of the North Sea, West of Shetland and for exploration around the Faroe Islands. There are also links with Northern Europe, Scandinavia and the Baltic countries.

One of the partners' key aims - as articulated in Scottish Enterprise Grampian's Strategy - is to develop 'internationally competitive businesses'. The aim is to develop the north east as a competitive location, building and diversifying upon the area's role as the "oil capital of Europe", and developing its strong healthcare, education and research, communications technology and leisure and cultural functions. Key to many of these are improved availability of good quality and readily accessible sites and premises and improvements in the region's transport infrastructure.

Despite the economic growth that has taken place over the last 30 years, the area has missed out on necessary transport infrastructure improvements. The oil-boom years of the 1970s and 80s resulted in a large increase in population with concomitant growth in housing. The growth of existing towns like Peterhead, Inverurie and Ellon and major new towns and suburbs like Bridge of Don, Westhill and Portlethen has not been matched by improvements in transport infrastructure.



The deficiencies of the north east's transport infrastructure are best exemplified in relation to the trunk roads in the area. Whilst the main A90 trunk road from Aberdeen to the central belt was improved in the 1980s, these improvements end at the entrance to Aberdeen, the medieval Bridge of Dee unable even to accommodate HGVs or buses. The journey time from Bridge of Dee to Edinburgh and Glasgow is about 2¼ and 2½ hours respectively, but increasing. Recently reported Trafficmaster figures show average road journey times between Aberdeen and Edinburgh at peak times increasing by 20 minutes between 1998 and 2002 and predicted to increase by a further 10-20 minutes by 2006.

Having crossed the A90 into Aberdeen at the Bridge of Dee, the average speed of journeys north is severely affected by congestion and the conflicting role and function of the trunk road as both a local and long distance route. There are 16 sets of traffic signals over a three-mile stretch of road.

Aberdeen is adjudged by many to be 'peripheral' within Scotland; however the more northern and western parts of Aberdeenshire are even more peripheral. Poor physical links and doubts about long term job security compound the sense of 'being on the edge'.

These interconnected transport issues affecting movement within the north east and between it and other parts of Scotland and the UK demonstrate the need for a co-ordinated and integrated regional transport strategy. Working together through NESTRANS, the public and private sectors have developed a strategy to address the economic, social and environmental effects of increasing congestion in the Aberdeen area and to improve transport opportunities across the north east of Scotland.



## PURPOSE OF REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

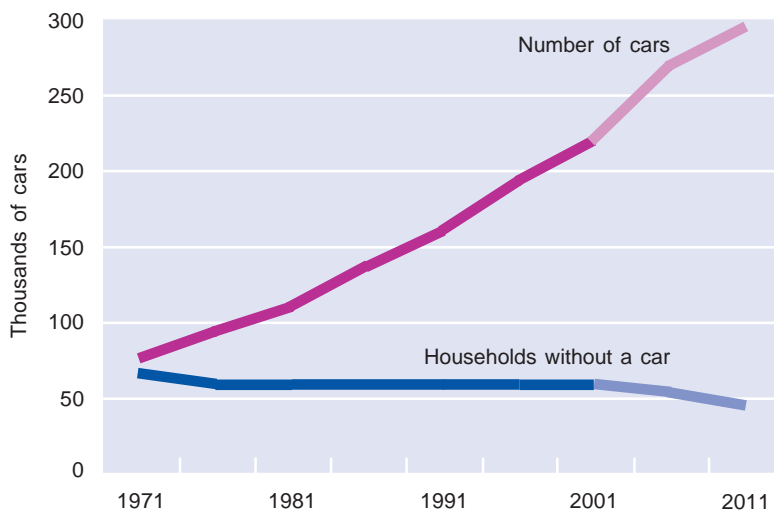
**R**egional Transport Strategies are a requirement of the Government south of the Border. In Scotland, however, where even Local Transport Strategies are recommended rather than required, there is no necessity to produce such a document. The Scottish Executive can however, if it feels the need, require authorities to work together on matters of regional transport significance.

In the north east there has never been a requirement to force agencies to work together. The partners in NESTRANS see the benefits of common and consistent policies, recognise the benefits of a Regional Transport Strategy to the area, and have voluntarily formed a Regional Transport Partnership and developed an agreed strategy.

The Regional Transport Strategy that has been developed has been based on the work of two consultancy studies of transport needs and sustainable transport strategies for the north east, undertaken by Oscar Faber in 1998 and Halcrow Fox in 2000. Public consultation on a north east transport strategy was undertaken in parallel with consultation on the two Councils' Local Transport Strategies in the autumn of 2000 and these documents were submitted jointly to the Scottish Executive in December 2000 reflecting the collaboration between the partners.

Taken together they are described as the 'Modern Transport System' for the north east. These transport strategies have also been closely integrated with the land use planning framework for the north east through the Structure Plan for the area, approved by the Scottish Executive in 2001, and in the new Local Plans prepared for each Council area, both of which are presently at the stage of Finalised Local Plans.

**Figure 1**  
**CAR OWNERSHIP, NORTH EAST SCOTLAND**



Between 1971 and 2001, the number of cars in the north east trebled. Due to an increase in households and more 2nd and 3rd cars, the number of households without a car fell by just 10%.

The Regional Transport Strategy has now been the subject of rigorous appraisal as required by the Scottish Executive through methodologies and modelling not available to the partners at the time of production of the Modern Transport System (MTS) and Local Transport Strategies.

In July 2001, the Scottish Executive produced a new method of appraising transport schemes, the draft Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG). The key principle of STAG is to encourage a fair appraisal of transport options by stating clear objectives and then appraising alternative schemes to ascertain which best achieves the desired improvements. These objectives reflect the Government's and the local authorities' high level objectives of safer transport, environmental sustainability, economic strength and social inclusion, reflected through improved accessibility and integration.

In producing a STAG analysis for the MTS, NESTRANS added two high level objectives, relating to public acceptability and deliverability. All of the objectives are detailed later in this report.

In addition to the new appraisal method, additional information is now available for assessing detailed options. In 2000, the Scottish Executive announced that it would extend the Central Scotland Traffic Model to the north east by undertaking a major data building exercise. The model has since been renamed the Transport Model for Scotland to take account of its extended remit, and an Aberdeen Sub-Area Model (ASAM) has been produced by the Scottish Executive to enable strategic testing of options in the north east. Data were collated in autumn and winter of 2001/2002 and have provided the most complete picture of travel and traffic in the area.

This information has been input to the ASAM allowing the performance of the MTS to be examined as well as tested against an alternative. This has allowed an understanding of the performance of key projects within the MTS to be obtained, in particular that of the proposed Western Peripheral Route. Almost 700,000 public transport and road journeys per day are modelled within the north east, travelling a combined 7½ million kilometres. Of these trips, the vast majority are car movements. Yet recognition must also be made that travel choice options must be available for those who do not have access to a car - around a third of households in some areas.

Around 10% of journeys are made by public transport trips, using one of 3,000 bus movements or 94 train services in the region every day. Also of significance are the thousands of lorry journeys made daily, delivering goods to the marketplace or taking products to harbours, railheads or manufacturers. Another of NESTRANS's key aims is to ensure the efficient movement of goods and people to, from and around the region.

The ASAM gives the opportunity to consider options in terms of encouraging modal shift by investing in different transport solutions and assessing results against the agreed objectives. For example, investing in a road scheme relative to a Park & Ride scheme or railway improvement can be tested to ascertain which provides the best economic, social and environmental benefits. The model is also used to assess value for money and economic rates of return for tested options.

This report summarises the regional transport strategy that has emerged from detailed work over recent years and the STAG appraisal. It sets out the objectives of the strategy and its key strands and how these operate individually and together to achieve the objectives. Full STAG appraisal reports have been prepared covering the appraisal of the MTS and alternative transport scenarios, and for key MTS projects, the first being for the Western Peripheral Route. Environmental Appraisals also form a key part of STAG and project appraisal.



## THE VISION

### Objectives for the Strategy

One of the key principles of the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) analysis framework is to define objectives which then set a context for considering solutions which can best achieve these objectives. This is a significant change in policy from identifying schemes and then justifying them - a practice which epitomised the “predict and provide” era of transport planning in the 1970s and 1980s.

Although considerable work had already been undertaken in developing transport strategies for the north east of Scotland, the STAG appraisal of the Modern Transport System (MTS) has followed this approach by identifying objectives which have been followed through each stage in the development of the policies.

NESTRANS has agreed a transport vision for the region. It is:

**“To deliver a Modern Transport System for the north east of Scotland which enables a more economically competitive, sustainable and socially-inclusive society”.**

To achieve this, the partners have listed objectives under 12 categories. For major schemes within the strategy more detailed objectives and specific targets will be identified.

It is acknowledged that not every scheme will deliver benefits towards every objective, but collectively, it is believed that the proposed strategy best delivers on a balance of these objectives. The ethos behind the strategy is that each of these objectives is of equal importance, that no single solution will deliver all of these, but that the strategy as a whole will deliver synergies and long-term benefits across the region as a whole.

The key theme is balance.

#### Acceptability and Participation

- To develop a strategy through public participation which will carry the endorsement of the community.

#### Deliverability

- To develop an achievable strategy, both practically and financially, and demonstrate best value.

#### Environment

- To develop a transport system which protects, enhances and promotes the natural, built and cultural heritage of the north east.
- To develop a transport system which protects non-renewable resources, and minimises the impact of transport on air quality, both locally and globally.

#### Safety, Accidents

- To reduce the number and severity of transport-related accidents.





### Safety, Security

- To provide a practical, healthy, safe and attractive transport system.
- To provide a secure travel environment which is safe from (and perceived to be safe from) intimidation and danger for all transport users and the wider community.

### Economic Activity

- To deliver a transport system for the north east of Scotland which enhances the competitiveness of the area, its business sectors and constituent communities, and thereby supports the Scottish and UK economy.
- To reduce the impact of peripherality by improving external links to the north east by rail, road, sea and air.

### Economic Benefits

- To enhance the efficiency of the transport networks.
- To ensure whole-life, long-term value of transport networks, in capital and running costs.

### Transportation Integration

- To enable efficient movements of people or goods, even when more than one mode is used, by integrating different modes of transport to provide seamless interchange and cross-modal synergies.
- To ensure integration of the north east into international transport systems.

### Land Use Integration

- To integrate land use and transportation to ensure that transport networks serve development as efficiently as possible.
- To create a long-term sustainable framework of settlements in a hierarchy, by locating new homes, jobs and services in scale with each other and with the role and function of each settlement.

### Policy Integration

- To consider transport when developing other policy initiatives, such as social inclusion, health, education and social care objectives.

### Base Accessibility

- To reduce the impact of peripherality and improve the perception of accessibility of the north east of Scotland, nationally and internationally.
- To provide communities with a choice of means of travel.
- To improve people's access to jobs and services.

### Change in Severance

- To minimise traffic-induced severance on communities.

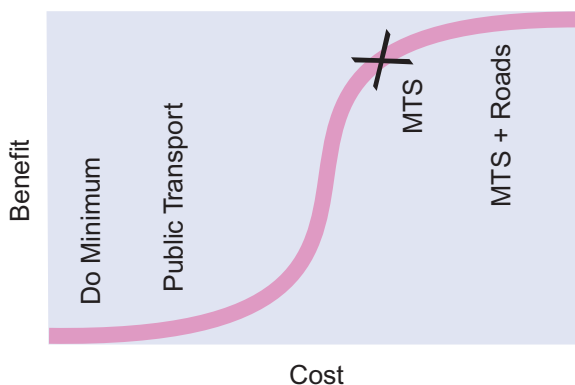


## THE NEED FOR A MODERN TRANSPORT SYSTEM (and consideration of options)

The defined objectives are clearly not being met by the existing infrastructure within the north east of Scotland. Whilst recent improvements to public transport have resulted in progress being made towards achieving some of the objectives, the continuing deficiencies are manifest in widespread dissatisfaction with transport. Indeed transport is now generally considered as the top business and political issue in the north east.

Previous studies of transport in the region have clearly indicated that only an integrated package of measures can support the balanced achievement of the range of objectives. The 1998 study into *Sustainable Transport in Aberdeen* by Oscar Faber, on behalf of the Scottish Office, tested over 20 alternative options for improving transport in the area. The study concluded that there was no single solution and that a balanced package of measures was required to achieve the stated aims. This conclusion was repeated in the *Delivery of an Integrated Transport Strategy for North East Scotland* study by Halcrow Fox, published in 2000, which also took account of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) facing the north east.

**Figure 2**  
**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EXPENDITURE AND BENEFITS**



There is not a straight correlation between expenditure and benefits. The Modern Transport System as proposed provides Best Value for Money in achieving benefits against Environmental, Economic and Social indicators.

To develop a regional strategy as part of the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) study, a wide range of possible transport scenarios for the north east were considered. Using a SWOT analysis technique and indicating the potential benefits afforded by each scheme against the agreed objectives, a total of 11 scenario options (plus a do-minimum) were considered and reduced to four, which were considered worthy of further investigation and comparison against the do-minimum.

These five schemes were then appraised using the STAG technique to ascertain a preferred scenario for the Modern Transport System (MTS). A full STAG appraisal has been conducted with a comparator test of public transport investment.

Figure 2 indicates an “S-curve” which reflects that the more money invested in transport infrastructure, the more benefits that can be achieved. However, the relationship is not a direct correlation - there is an optimum which provides best value for money. Figure 2 indicates that this optimum is achieved with the balanced package which constitutes the MTS.

### Public Support

The STAG appraisal methodology indicates that transport proposals should have taken due account of public opinion. Public consultation has been undertaken at various stages in the development of the MTS, notably through the public consultation on both Councils’ Local Transport Strategies and on the MTS by the Robert Gordon University on behalf of NESTRANS’s predecessor, NESEDP, (the North East Scotland Economic Development Partnership).

The results of these exercises have been conclusive. The public of the north east wants to see a balanced, integrated strategy of measures; regard these as extremely important; agree with the proposals contained within the MTS; and believe that they should be funded from the central taxation which is already collected.

## Future Developments

As set out in the vision, the MTS will provide a transport infrastructure to underpin a sustainable, economically competitive and socially inclusive society for north east Scotland. Over the period of MTS development, it is inevitable that continuing social, environmental and economic changes will create aspirations for further improvements in transport infrastructure. Given the time needed to bring such ideas to maturity, it is likely that transport developments in comparable European city regions will continue to excite interest and comment, and that conceptual work on what should follow the MTS will require to be undertaken before the MTS itself is physically completed.

The MTS will provide an essential foundation for these further aspirational transport developments and the emphasis in this document is on how this foundation is being delivered rather than on describing longer-term aspirations. However, given the pace of change, it is important to be aware of some of the key drivers which will influence the future. These are likely to include:

- Changing attitudes to transportation - particularly in relation to travel awareness and wider considerations of climate change and energy availability;
- Changing transport economics - in relation to transport requirements for regional competitiveness and possible new means of funding transport infrastructure; and
- Technological changes - with improved traffic information systems, new modes of transport such as rapid transit, and the impacts on travel demand of teleworking and internet shopping.

NESTRANS will endeavour to keep abreast of these and other changes over the period of delivering the MTS. These changes, and differing aspirations of future generations, will determine the type of transport infrastructure required to keep pace with the needs of the area. The partners are clear, however, that the defined MTS is the appropriate platform from which the north east can confidently face the future.

It should be emphasised that the partners regard the MTS as a requirement, not a wish list. The MTS represents what is considered to be necessary to ensure economic, social and environmental security for the north east over the next decade; it is the minimum necessary to maintain the economic competitiveness of the region.

There are increasing opportunities to reduce the adverse impacts of transport, such as electric vehicle pools.



Longer-term aspirations may follow the lead of comparable European city regions, such as the new rapid transit system in Lyon.

**LINK TO  
LOCAL  
TRANSPORT  
STRATEGIES  
AND  
OTHER  
PLANS**

The Modern Transport System reflects European and national transport guidance and is articulated in more detail through the respective Councils' Local Transport Strategies. It also emphasises the need to integrate transport with land use issues, particularly through the Structure Plan and integration with other corporate policies. The key documents to which it relates are:

**European transport policy for 2010: time to decide**

The European Commission's White Paper, *European transport policy for 2010: time to decide*, proposes an action plan aimed at bringing about substantial improvements in the quality and efficiency of transport in Europe.

**Scottish Executive: Travel Choices for Scotland and the Transport Delivery Report**

*Travel Choices for Scotland*, introduced in 1998, sets the framework within which the Scottish Executive is developing transport policy and is built on the twin objectives of sustainable and integrated transport.

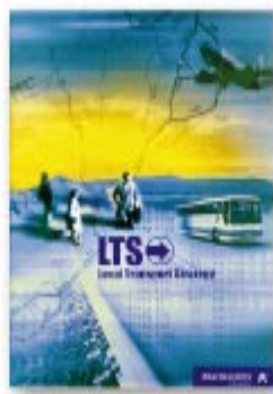
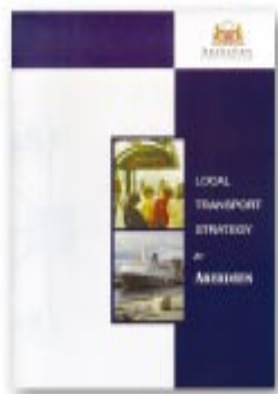
The *Transport Delivery Report*, launched in March 2002, sets out the Scottish Executive's transport vision for Scotland, and describes the transport improvements that have been and will be delivered in the short term with committed funds. It states that Scotland's primary transport challenge today is to tackle congestion in and around the major metropolitan areas and identifies "Fixing Aberdeen's Congestion" as a key national priority.

**Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan**

Approved by the Scottish Executive in December 2001, the Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire Structure Plan, *North East Scotland together*, sets out a shared strategic statement about the future use of land in the north east. In transport terms it aims to integrate the linkages between transport and land use.

**Local Transport Strategies**

Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils submitted their Local Transport Strategies to the Scottish Executive in December 2000. They are closely integrated and were jointly submitted to demonstrate this integration and the close collaboration in their preparation.



# THE MTS IN DETAIL : KEY STRANDS AND PROJECTS

The Modern Transport System (MTS) is an integrated package of measures, proposals and policies to enable the efficient movement of goods and people in and around the north east of Scotland. Detailed policies are contained within the appropriate Local Transport Strategies and statutory Development Plan. This report attempts only to give a flavour of what is trying to be achieved. In particular, it outlines the key schemes and proposals for the area over the next 10 years. These are broken into 13 key strands and outlined in the following sections.

The 13 strands cover the key projects: -

- Western Peripheral Route;
- Strategic Roads;
- Park & Ride;
- Buses;
- Crossrail;
- Strategic Rail;
- Rail Freight;
- Airport/Access to Airport;
- Ports/Maritime Transport;
- Urban Environment;
- Cycling, Walking and Safety;
- Travel Plans/Travel Awareness; and
- Maintenance of Existing Network.

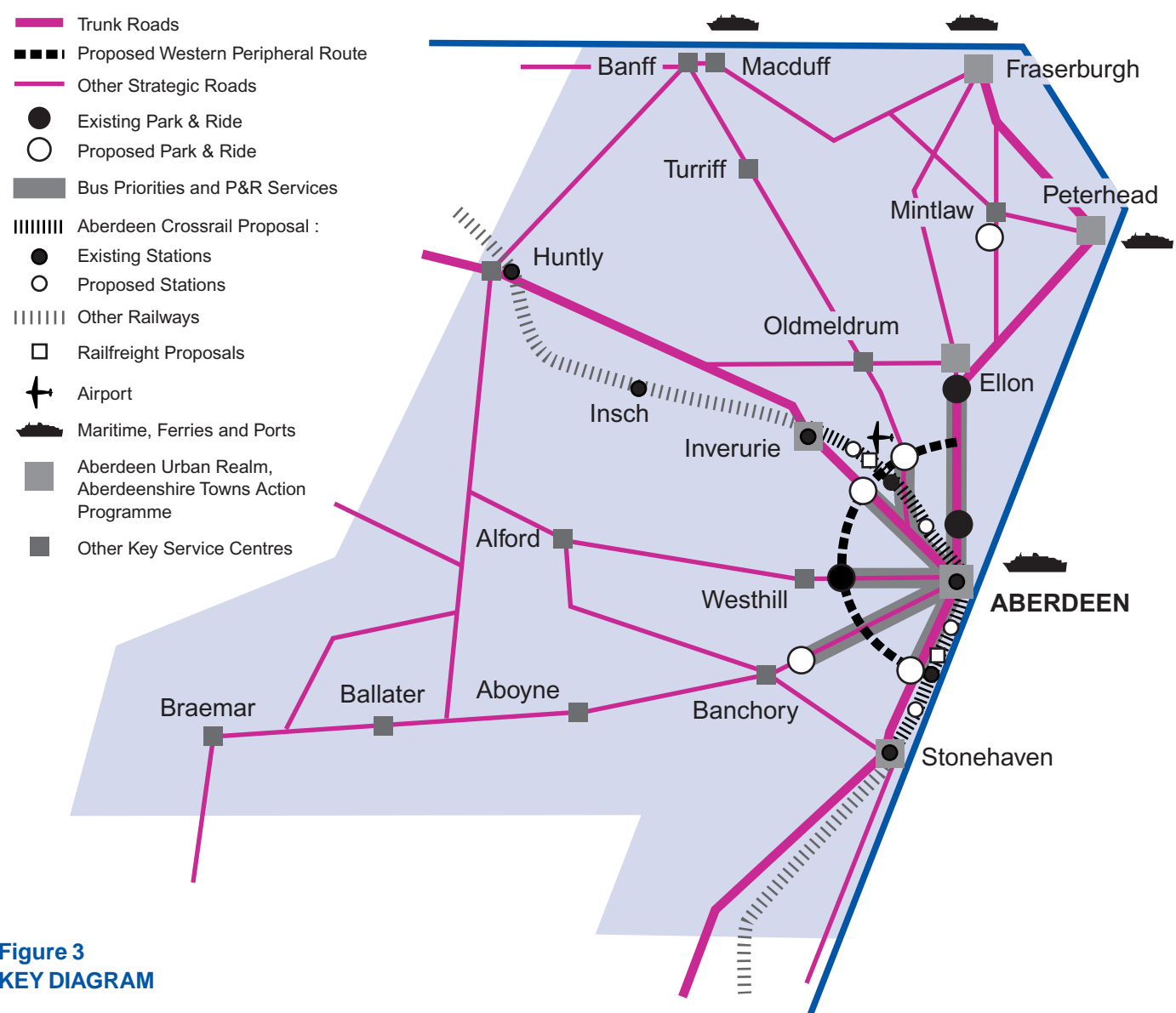


Figure 3  
KEY DIAGRAM

## WESTERN PERIPHERAL ROUTE

Although the NESTRANS strategy is predominated by a desire to enable transport choice and encourage less dependence on the motor car, it is not an anti-car strategy and has not adopted the doctrine that roads are bad. On the contrary, the Western Peripheral Route (WPR) is regarded as the key single element of the Modern Transport System (MTS), a facilitating project which allows other parts to be implemented.

The key roles of the WPR are to enable through-traffic to by-pass Aberdeen, which in turn allows for prioritisation for buses, cycles and pedestrians within the urban area. It also improves peripheral movements around the City, improving access to Park & Ride sites and relieving heavily-used, unsuitable rural routes. It will improve accessibility to existing and planned employment locations and open up possibilities for future land release. Finally, it will transform accessibility of freight and business service movements to and from the north and west of Aberdeen.

Grampian Regional Council agreed a corridor for the route between the A90 (south) at Charleston and the A96 Inverurie road in 1996. The route was subsequently endorsed by both the City Council and Aberdeenshire Council after these authorities took over responsibility for transport.



It has wide support from the public, politicians and the local media alike.

The WPR is an important and integral component of both Local Transport Strategies and it is specifically mentioned in the north east Structure Plan and both Councils' Local Plans. It will make a significant contribution to the high level objectives for the MTS, in particular through enhancing the economic competitiveness of the area and reducing the peripherality of northern and western parts of the area. It will also increase the efficient movement of people and goods by improving integration between different modes of transport.

### PROPOSALS

Work to identify a route for the northern leg of the WPR (from the A96 to the A90 north) is currently underway and being tested in the Aberdeen Sub Area Model. This testing has demonstrated the value for money case for the WPR. An independent Environmental Appraisal has also been conducted for the route. Public consultation on three route options for the northern leg was undertaken between 7 January and 14 February with a decision on the preferred route scheduled to be taken by both Councils in April 2003.

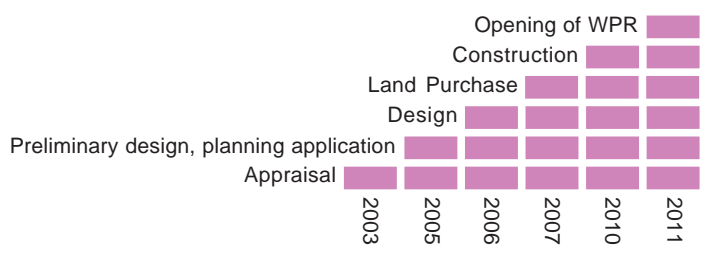
Concurrently, the two Councils are working on the detailed design of the western section. To fully achieve the objectives intended for the route, it is proposed that the road should be a high quality route to dual-carriageway standard with grade-separated junctions.

Delivering the WPR is a 10 year project of which 6½ years is lead-in and 3½ years construction. On the basis of work undertaken to date and provided the necessary funding continues to be forthcoming, construction would be expected to start by 2007 and the WPR fully completed by 2011.

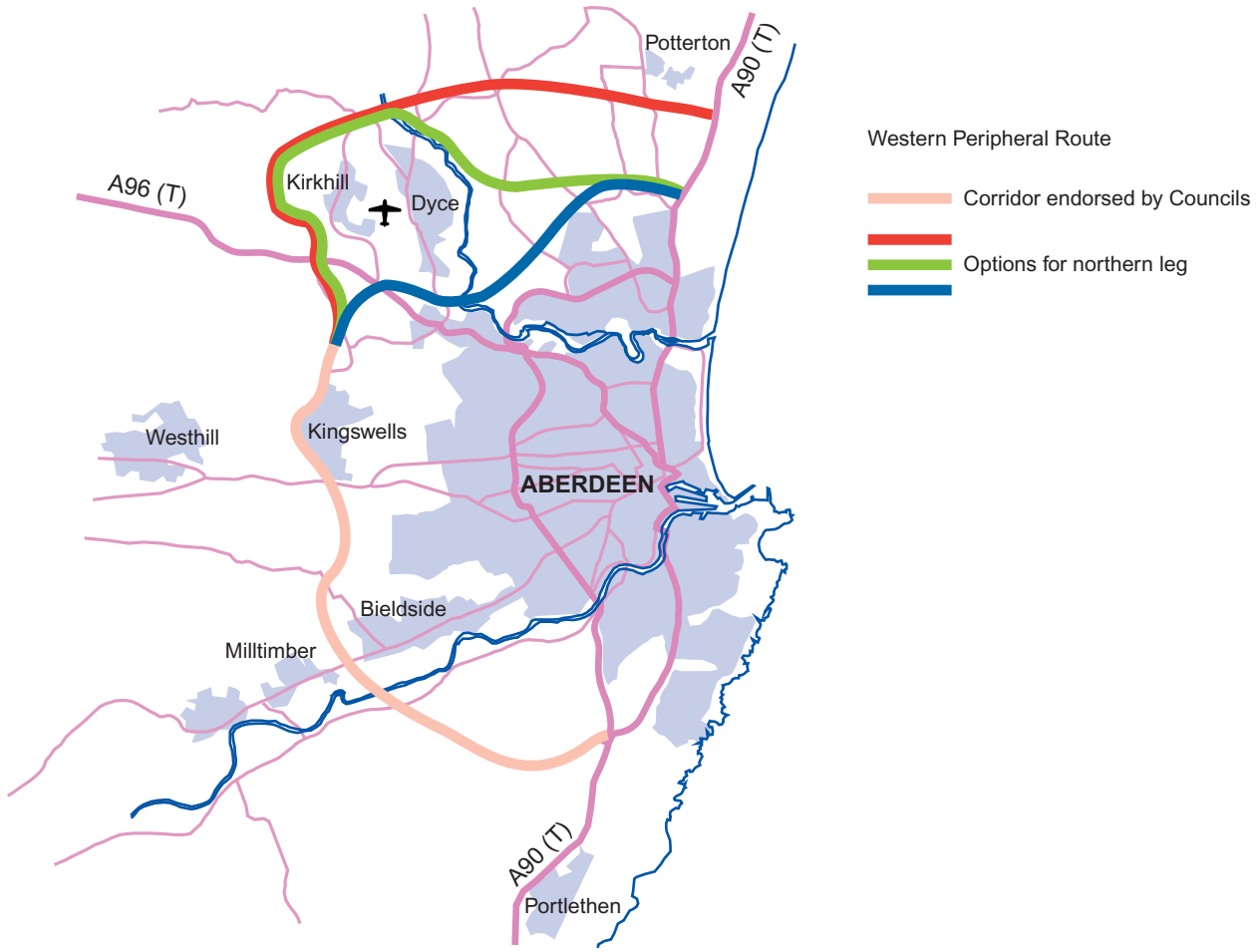
**Figure 4**  
**TIMELINE : WESTERN PERIPHERAL ROUTE**

**COST**

Costing of the WPR has recently been comprehensively updated by the joint Council team commissioned to undertake the initial design work. The estimated cost at current prices is £120million including the northern leg. The three route options for the northern leg, whilst differing in length, lead to only minor variations in cost.

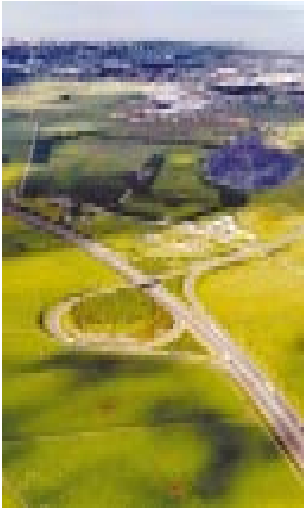


**Figure 5**  
**WESTERN PERIPHERAL ROUTE**



## STRATEGIC ROADS

The responsibility for trunk roads lies with the Scottish Executive. When complete the Western Peripheral Route will also form part of this strategic network, which in turn forms part of the Trans-European Network.



South of Aberdeen, the A90 has been built to dual carriageway standard. However, this relatively high standard ends at the Bridge of Dee. The deviation required to avoid this bridge and the inadequacy of Anderson Drive as a trunk road results in a large proportion of heavy goods traffic taking alternative routes directly through the City Centre. North of the bridge is a mix of dual and single carriageway, with a single lane bridge at Inveramsay north of Inverurie.

The A90 provides the strategic link from the Buchan area. In recent years, Ellon has been by-passed and access to the Bridge

of Don Technology Park and Park & Ride site has been improved by lengthening the slip road into the area. This allows Park & Ride users to avoid congestion on the way into the City. Safety and capacity problems still exist, particularly at the single carriageway section of Balmedie to Tipperty.

As well as providing access to north west Aberdeenshire, Moray and Highland, the A96 provides the main link to Aberdeen Airport. The road was improved in the 1990s including bypasses of Bucksburn, Blackburn and Kintore, and the heavily congested approach to Haudagain roundabout has been widened to provide a bus, taxi and cycle lane.

## PROPOSALS

The main priority is dualling the Balmedie to Tipperty section of the A90, to provide continuous dual carriageway from the Bridge of Don to Ellon and reduce accidents and congestion on the present single carriageway section. With this improvement and a Western Peripheral Route to dual carriageway standard, a continuous, high standard route would then exist from Ellon and Inverurie to the south from the A90 and A96 respectively. Other local improvements on A90(North) and A96 are required to improve safety and reduce accidents.

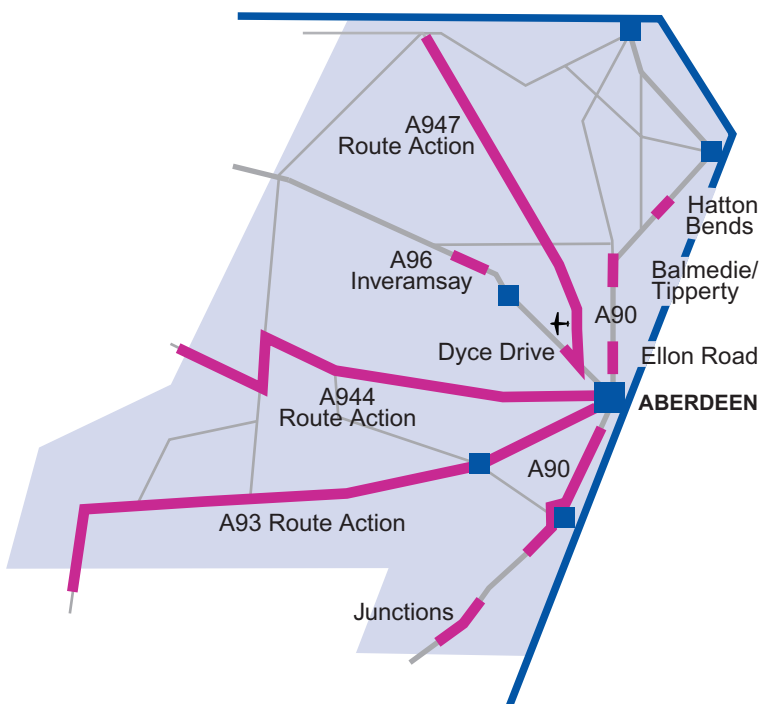
South of Aberdeen, there is also a need to improve safety by the introduction of grade-separated junctions at recognised hazard locations such as Laurencekirk.

Within Aberdeen, there are proposals to introduce right-turn lanes on the Parkway section of the A90 to reduce blocking-back.

## COST

The estimated cost of these improvements to the strategic road network over the period to 2011 is £30million, of which £3million would be expected in developer contributions.

**Figure 6**  
**STRATEGIC ROAD IMPROVEMENT PROPOSALS**





## PARK & RIDE

There is a growing network of bus-based Park & Ride services in the north east. After successful Christmas trials, the first permanent Park & Ride service was started from Bridge of Don in 1994 and patronage has grown steadily. The second, inter-urban service from Ellon to Aberdeen opened in November 2000 and the third commenced in September 2001 from Kingswells. In addition to “bus-based” schemes, Park & Ride opportunities also exist at stations such as Stonehaven and Inverurie.

Park & Ride schemes fulfil an important role in the transport strategy. They make a significant contribution to transport integration, are safe and secure forms of transport, help reduce congestion and therefore help competitiveness of the area. They presently remove 600 daily car journeys from the road network which, if a parking space was required for each, is equivalent to a new, major multi-storey car park.

**COST**

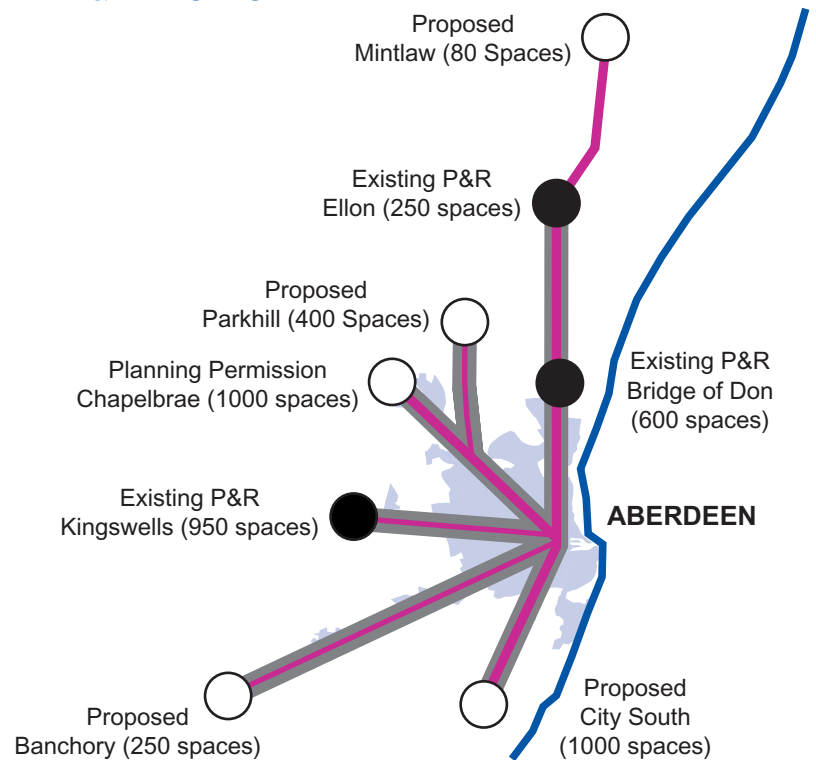
There has already been considerable investment in the Park & Ride network and funding for several of the proposed schemes has been allocated to the two local authorities by the Scottish Executive. The proposals in the MTS amount to £7.5million additional spend on Park & Ride.

**PROPOSALS**

A ring of Park & Ride sites is planned around Aberdeen in areas near to where the Western Peripheral Route will cross the major radial roads into the city. The Bridge of Don and Kingswells sites have been developed with this in mind. Further sites are proposed on the A96 and A947 routes to the north west and the A90 south of the city. The A93 will be served by a further inter-urban service from the Banchory area similar to the one from Ellon.

Park & Ride needs complementary initiatives to be successful: the cost to the passenger must be competitive with the cost and convenience of city centre parking; service provision must be of the highest quality, and journey times need to be quick and reliable (achieved through bus priority measures). These complementary initiatives are being promoted through a Quality Partnership between the two local authorities and the main north east bus operators.

**Figure 7  
PARK & RIDE SITES**



## BUSES

Bus priority measures can be used to ensure that limited road network capacity can be used efficiently and that stated objectives can be achieved. For example, dedicated lanes or junction priorities can provide a journey time advantage for public transport over other modes and can help to maintain or improve service reliability by helping buses avoid congestion.

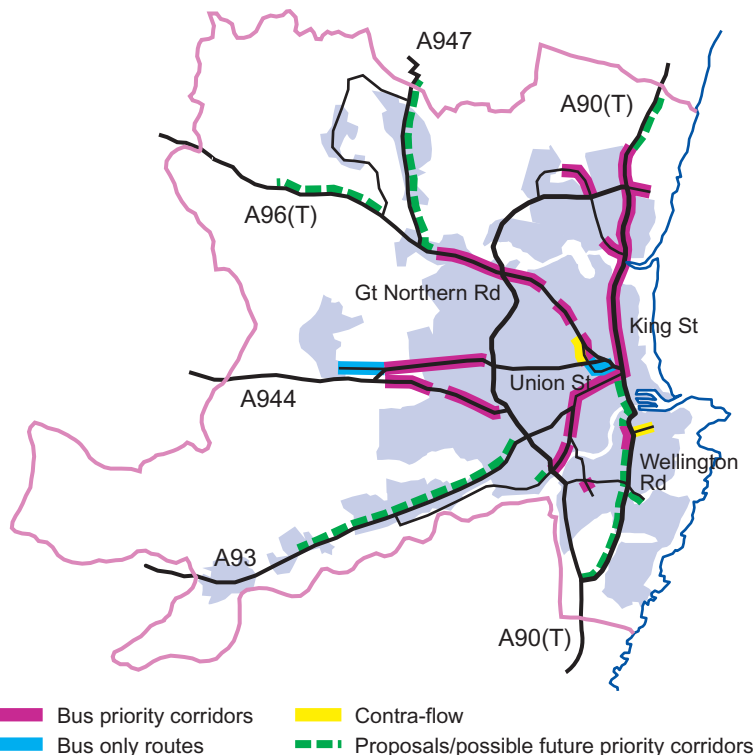
In the north east, the first part of the bus lane network was provided in Aberdeen on Union Street in 1992, then on Ellon Road and King Street in conjunction with the Bridge of Don Park & Ride scheme in 1994. This was followed by the provision of bus lanes in Lang Stracht as part of the Kingswells Park & Ride proposals. Since 1999, a further £2.9million has been spent on the introduction of bus lanes as part of the Twin Track Initiative, in which the bus operator agreed to complement public expenditure on bus-related infrastructure by investment in new buses. There are now over 11 kilometres of bus priority in the City.



These lanes have been provided without reducing capacity, by avoiding constraining junctions, which are the limiters of capacity on the road network. By and large, the introduction of bus lanes has been possible by peak-time restrictions on on-street parking or by widening roads to provide replacement capacity. In this way, buses are afforded priority without creating additional congestion for other vehicles.

Bus priority measures provide a highly efficient means of transporting people and help by providing a choice of means of transport to increase social inclusion. Partnership working (particularly through the Twin Track Initiative between Aberdeen City Council and First Aberdeen, which has attracted Scottish Executive funding) has ensured parallel improvements in the quality of bus services in return for the investment in infrastructure.

**Figure 8**  
**BUS PRIORITIES IN ABERDEEN**



## PROPOSALS

A significant part of the necessary bus priority network is already in place. Further bus priority measures are proposed in conjunction with new Park & Ride schemes in the north west and south of the City and in support of Inter-urban Park & Ride schemes and proposals on the A90, A947 and A93 corridors. Bus priority measures will also be required to prioritise public transport within the Urban Realm proposals.

Measures to detect buses approaching traffic signals and give them a green light have proven successful on other routes and are likely to be extended throughout the City and at key points within Aberdeenshire.

## COST

Over the last three years over £20million has been spent on bus related infrastructure in the north east. The estimated cost of additional improvements to the bus network and bus priority measures over the period to 2011 is £27million

## CROSSRAIL

Crossrail is intended to provide a regular rail service between Inverurie, Aberdeen and Stonehaven with, over time, new intermediary stations being opened to provide additional Park & Ride opportunities. It will increase the efficiency of the transport network overall and result in fewer car trips into Aberdeen City Centre. It will also provide an alternative means of transport for those settlements which are adjacent to the line, and is integral to the land use settlement strategy in terms of focusing development on public transport corridors. Crossrail carries significant public and business support.

The local authorities have been promoting improvements to the local rail service between Inverurie and Stonehaven with new stations for several years. A number of demand and technical assessments have been carried out. The latest suggests that the longer-term provision of a dedicated local service would best be achieved by an incremental approach. Building up the service by enabling cross-City movements on existing services will allow demand to accumulate over time and justify the investment in a dedicated service.

## PROPOSALS

Phase 1 will provide a half-hourly service between Inverurie and Stonehaven by developing existing Inverness to Aberdeen and Aberdeen to Edinburgh/Glasgow services, including a new station at Kintore. This operating scenario depends on track improvements between Aberdeen and Inverness discussed under 'Strategic Rail'. In association with this, station services will continue to be improved with the gradual installation of CCTV, information screens and improved passenger facilities.

The second phase of development would be for a dedicated local service with new stations, possibly at Newtonhill and north and south within Aberdeen, along with a strengthening of services through Portlethen.

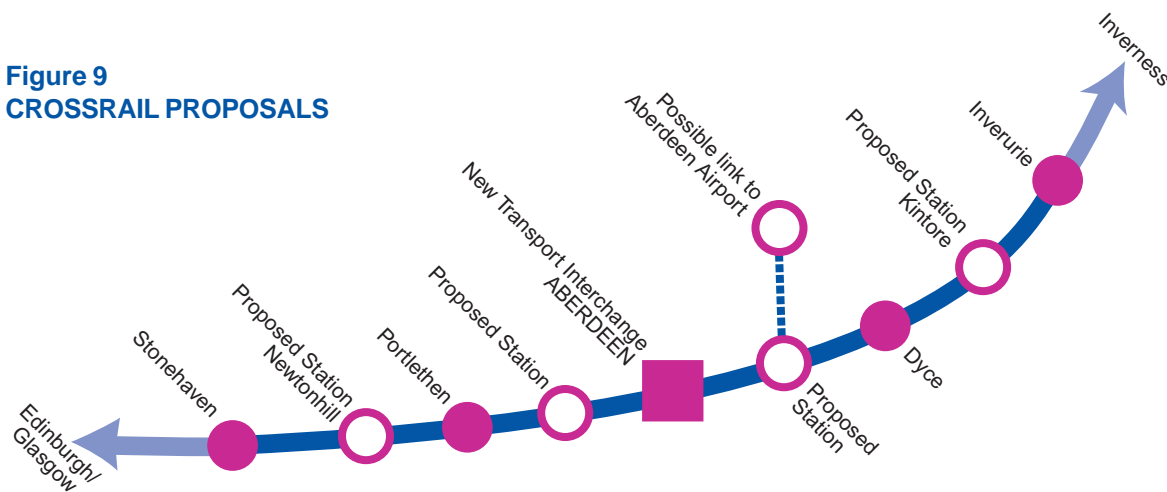
Investigation into the possibility for a direct rail connection into the airport will also be considered as a possible third phase scheme.



## COST

Level 4 costing work is presently being undertaken by consultants and will be available in March 2003. It is anticipated that the total costs of implementing Phases 1 and 2 of Aberdeen Crossrail will be of the order of £40million, of which Phase 1 would be around £25million.

**Figure 9**  
**CROSSRAIL PROPOSALS**



## STRATEGIC RAIL

Trains run every hour from Aberdeen to Edinburgh and to Glasgow and there are three trains a day between Aberdeen and London. The NESTRANS partners have been involved in the Campaign for Rail Enhancement Aberdeen to Edinburgh (CREATE).



The service to Inverness runs on an “ad hoc” basis because most of the railway is single track. There are six other stations in the NESTRANS area, some of which serve a predominantly local function, but others, notably Stonehaven and Dyce, also carry significant numbers of longer-distance train travellers. The quality and facilities available at most stations has been improved in recent years.

A frequent, reliable and good quality rail service helps reduce the perception that the north east is a peripheral part of

Scotland. It also helps reduce car trips both locally and over longer distances, such as to the central belt. Rail improvements generally carry public support.

## PROPOSALS

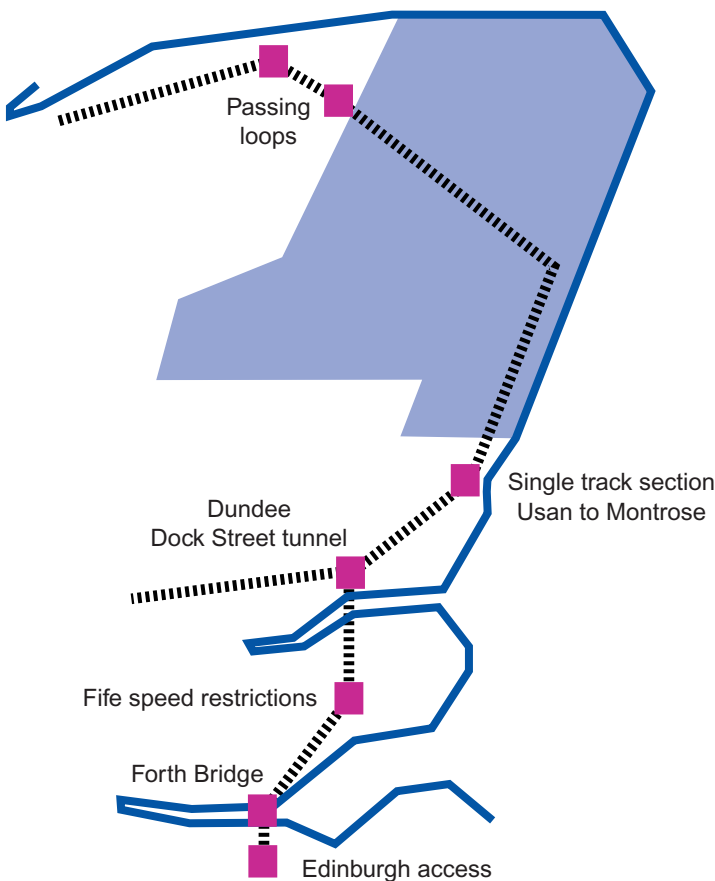
The provision of a regular hourly service between Aberdeen and Inverness should be delivered through the Strategic Rail Authority’s Incremental Output Statement (IOS) programme. Provision of at least 2 passing loops on the single-track line between Keith and Inverness could allow an end-to-end journey time of less than 2 hours. The Aberdeen to Inverness IOS scheme is necessary to enable and support development of the Crossrail proposals which form a separate element of the Modern Transport System.

Track capacity is currently less of an issue south of Aberdeen, although if demand for capacity increases (through a growth in passenger and/or freight) the short, single-track section between Usan and Montrose will become a constraint on the network. Other constraints, such as line speeds within Fife and capacity on the approaches to Waverley Station and Glasgow Queen Street, require to be tackled on a national scale.

NESTRANS has contributed to the Scottish Strategic Rail Study and recognises the need for priorities to be considered in a Scotland-wide forum.

Consideration will also be given to the case for the opening of new stations, such as at Laurencekirk and the new stations envisaged as part of the second phase of the Crossrail project.

Figure 10  
 STRATEGIC RAIL CONSTRAINTS



## COST

The estimated cost of the range of improvements to the strategic rail network is £60million over the period to 2011, which is not included in the MTS costs as it is envisaged this cost will be met in full by the Strategic Rail Authority and is outwith the NESTRANS area.

## RAIL FREIGHT

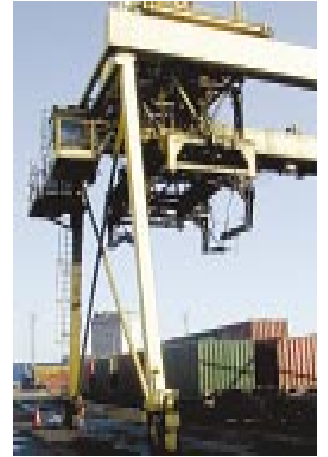
Aberdeenshire Council, with Aberdeen City and Moray Councils, set up the North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group (NESRFDG) in 1999 to increase the amount of freight transported by rail. Rail freight generally becomes more commercially viable for hauls greater than 300 miles. Given the distance between the north east and markets south of the Border, there are excellent prospects for increased rail freight to/from the area. The freight route from the north east goes via the Scottish hub at Mossend near Glasgow. The NESRFDG's main work has been to examine the demand for freight services and to identify constraints and solutions on the route to Mossend.

A good rail freight service is essential to improve the economic prospects of the region. The impact of the European Commission's Working Time Directive on long-distance road freight traffic will be disproportionately felt in the north east with its long distances to markets. Rail freight is an efficient mover of goods over long distances and should help bring about a reduction in long distance lorry movements. Freight efficiencies could also help the wider economic performance of the region, and in conjunction with developing markets for intermodal movement of goods through the region's ports, are needed to increase the importance of the area as a transport hub.

### PROPOSALS

It is essential that modern rail-to-road freight transfer facilities are built to replace the outdated and constrained Guild Street yard in Aberdeen City Centre whilst still retaining convenient rail-to-sea transfer in Aberdeen. There are plans to provide a new road-to-rail transfer facility at Raiths Farm in Dyce and the possibility of a second terminal nearer Inverurie has also been identified by the NESRFDG. There is further interest in a terminal at Cairnrobin to the south of Aberdeen and Craiginches will take up some of the capacity currently provided by Guild Street.

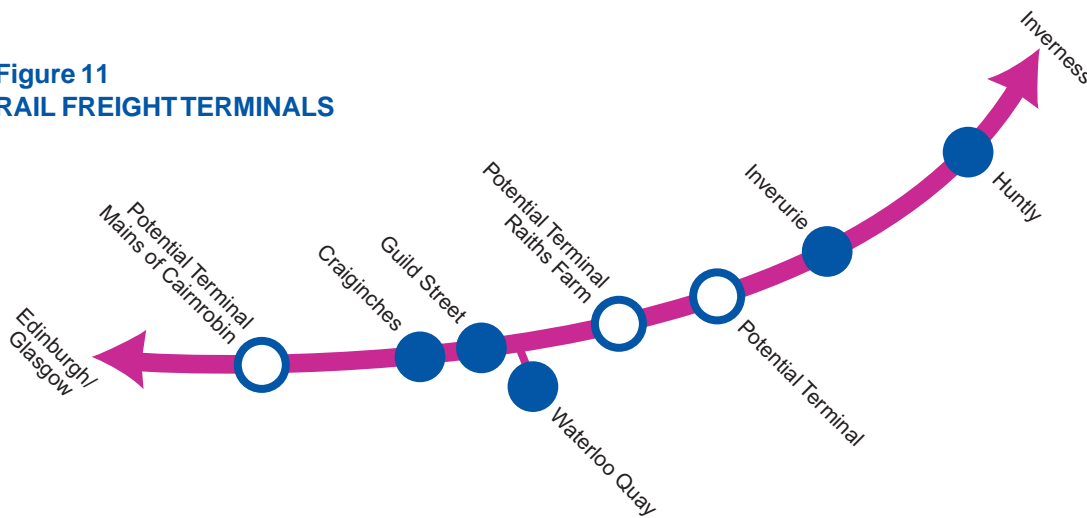
A key constraint to the development of services is the freight gauge. Eighteen structures between Elgin and Mossend are too narrow or low to allow standard containers. It is estimated that it will cost £3million to rectify the situation, which would enable up to an additional 1.3 million tonnes of rail freight per annum to and from the north east, the further potential which has been identified.



### COST

The cost of enhancements to the freight gauge is estimated at £3million with the new freight transfer facilities estimated to be £12million, which will be private investment

**Figure 11**  
**RAIL FREIGHT TERMINALS**



## AIRPORT/ACCESS TO AIRPORT

Aberdeen Airport is the twelfth busiest airport in the UK with 86,300 air transport movements serving 2.55 million passengers a year. It is the world's busiest commercial heliport with more than 36,500 rotary movements. A range of regular scheduled fixedwing services is available to around 30 destinations. Of these, the services to Heathrow, Gatwick, Paris Charles de Gaulle and Amsterdam Schiphol are essential for business access to international markets and to attract international tourists to the region. There is also a limited range of charter flights.

The airport is one of the keys to the economic competitiveness of the north east. The facility helps reduce the impacts of peripherality and provides the most important link with international destinations. It also has the potential to be the focus of a regional, integrated transport hub.

Access to the airport is currently limited, with inadequate links between Dyce railway station and the main terminals and infrequent buses. Car and taxi are therefore the predominant transport modes accounting for around 90% of journeys to the airport, but peak-hour congestion problems affect all users of the airport. An Airport Transport Forum has been

established to bring forward proposals to improve the choice of travel and a series of targets and proposals has been published.

The Government's recent *Review of the Future for Air Transport* indicated that Aberdeen will require additional terminal and apron capacity by 2015. The site is relatively constrained, but there should be scope to extend the existing terminal sufficiently to meet the demand forecast for 2030 (up to 5.2 million passengers a year). The runway is likely to have sufficient capacity, but a limited extension may be necessary to serve a wider range of potential charter destinations and for the development of direct air freight services. This possibility is currently being examined in more detail. Outcomes from the *Review* will influence future investment at Aberdeen Airport.

### PROPOSALS

In its response to the *Review of the Future of Air Transport*, NESTRANS emphasised the importance of expanding direct international flights from Aberdeen and the maintenance of good connecting flights to London and other international hub airports.

The NESTRANS partners are working with Aberdeen Airport to improve access to the airport, especially by non-car modes. Two recent applications to the Scottish Executive's Public Transport Fund have secured over £1million of funding to undertake early improvements to pedestrian, cycling and bus routes around the airport and funds have also been provided to examine the long-term requirements for surface access in the Dyce area.

### COST

Improvements to access to the airport and Dyce area are estimated at £6million and another £20million of investment is anticipated in the airport itself.



## PORTS/MARITIME TRANSPORT

North east ports contribute significantly to the prosperity of the area. Aberdeen Harbour handles about four million tonnes annually, approximately 80% of which is related to the oil industry. The Harbour Board estimates that the value of the goods is about £1.5 billion and the services provided are worth about £100million to the local economy. There are passenger ferries to the Northern Isles and freight services to Norway and Holland, which have seen massive investment in recent years, notably by Northlink in three new vessels to serve Orkney and Shetland. Enlargement of the European Union also creates an opportunity for Aberdeen to benefit from increased trade as a traditional point of access to the Baltic.

Peterhead handles 1.3 million tonnes each year, most of which is again related to oil. It is also the premier white fish landing harbour in Europe, with Fraserburgh and Macduff also having significant fish landings.

The main transport-related benefits of the harbours are economic. They also help to reduce the perceived peripherality of the area and to integrate the area into wider international connections.



## PROPOSALS

Aberdeenshire Council, the City Council and Aberdeen Harbour are among the partners involved in the Northern Maritime Corridor project. This is a three year, £3million European Interreg IIIB project which focuses on the transportation of goods within and between North Sea regions and the North Atlantic. The aim is to transfer goods from road to sea, reduce pollution and road congestion and look at possible new trade links, for example for petroleum logistics and seafood.

In a parallel project - the Fast Seafood Link - the feasibility of a new, fast container or Roll-on/Roll-off sea link between Norway, north east Scotland and Boulogne in northern France is being explored. Boulogne is one of the largest fish markets in Europe and takes much of Norway's and Scotland's fish landings. Fish is currently transported to France by road.



## COST

The NESTRANS partners will continue to promote and support projects to enhance the role of the north east's ports such as through the current European programmes. Investment in the major ports up to 2011 could reach £50million.

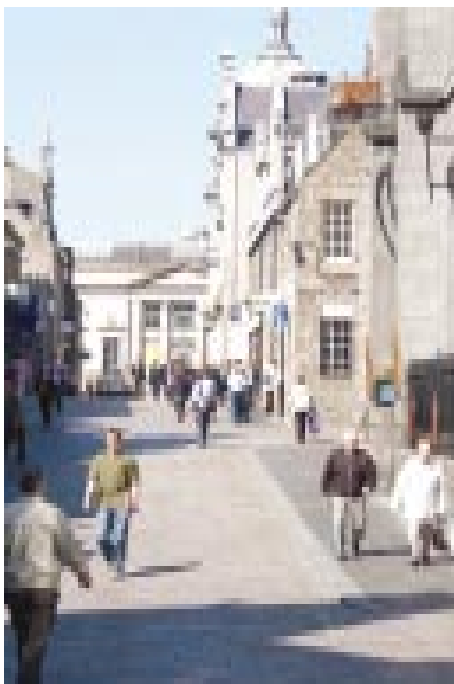


## URBAN ENVIRONMENT

A key strand of the Modern Transport System (MTS) both in Aberdeen and the main Aberdeenshire towns is to improve the urban environment, with benefits for local economies and accessibility.

Aberdeen's Urban Realm project involves proposals for pedestrianisation of Union Street between Bridge Street and Market Street and improving pedestrian linkages, especially from Union Street to Guild Street (and the proposed transport interchange/retail and leisure developments), through the Castlegate area and in the Denburn Valley/Union Terrace area. It is being taken forward by the City Council and Aberdeen City Centre Partnership with funding support from the Scottish Executive's Integrated Transport Fund.

The Aberdeenshire Towns Partnership has been established as a public/private sector partnership with the aim of sustaining and improving the quality of life in identified Aberdeenshire towns. Provision of a sustainable and efficient transport network for local and longer distance travel is a key element of the initiative. Peterhead and



Fraserburgh have seen successful town centre pedestrianisation schemes introduced in recent years and environmental and traffic management improvements and proposals have been implemented in Stonehaven, Ellon and Inverurie.

Car parking forms an important part of the access needs of town and city centres, and the Local Transport Strategies include parking policies to maintain their attractiveness as retail and tourist destinations.

## PROPOSALS

Aberdeen City Council has plans to partly pedestrianise Union Street and is currently assessing the traffic implications of options via a Paramics model. This is likely to necessitate bus priority measures to ensure that public transport continues to afford excellent access to the City Centre.

In October 2002, Aberdeenshire Council was awarded £2million from the Scottish Executive's Integrated Transport Fund, to improve the town centres of Inverurie and Peterhead and provide improved transport infrastructure at 24 key settlements throughout the area. Improvements will incorporate cycle and walking links to the town centres, enhanced and new public transport interchanges with integrated transport facilities, and an extension of Inter-urban Park & Ride to the A93 corridor.

In these schemes, access for people with disabilities will be an important consideration and their needs will be taken fully into account.

## COSTS

The estimated costs of the various urban environment enhancements relating to transport amount to £9million. Another £33million of private investment is anticipated in the development of a transport interchange and car park redevelopments in Aberdeen.



## CYCLING, WALKING AND SAFETY

Recent Scottish Household Survey data for travel to work trips in the north east revealed that 17% of people walk and 2% cycle. The percentages are higher in urban areas with up to 40% of people walking to Aberdeen City Centre to work.

In recent years there have been a variety of initiatives to help pedestrian movement. Traffic calming measures including the introduction of 20mph zones and Home Zones have helped reduce traffic speeds and accidents. Pelican- and zebra-crossings have been reintroduced and dropped-kerbs provided to help prams, buggies and wheelchairs. Land use planning policies have helped to promote more direct walking routes within developments.

The number of cycle lanes and routes has increased. The north east lies on National Cycle Network Route 1, which takes in Stonehaven, Aberdeen, Turriff and Banff. The North Sea Cycle Circuit also comes through the north east, linking with Scandinavia and northern Europe. Former railway lines have been converted to cycle routes and a growing number of roads have advisory cycle lanes.

The implementation of projects has been aided by the Scottish Executive's Cycling, Walking and Safer Streets and Safer Routes to School funds. Safer Routes to School has helped to prioritise expenditure on school journeys.

### PROPOSALS

There is considerable public and political interest in Home Zones and other traffic calming developments, and funds will continue to be prioritised on the basis of need, related to accident history, traffic speeds, for example.

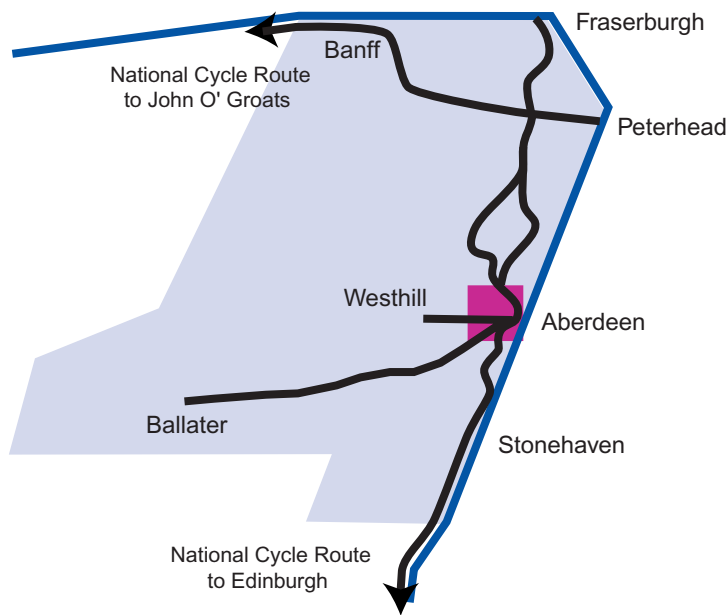
Developers will be asked to provide cycle facilities - stands and lockers. Both local authorities are also providing cycle stands at community facilities, shopping centres and schools. A network of signed routes has been devised and will be implemented over time.



### COST

Local authorities in the north east currently spend around £2½million on cycling, walking and safety each year. A Modern Transport System prioritising this sector would require double this figure, or an additional £20million by 2011.

Figure 12 STRATEGIC CYCLE NETWORK



## TRAVEL PLANS/TRAVEL AWARENESS

Businesses are increasingly being encouraged to consider the impacts of the travel patterns of their employees, to try to ensure that a choice of travel modes is available and to reduce congestion on nearby roads. In the north east, this is a complex issue because of the dispersed nature of many businesses and the effect which business location has on commuter travel flows. These are often complementary to other reasons why businesses might want to reduce the number of cars going to the workplace, such as a shortage of car parking space or a requirement to reduce the cost of business mileage. An increasing number of new developments are also now required to put travel plans in place as a requirement of planning permission.



For some time now, companies such as BP and Shell have shown an interest in promoting travel plans as part of their wider 'green credentials'. These and other companies provide public transport services for their workers, bicycle mileage allowances and preferential parking for car sharers, for example. The Aberdeen and Grampian Chamber of Commerce is actively encouraging the take-up of travel plans and the City Council formally adopted its Travel Plan in June 2001. Aberdeenshire Council anticipates adopting its plan in 2003. Robert Gordon University and the National Health Trusts and University at Foresterhill complex are amongst the country's most advanced major employers in developing travel plans.

### PROPOSALS

The number of travel plans is expected to grow, especially in respect of new developments requiring to mitigate access problems and secure planning permission. Encouraging businesses to take up plans can be a time-consuming effort for local councils, as they tend to rely heavily on council input. Both Councils have appointed staff to help facilitate this process.

In parallel with encouragement and support to company travel plans, the NESTRANS partners will support initiatives to promote better travel awareness through the Scottish Executive's *Learn to Let Go* campaign and initiatives promoted by Travelwise and other organisations.

### COST

Although expenditure in areas such as public transport, cycling and walking will support and encourage more sustainable travel, specific expenditure on travel plan/travel awareness initiatives amounting to £1.5million is proposed, in addition to Council spending of £1million and a similar expenditure by businesses.

## MAINTENANCE OF EXISTING NETWORK

The greatest asset any transport provider has is its existing infrastructure. There are 6,000 kilometres of roads in the north east. The busiest carry 50,000 vehicles a day.

A programme of works is produced annually to identify and prioritise work to carriageways and footways. Lighting maintenance (painting, lamp changing, cleaning and testing) is carried out on a cyclical basis. In Aberdeen, there are 30,000 lamp standards and over 35,000 in Aberdeenshire. Bridge inspections are carried out on a two year cycle with a major inspection every six years.



### PROPOSALS

For many years, the local authorities have pointed to the fact that maintenance budgets have declined and the condition of roads and lighting columns has gradually deteriorated. The ratio of maintenance costs to replacement costs for carriageways, footways and street lighting has been declining in all parts of the country as finance available for maintenance has been reduced, resulting in increasingly more expensive repairs.

### COST

Local authorities in the north east currently spend around £5million on planned maintenance per year. To adequately maintain the network would require this to be doubled, an additional £40million by 2011.

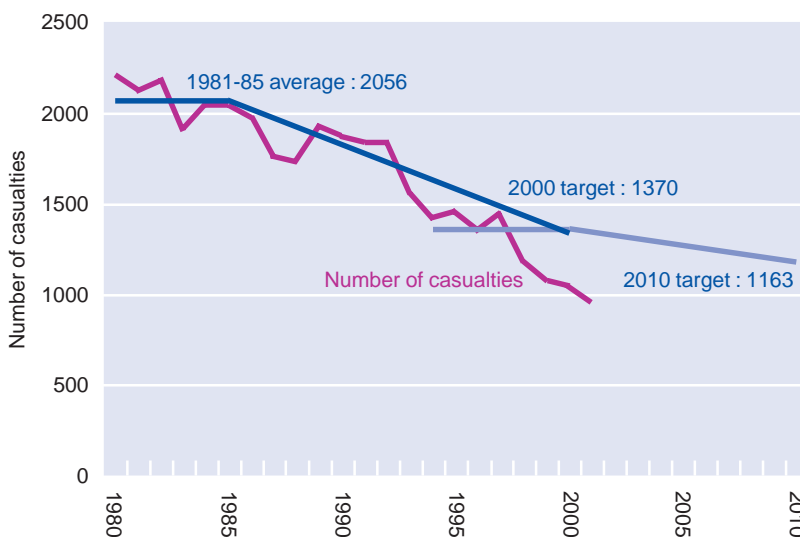
## ASSESSMENT AGAINST GOVERNMENT'S TRANSPORT OBJECTIVES

The Modern Transport System (MTS) strategy is closely aligned to the Government's five objectives for transport - Safety, Environment, Economy, Accessibility and Integration. The following paragraphs demonstrate the 'fit' of the MTS strategy and its key projects to those objectives. Specific targets for achieving modal shift and other objectives are set out in the Councils' Local Transport Strategies.

### SAFETY

The north east of Scotland has been the most successful area of the UK in achieving national targets to reduce the numbers and severity of traffic-related accidents. Since the mid-1980s when national targets were first introduced, with an aim of reducing casualties by a third by 2000, the region (Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire) has seen a drop of 52%. These improvements have been broadly similar across all modes of transport

**Figure 13**  
**CASUALTY REDUCTION, NORTH EAST, 1980 - 2010**



Casualties from traffic accidents in the north east have halved since the early 1980s. Targets for further reduction have been set for 2010.

(including pedestrians and cyclists) and in all severities, including a reduction in traffic-related deaths of 35%.

Safety is a key issue for NESTRANS and a vital strand of the MTS. The local authorities will put safety at the top of their transport agendas, setting targets for casualty reduction, producing Road Safety Plans and working with Grampian Police and other organisations to endeavour to continue to reduce the number and severity of accidents.

### ENVIRONMENT

Improving transportation networks is vitally important to the local and global environment. Concern over climate change is a national and international issue, with authorities in the north east taking a lead in determining what can be done locally to minimise the global impact. Since transport produces around a third of greenhouse gases, the link between transport policy and climate change is strong. The MTS, as a balanced package of measures, is therefore seen as important in minimising the contribution of transport in the north east to global climate change. The Aberdeen Sub Area Model will be used to test the emissions impact of various transport scenarios.

Locally, emissions can also cause concern in relation to Air Quality, and within Aberdeen an Air Quality Management Area was identified in 2001. Levels of Nitrogen Dioxide are projected to exceed guidelines in an area of the City Centre at 2005 and an Action Plan is therefore being produced to prevent this.

Where land is required for new transport developments, all reasonable measures will be taken to mitigate against any negative environmental impacts. Proposals are assessed for their environmental impact and positive impacts will be highlighted.

## ECONOMY

Economic sustainability is crucial, and the north east's contribution to the Scottish and UK economies is considerable, having the highest Gross Domestic Product per head of population in the UK outside the south east of England. The decline of traditional industries, including food production and fishing, and the reliance on the oil and gas sector make the economic strength of the area vulnerable, often to external changes. Investment in the MTS will support the area's efforts to diversify its economy, promoting itself as the "energy capital of Europe" with a focus towards global excellence in the oil and gas industry and being in the forefront of renewable technologies.

As part of the STAG appraisals, consultants have been commissioned to analyse the "economic activity" and "location impacts" of the MTS and the Western Peripheral Route concluding that there are significant net benefits to employment and income, not only in the north east but in Scotland, which would be assisted by these transport investments. The opportunity to relieve constraints on developable land in Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen and the improved perception of accessibility of the area will contribute further by making more of the region into a competitive economic development location.

## ACCESSIBILITY

Congestion is a growing concern for residents and businesses of the north east of Scotland. But poor accessibility extends beyond the delays caused by congestion. Lack of suitable public transport services affects the ability of residents to access services, job opportunities and other needs.

The Councils will endeavour to ensure accessibility for all, regardless of disability, age, gender or location for those without access to a car (over 26% of households in the north east), the aim being to support provision of public transport networks which are reliable and attractive. Where a commercial service cannot be provided, but is deemed socially-necessary, subsidies or other procurement will be used to ensure

that a choice of transport is available to communities. Alternative solutions to meeting public transport needs in urban and rural areas will also be investigated.

## INTEGRATION

Integration is the glue which pulls together the strands of the MTS and the policies of the partners, to ensure consistent and long-term thinking. NESTRANS believes that working towards common objectives is for the good of all and will continue to pursue the best solution for the area through joint working. The partners believe that there are synergies, which will develop from the overall package of measures and policies, which will not be fully realised by partial implementation.

In addition to implementation of schemes and ensuring consistent policies across the area, the partners will work together and with other public and private bodies to ensure an open and publicly-supported transportation package. The local authorities will continue to ensure that planning policies and decisions, and in particular the Development Plan, support the principles of sustainable development and the MTS.



**COSTS  
AND  
VALUE  
FOR  
MONEY**

The total public sector cost of the Modern Transport System (MTS) over the period to 2011 has recently been comprehensively reviewed and updated to 2002 prices. This now shows a total cost over the eight year period of £300million, and compares to expenditure over the last 3 years of £40million. The NESTRANS partners believe that this £300million should be largely funded by the Scottish Executive in the national interest, and could attract an additional £240million in private investment, local authority contributions and funding external to the area. Of the total package, 30% relates to public transport, cycling and walking, 28% on external links, 28% on roads and 15% on maintenance.

In particular, many of the problems currently associated with transport in the north east relate to the trunk road network, which is a Scottish Executive responsibility. Construction of a Western Peripheral Route (WPR) would relieve many of these congestion points and offer the opportunity to provide for a more sustainable package of measures in the region.

Based upon the detailed modelling undertaken through the Aberdeen Sub Area Model (ASAM), value for money estimates for those elements of the MTS which can be modelled have been calculated. The Benefit/Cost Ratio of these components is high, at around 4 and a Net Present Value of over £500 million. The WPR is the single biggest contributor to the benefits of the scenarios analysed through ASAM.

**Figure 14**  
**PROPOSALS 2003 - 2011**

	MTS Costs	Additional Contributions
Western Peripheral Route	£120m	
Strategic Roads	£27m	£3m private
Park and Ride	£7m	
Buses	£27m	
Crossrail	£40m	
Strategic Rail	-	£60m external
Rail Freight	£3m	£12m private
Airport/Access to Airport	£6m	£20m private
Ports/Maritime Transport	-	£50m private
Urban Environment	£9m	£33m private
Cycling, Walking and Safety	£20m	£20m local authorities
Travel Plans/Travel Awareness	£1m	£1m private, £1m la's
Maintenance of Existing Network	£40m	£40m local authorities
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£300m</b>	<b>£240m</b>

## NEXT STEPS

**B**uilding upon the recently secured Scottish Executive endorsement of the overall Modern Transport System (MTS) strategy and commitment to the Western Peripheral Route (WPR), NESTRANS will be progressing the detailing and implementation of the MTS to secure its speedy, balanced and integrated delivery on the ground.

Key tasks for the next year include:

- Joint working with the Scottish Executive on programming the necessary work for the delivery of the WPR as speedily as possible, with early priorities being the detailed design and environmental assessment of the full WPR route;
- Through the two Councils making a decision on the proposed route for the northern leg of the WPR following the public consultation in January and February;
- Progressing implementation of the remaining Park & Ride sites that are planned in Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire;
- Level 4 costing and a STAG appraisal of the Aberdeen Crossrail project leading to a detailed funding bid;
- Through the North East Scotland Rail Freight Development Group, costing and carrying out a STAG appraisal of gauge enhancements on the line to central Scotland, with a funding bid in 2003;
- Detailed traffic appraisals in Aberdeen City Centre in association with the Urban Realm proposals, including partial pedestrianisation of Union Street;
- Detailing and implementing town centre traffic measures to improve the urban environment and transport networks in the main Aberdeenshire towns;
- Implementation of further measures to improve surface access to the Airport and preparing a Dyce Area Transport Needs Study;
- Working with the ports and Aberdeen Airport Limited to secure better external links to and from the north east;
- Supporting and promoting travel awareness programmes and the development of Travel Plans by major employers in the region; and
- Through the two Councils, looking at ways by which early improvements to traffic flows can be secured.

NESTRANS intends to prepare annual progress and programme reports, the next being in March 2004.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

Further information including relevant publications and press releases can be found on the NESTRANS website:

[www.nestrans.org.uk](http://www.nestrans.org.uk)

The website is linked to those of the four NESTRANS partners.



NORTH EAST SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP

27 - 29 King Street  
Aberdeen  
AB24 5AA  
Tel 01224 625524  
Fax 01224 626596

[www.nestrans.org.uk](http://www.nestrans.org.uk)



Courtesy of NERC Satellite Receiving Station, University of Dundee

