

STAG Technical Database

Section 5

Part 1 Appraisal

January 2015

Transport Scotland

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Version History

Changes since STAG Refresh, May 2008

Change number	Section updated	Date
1	Addition of References to Policy Assessment Framework	December 2013
2	Enhanced guidance on Driver Frustration.	January 2015
3	Enhancing guidance on the reporting of Transport Appraisals (continuous improvement)	January 2015

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5. Part 1 Appraisal

The Part 1 Appraisal is an integral element to the overall transport appraisal process and is designed to decide whether an option meets the Transport Planning Objectives and the STAG Criteria, fits with relevant transport, land-use and other policies and hence should proceed to a more detailed Part 2 Appraisal. In this respect, Part 1 Appraisal is a prior/initial appraisal.

5.1 Introduction

The Part 1 Appraisal is an initial appraisal of the options generated during Pre-Appraisal and involves a qualitative assessment of their likelihood of meeting the Transport Planning Objectives, and subsequently proceed to the more detailed Part 2 Appraisal.

In this respect, Part 1 Appraisal is intended to focus appropriate effort and resource towards options which merit detailed quantitative appraisal and eliminate options which are unlikely to meet the Transport Planning Objectives, alleviate problems or realise opportunities identified during Pre-Appraisal.

Where a number of alternative options have been generated during Pre-Appraisal, the Part 1 Appraisal should be used to scope and test alternatives. It is likely that no single option will emerge from the Part 1 Appraisal, and as such, the Part 2 Appraisal should be used to appraise the alternative options in detail.

The Part 1 Appraisal concentrates on the following areas:

- An initial appraisal of the likely impact of options against Transport Planning Objectives;
- An initial appraisal of the likely impact of options against the STAG Criteria;
- An initial appraisal of the fit of options with established policy directives; and
- An initial appraisal of the feasibility, affordability and likely public acceptability of options.

At this phase in the STAG study, practitioners must produce an indicative assessment of the scope and scale of the benefits and impacts associated with an option for each area noted above. In addition to these tasks, it is important to be clear about relevant background information including the geographic, social and economic context for a particular study.

It should be noted that quantitative information can be used as evidence of impacts if this is available and likely to support the Part 1 Appraisal.

5.2 Background Information

To provide a relevant context to each particular study, the Part 1 Appraisal requires a summary of the following:

- Geographical Context - a general statement describing the geographic area likely to be affected by the option. This should include a description of the built and natural environment (baseline information) as well as a description of the existing transport infrastructure. Relevant journey to work areas should also be described;
- Social Context - a summary of the social makeup of the area likely to be affected by the option. Areas of deprivation and social exclusion should be identified as well as noting any relevant policy designations, such as whether the area is within a European Structural Fund area, a Priority Partnership or a Community Planning Partnership area; and
- Economic Context - a description of the principle sectors and industries within the study areas as well as a summary of the factors affecting performance.

5.3 Transport Planning Objectives

Performance against the Transport Planning Objectives is crucial from the practitioner's perspective since it is in their interest to seek the most effective and efficient way of meeting these objectives. The choice of the preferred option(s) and the rationale for that choice (as required in the Part 1 Appraisal) should therefore be founded upon the Transport Planning Objectives.

A summary of the performance of each option against each Transport Planning Objective is required during Part 1 Appraisal. At this stage, it is recommended that this will be a wholly qualitative appraisal based on the likely impacts of the option against each Transport Planning Objective. However, where quantitative information is available without expending significant additional resources this can also be used to inform the Part 1 Appraisal.

A qualitative assessment should be completed for each option, against each Transport Planning Objective, using a seven point scale assessment (described in Section 5.4), that considers the relative size and scale of impacts. It is important that practitioners provide details of why options are unlikely to meet the Transport Planning Objectives sufficiently and as such should, be rejected at this stage. The reasons for rejection should be clearly outlined.

It should be noted that options should not be recommended for Part 2 Appraisal unless they are likely to contribute sufficiently to meeting the Transport Planning Objectives and addressing the problems and/or opportunities identified.

If required, practitioners should undertake appropriate stakeholder participation and consultation in order to gain agreement on the likely performance of options against Transport Planning Objectives.

5.4 STAG Criteria

At the Part 1 Appraisal, a qualitative assessment should be completed for each option against each STAG Criteria, using a seven point scale assessment, that considers the relative size and scale of impacts. The Part 1 Appraisal should capture the likely impacts of options but detailed appraisal should not be undertaken until the Part 2 Appraisal phase. It should be noted that at this phase, qualitative information on likely impacts is all that is required, but where available, quantitative information can be provided. It is important that the context and significance of the qualitative and quantitative outcomes are clearly set out to allow an understanding of the rationale for the results using the seven point scale assessment.

For each STAG Criteria the practitioner should therefore note whether the option would bring:

- **Major benefit** – these are benefits or positive impacts which, depending on the scale of benefit or severity of impact, the practitioner feels should be a principal consideration when assessing a option's eligibility for funding;
- **Moderate benefit** – the option is anticipated to have only a moderate benefit or positive impact. Moderate benefits and impacts are those which taken in isolation may not determine an option's eligibility for funding, but taken together do so;
- **Minor benefit** – the option is anticipated to have only a small benefit or positive impact. Small benefits or impacts are those which are worth noting, but the practitioner believes are not likely to contribute materially to determining whether an option is funded or otherwise.
- **No benefit or impact** – the option is anticipated to have no or negligible benefit or negative impact.
- **Small minor cost or negative impact** – the option is anticipated to have only a moderate cost or negative impact. Moderate costs/negative impacts are those which taken in isolation may not determine an option's eligibility for funding, but taken together could do so.
- **Moderate cost or negative impact** – the option is anticipated to have only a moderate cost or negative impact. Moderate costs/negative impacts are those which taken in isolation may not determine an option's eligibility for funding, but taken together could do so;
- **Major cost or negative impacts** – these are costs or negative impacts which, depending on the scale of cost or severity of impact, the practitioner should take into consideration when assessing an option's eligibility for funding.

It should be noted that on the whole, qualitative information on impacts is all that is required at this stage, but where available, quantitative information can be provided. Supporting qualitative and, where available, quantitative information should be presented alongside the Part 1 Appraisal of options against the STAG Criteria using the seven point assessment scale.

A summary of the requirements when undertaking appraisal against each STAG Criteria for transport during Part 1 Appraisal is presented below:

5.4.1 Environment

The key environmental attributes and characteristics of the study area must be summarised. This should draw attention to the particular qualities of the area, making reference to specially designated parts within the study area and to known proposals for change.

The collation of environmental baseline data is important at the outset to allow an informed view to be taken of the vulnerability of the study area to likely changes

associated with transport or other options under consideration. Baseline data is required to inform both the Part 1 and Part 2 Appraisals. For the Part 1 Appraisal, the data will be generally limited to readily available existing information.

The collection of information may involve, in the first instance, desk studies of existing records. Where information does not exist or is inadequate for the purposes of making accurate predictions about potential impacts, additional field surveys may need to be undertaken. Field surveys are less likely to be required where environmental assessment is being undertaken on a strategy, plan or programme rather than an individual more specific option or option level, as the emphasis is likely to be on identification of relevant environmental issues and the broad scale and nature of potential impacts rather than on detailed predictions.

Baseline data should, as far as possible, be adequately documented and of known quality and updated at regular intervals in accordance with reliable procedures. Gaps and uncertainties in data should be identified.

The key purpose of the Part 1 Appraisal is to allow a comparison of alternative options, enabling those options which are unsuitable on environmental grounds to be filtered out at an early stage. It will also help to scope required appraisals at Part 2.

In summary, it is important to:

- Confirm the nature of the option including the alternatives under consideration;
- Identify if an Environmental Impact Assessment, or Strategic Environmental Assessment is required;
- Identify the range of likely impacts on the environment;
- Identify the extent to which these impacts need to be investigated;
- Identify methodologies to be employed;
- Define data availability and further data gathering requirements;
- Set the indicative thresholds and significance criteria to be used in the Evaluation of impacts;
- Identify broad mitigation measures; and
- Agree the above with statutory bodies.

At the Part 1 Appraisal stage, a qualitative assessment should be completed using the seven point scale assessment, considering the relative size and scale of its impacts. The supporting information could include:

- How the option will contribute towards reducing emissions of CO₂ and other pollutants, and promote better air and water quality;
- Are there significant impacts on the environment? and
- What are the distributional impacts, who will be the gainers and losers?

Impact assessment relies on reliable and readily available baseline information to give an indication of the significance of impacts. The topics for which more in-depth data are to be collected should be agreed between parties following the Part 1 process.

5.4.2 Safety

The Safety Criterion comprises two sub-criteria: Accidents and Security. In the Part 1 Appraisal, practitioners should take account of impacts against both sub-criteria including:

- identifying for accidents which, if any, user groups may be affected and develop projections of what will be the likely impact of each option; and

- considering whether each option has any material impact on security for the users.

At the Part 1 Appraisal stage, a qualitative assessment should be completed using the seven point scale assessment, considering the relative size and scale of impacts. The supporting information could include:

- How will the option enhance safety for different types of transport users?
- Will the option involve gainers and losers in terms of safety? and
- Are there impacts on personal safety / security?

5.4.3 Economy

The Economy Criterion has three sub-criteria, which together should summarise the full extent of economic impacts resulting from an option. These include:

- Transport Economic Efficiency (TEE), covers the benefits ordinarily captured by standard cost-benefit analysis – the transport impacts of an option (including the use of bespoke values if appropriate and subject to approval by Transport Scotland);
- Wider Economic Benefits (WEBs) relate to the notion of potential transport impacts on agglomeration and the relationship between agglomeration and productivity. This is not included in initial Part 1 Appraisal and practitioners should note that it is likely that appraisal of this sub-criterion should only be completed in Part 2 Appraisal; and
- Economic Activity and Location Impacts (EALIs), allows the impact of an option to be expressed in terms of their net effects on the local and/or national economy.

In completing the Part 1 AST, even where economic development impacts are not expected at the outset, or not thought to be central to the case for an option, the potential for such impacts should be considered. At this stage, gross impacts should be considered – that is, the impacts on different sectors of economic activity, on different areas within a region or sub region, and on different groups in society.

This is especially important where a regeneration or development area might be affected. As discussed later, it may well be the case that gross impacts will cancel each other out, but in the interests of transparency and to ensure that impacts on particular areas or social groups are not omitted, it is desirable to consider the (gross) components which constitute to the overall net impact.

Where no gross EALIs are expected following an initial appraisal, there should be a statement to this effect, together with the reasons for this judgement. At the option development stage, this should be indicated in the Part 1 AST in the section on impacts on the local economy. Transport Scotland reserves the right to request that such impacts are investigated, even if the practitioner does not expect any to arise.

In Part 1, there is a scoping table which involves:

- Segmentation of the economic context by economic sectors or drivers of economic development; and
- Analysis of potential local and national level impacts in each sector.

In Part 1 only qualitative/indicative information is required. What is important in Part 1 is to ensure:

- That both positive and negative impacts are scoped; and
- That areas and people/social groups likely to be affected are identified, with indicative levels of impacts.

A key issue at this stage in the transport appraisal process is to determine the scope of the TEE appraisal.

At the Part 1 Appraisal stage, a qualitative assessment should be completed using the seven point scale assessment, considering the relative size and scale of its impacts. The supporting information could include:

- How will the option affect traffic volumes, journey times, driver frustration or the reliability of travel times?
- Will there be gainers and losers, and if so what are the impacts on users and operators of different transport modes and in different areas? and
- How might the option help attract new jobs, help existing businesses, open up appropriate land for development?

5.4.4 Integration

The Integration Criterion has three sub-criteria, which together should summarise the full extent of integration impacts. These include:

Transport Integration

This relates to the degree to which an option fits with other transport infrastructure and services.

Given the guidance concerning the degree to which the TEE can be expected to capture costs and benefits of transport interchange, any impacts recorded under this criterion can only be identified if practitioners can confidently answer “yes” to the following two questions:

- Is there an identifiable impact upon transport interchange resulting from this option? and
- Is it the case that some aspect(s) of this impact will not be captured by the TEE or another aspect of the appraisal?

The supporting information should include a brief explanation as to why practitioners have answered yes to both. If the answer to one or the other is “no”, practitioners should provide details explaining why there are “no impacts”.

Transport and Land-Use Integration

This relates to the fit between the option and established land-use plans and land-use/transport planning guidance.

A preliminary appraisal of the option’s fit with established land-use policy and environmental designations at a local and, where appropriate, national level, should be carried out in Part 1 Appraisal. This will allow any serious conflicts to be identified early and so avoid any wasted effort in working up an option which is not viable. In its most specific sense, this is a test of whether any land required for the option is preserved for uses which are entirely incompatible with transport.

Whilst the Part 1 Appraisal will largely determine the option’s performance under this sub-criterion, there is scope for additional analysis to be carried out in Part 2.

Policy Integration

This relates to the appropriateness of the option in light of wider policies, including those of both Central and Local Government.

In any transport planning exercise, there will exist statutory documents concerning planning which should be checked as a matter of course to establish any spatial conflicts. In the exercises to which this guidance relates, development plans comprising the following are likely to feature:

- Structure plans; and
- Local plans.

Practitioners should take care to establish with confidence the nature and gravity of any spatial conflicts between the options under consideration and established planning policy at either level – this will ordinarily form part of the Part 1 Appraisal and as such, it is not appropriate to grade the compatibility; however, it will be necessary to record the conflict and to take a view as to whether it would be likely to jeopardise the feasibility of the option.

Similarly, in a Part 1 Appraisal of Policy Integration a check is required to understand if the option is in harmony with the aims of transport and wider (non-transport) government policies and national transport targets, and whether it would have an actively positive impact in terms of contributing towards these objectives.

At the Part 1 Appraisal stage, a qualitative assessment should be completed using the seven point scale assessment, considering the relative size and scale of impacts. The supporting information could include:

- How will the option promote or enhance Transport Integration?
- Will services be able to function in a more complementary manner? and
- How does the option fit with wider government policy including national transport targets?

The Policy Assessment Framework (PAF) tool (available in Section 17) should be used to qualitatively assess how the options perform against current Scottish Government transport policy objectives detailed in the PAF spreadsheet. The outputs from the PAF should be used to inform the sifting process.

5.4.5 Accessibility and Social Inclusion

The Accessibility and Social Inclusion Criterion includes the sub-criteria of Community Accessibility and Comparative Accessibility. The Part 1 Appraisal involves qualitative assessment of:

Community Accessibility

- Public transport network coverage – changes in accessibility provided by the public transport system; and
- Access to local services – changes in accessibility by walking and cycling to local services.

Comparative Accessibility

- The distribution of impacts by people group – compare impacts for different population groups relevant to local policy objectives; and

- The distribution of impacts by location – compare impacts for policy sensitive locations such as Community Regeneration Areas and areas of deprivation defined by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

At the Part 1 Appraisal stage, a qualitative assessment should be completed for the overall appraisal against the Accessibility and Social Inclusion Criterion using the seven point scale assessment, considering the relative size and scale of impacts. The supporting information could include:

- How does the option affect accessibility for transport users and for others, including access to jobs, communities, shops, services and other facilities? and
- How does it impact in terms of tackling social exclusion?

5.5 Established policy directives

The established policy directives identified during Objective Setting in Pre-Appraisal should be considered during Part 1 Appraisal. A clear conflict between an option and, for example, established land-use planning policy or transport targets in the area is likely to jeopardise its potential for funding, support, approval and implementation. A positive contribution towards the achievement of other relevant policy objectives will be to an option's credit.

The contribution of options towards meeting established Scottish Government policy objectives should be demonstrated using the outputs of a PAF assessment (see Section 5.4.4 Policy Integration).

5.6 Feasibility, Affordability and Public Acceptability

Alongside considering performance against the Transport Planning Objectives, STAG Criteria and established policy directives, the Part 1 Appraisal must also assess the feasibility, affordability and public acceptability of an option. Practitioners must consider the following:

- Feasibility - a preliminary assessment of the feasibility of construction or implementation and operation (if relevant) of an option and the status of its technology (e.g. proven, prototype, in development etc.) as well as any cost, timescale or deliverability risks associated with the construction or operation of the option, including consideration of the need for any departure from design standards that may be required. Similarly, consideration should be given to who would operate the option, including, if relevant, their statutory powers to operate an option and any other issues (e.g. cost) which may impact on its operation;
- Affordability - the scale of the financing burden on the promoting authority and other possible funding organisations and the risks associated with these should be considered together with the level of risk associated with an option's ongoing operating or maintenance costs and its likely operating revenues (if applicable);
- Public Acceptability - the likely public response is of importance at this initial appraisal phase and reference to supporting evidence, for example results from a consultation exercise, must be provided where appropriate.

The Policy Assessment Framework (PAF)(available at Section 17) can be used to assess the performance of options against criteria relating to affordability, deliverability and risks including public acceptability risks. The chart outputs from the PAF assessment may assist in illustrating the feasibility, affordability and public acceptability of options.

5.7 Rationale for Selection or Rejection

The rationale for selection or rejection must always be explained fully. The results of the Part 1 Appraisal should be presented clearly and concisely so that it is understood why options have been either taken forward to the more detailed Part 2 Appraisal or rejected on completion of Part 1 Appraisal. Where there is insufficient information or data to available to fully justify the rejection of a particular option during the Part 1 Appraisal, then the particular option must be taken forward to a more detailed appraisal in the Part 2 Appraisal.

5.8 Participation and Consultation

The continuous process of participation and consultation can also contribute to appraising options during the Part 1 Appraisal process and in making recommendations for the next stages in the STAG study. It should be recognised that this can be an inherently more difficult task to do thoroughly during Part 1.

Practitioners should plan carefully for stakeholder involvement and feedback at this stage in advance of finalising the Part 1 Appraisal results. Adopting a proactive approach that includes the wider public can encourage and promote momentum in the overall process. Consensus can also emerge over the relative priorities for implementation.

At the outset a plan for stakeholder engagement should be prepared which sets out the nature and timing of the engagement and, additionally, how the outcomes will be used to inform the Transport Appraisal.

The views shared and information arising from participation and consultation can make an important contribution to the overall information gathering exercise which will inform the evidence base for the appraisal. Practitioners must, however, seek supporting evidence for any views and information emerging from participation and consultation which are included in the Transport Appraisal.

Workshops offer one helpful way to engage with stakeholders. It is important, however, that practitioners do not rely on workshop discussions and outcomes to form the basis of the Transport Appraisal, but consider these alongside the other evidence gathering and analysis undertaken as part of the Transport Appraisal.

5.9 Reporting

At the Part 1 Appraisal stage, the Scottish Government and its agency Transport Scotland does not expect authorities to have modelled and appraised options in a high degree of detail, with qualitative information on impacts being all that is required at this stage, but where available quantitative information should also be provided.

The Part 1 Appraisal reporting should concentrate on the following areas:

- An initial appraisal of the likely impacts of options against Transport Planning Objectives – which should record the performance using the seven point assessment scale;
- An initial appraisal of the likely impacts of options against the STAG Criteria – which should record the performance using the seven point scale assessment criteria;
- An initial appraisal of the fit of options with established policy directives – i.e. relevant established transport, land-use planning and other policies; and
- An initial appraisal of the feasibility, affordability and likely public acceptability of options.

The reporting of the appraisal work should be sufficient to provide a clear understanding of the performance and scoring of an option and relative differences/similarities in performance and scoring between options. As stated in section 5.4, it is also important that the context and significance of the of the qualitative and quantitative outcomes are clearly set out. In addition, cumulative scoring of the individual results from the seven point scale assessment for an option is not acceptable as this can attribute inappropriate weighting to one or more individual elements of the Part 1 Appraisal.

The appraisal work undertaken during the initial Part 1 Appraisal should be presented in the main body of the STAG Report with Part 1 Appraisal Summary Tables (ASTs) being provided in an appendix for all options considered during the Part 1 Appraisal.

5.9.1 Part 1 Appraisal Summary Tables

The Part 1 Appraisal Summary Tables should be completed for each option appraised during this stage in the transport appraisal process. The Part 1 ASTs should set out in one place:

- A brief description of the option;
- Summary background information on the geographic, social and economic context of the study area likely to be affected by the option;
- The Transport Planning Objectives set, as defined during Objective Setting, and a summary of the performance of the option against these objectives;
- A summary of the scoping appraisal of the impacts of the option against the STAG Criteria;
- Any relevant additional established policy directives and a summary of the performance of the option against these objectives;
- A statement of the scope for implementation – i.e. feasibility, affordability and public acceptability; and
- A brief summary of the rationale for taking the option forward to Part 2 Appraisal or a summary explanation of why the option is being rejected.

The ASTs should not introduce any new information that is not already included in the main body of the STAG Report.

Discussion of how to report against the Transport Planning Objectives and the STAG Criteria in Part 1 Appraisal has been provided above. It should be reiterated that only a qualitative assessment is required at this stage, although quantitative details can be provided if they are readily available.

The Implementability Appraisal should cover:

- *Technical Issues* - a preliminary assessment of the feasibility of construction or implementation (if relevant) of a proposal and the status of its technology (e.g. proven, prototype, in development, etc.) as well as the potential cost, timescale, or deliverability risks associated with the construction of an option, including consideration of the need for any departure from design standards that may be required;
- *Operation Issues* – who would operate the option, including, if relevant, their statutory powers to operate a proposal and any other issues (e.g. cost) which may impact on its operation;
- *Financial Issues* – what is the scale of the financing burden on the promoting authority and other possible funding organisations and what are the risks associated with these. What is the level of risk associated with a proposal's ongoing operating or maintenance costs and its likely operating revenues (if applicable); and

- *Public Issues* – the likely public response to an option. Reference to supporting evidence, for example results from a consultation exercise, should be provided where appropriate.

For each option which is rejected at Part 1 there should be discussion of its performance against the Transport Planning Objectives. Additional issues which led the practitioner to conclude that the option should not progress to Part 2 will require full explanation.

Full Part 1 ASTs do not need to be included for rejected options although it is expected that at least partly completed Part 1 ASTs would be produced as part of the study process and could be called upon for audit or inquiry purposes at a later date.

In order to avoid abortive appraisal work, at this stage, discussions should be held with the Scottish Government or its agency Transport Scotland, about the likelihood of the option securing support or funding, and whether options other than those identified also need to be assessed in detail.