



HOPS Heads of Planning Scotland

Transport Scotland Planning Performance Framework Annual Report 2014-2015



PLANNING PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

Transport Scotland Annual Report April 2014 to March 2015

1. National Headline Indicators

Transport Scotland Development Planning Statistics

Transport Scotland has two Senior Transport Planners who engage with planning authorities throughout the Local Development Plan and Strategic Development Plan Process. They are supported by experienced external consultants through a framework arrangement and work closely to review, comment and engage on development planning matters. They also represent Transport Scotland at the Key Agencies Group and engage across the whole of Transport Scotland on specific issues.

Transport Scotland Development Planning Indicators		Notes
April 2013 – March 2014	April 2014 – March 2015	* All Scottish Government responses are co-ordinated by Scottish Government Planning and Architecture Division
Main Issues Report (MIR), Proposed Plan and Modified Proposed Plan Responses*		
Total Responses - 10	Total Responses – 8 MIR – 5 Proposed Plan - 3	** These consultations include draft documents such as Main Issues Reports and Proposed Plans as well as Supplementary Guidance consultations. These allow early identification of issues to be resolved and the minimisation of formal representations.
Other Planning Authority consultations, requests for information, requests for Transport Scotland to review information etc.**		
Total Responses - 51	Total Responses – 62 Incl. 11 Supplementary Guidance and 21 draft documents	*** Meetings now include a significant number of project and report related discussions such as the SESplan Cross Boundary Study, Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Development Plan as well as Supplementary Guidance.
Development Plan related meetings with Planning Authorities, developers, Key Agencies and other bodies		
86	152***	

Transport Scotland Development Management Statistics

Transport Scotland has a team of 6.5 full time equivalent staff that deal with planning applications, also drawing on the same consultancy support as required. We divide our caseload into two categories of application which are as follows:

- Major Applications
 - In terms of the Planning etc. (Scotland) 2006 Act definitions these include all Major applications and Local applications which require a Transport Assessment.
- Minor Applications
 - In general the minor applications team deals with applications of less than 100 houses or equivalent trip generation from other classes. In terms of the Planning etc. (Scotland) 2006 Act definitions these include Major and Local applications which do not require a Transport Assessment.

If a Transport Assessment is needed in support of a planning application an audit needs to be undertaken before we can issue a consultation response to the Planning Authority. Therefore our response targets are different for the Transport Scotland categories outlined above, rather than being broken down into the major/local 2006 Act definitions. Our planning application and related statistics reported below are broken down into both the Transport Scotland categories and the Planning etc. (Scotland) 2006 Act definition which is reported by Planning Authorities.

Item	Statistic	Additional Information
No of planning applications with processing agreements that Transport Scotland has been asked to sign up to	3	
No of major applications (2006 Act definition)	126	Consulted on 128 of which 2 were subsequently withdrawn
No of major applications (Transport Scotland definition)	79	Consulted on 81 of which 2 were subsequently withdrawn
No of major applications (2006 Act definition) recommended for Grant	62 (49%)	
No of major applications (Transport Scotland definition) recommended for Grant	45 (57%)	
No of major applications (2006 Act definition) recommended for Grant with conditions	62 (49%)	
No of major applications (Transport Scotland definition) recommended for Grant with conditions	34 (43%)	

No of major applications (2006 Act definition) recommended for refusal	2 (2%)	1 subsequently withdrawn by applicant
No of major applications (Transport Scotland definition) recommended for refusal	0 (0%)	
No of local applications (2006 Act definition)	835	We were consulted on 841 of which 6 were subsequently withdrawn
No of minor applications (Transport Scotland definition)	882	We were consulted on 888 of which 6 were subsequently withdrawn
No of local applications (2006 Act definition) recommended for Grant	485 (58%)	
No of minor applications (Transport Scotland definition) recommended for Grant	502 (57%)	
No of local applications (2006 Act definition) recommended for Grant with conditions	284 (34%)	
No of minor applications (Transport Scotland definition) recommended for Grant with conditions	312 (35%)	
No of local applications (2006 Act definition) recommended for refusal	66 (8%)	
No of minor applications (Transport Scotland definition) recommended for refusal	68 (8%)	
Average timescale to respond on major applications (2006 Act definition)	55 days	Median Response time 19 days. We consider the median a more accurate representation as we have to delay responding to a small number of applications until information is provided by applicant.
Average timescale to respond on local applications (2006 Act definition)	10 days	We responded to 97.2% of all local application consultations within the target of 14 days
No of EIA consultations responded to	405	This is approximate as date recording did not commence until June 2014
No of other consents	56	

2. Defining and measuring a high-quality planning service

Open for Business

- Transport Scotland provides a single point of contact for the duration of the preparation of a Development Plan or an individual planning application. Effective internal and stakeholder communication ensures that consistent, proportionate and pragmatic advice is provided throughout the planning process.
- Transport Scotland is committed to pro-actively working with Planning Authorities on Development Plans. Every effort is made to ensure early engagement on key issues and to inform the appropriate appraisal of the spatial strategy that is necessary.
- We are working to simplify and rationalise the information provided on our role in the development plan process. This will result in a clearer understanding of the types of information we can provide and that is sought in order to effectively engage in the development plan process. This information will be issued to planning authorities, tailored to reflect where they are in development plan process.
- Early engagement is key and Transport Scotland endeavours to regularly keep in touch with Local Authorities regularly throughout the plan process. We strongly encourage authorities to issue draft plans and supporting documents for review prior to publication. This has worked successfully with Angus, Fife, South Lanarkshire, East Renfrewshire, Stirling, SESplan and TAYplan.
- Transport Scotland responds on LDP and SDP Action Programmes (APs) in draft form, through formal consultation periods and updating post adoption. They are important documents outlining developer requirements to deliver sites. Numerous comments on draft documents have been passed to planning authorities this year, including Aberdeenshire, Aberdeen City and TAYplan's APs.
- Transport Scotland continues to engage post development plan adoption/approval. Examples include ongoing strategic modelling within the SESplan area, providing input into the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Transport Fund, providing comments on Supplementary Guidance (SG) for East Renfrewshire and a Development Brief for The Highland Council.
- Ensuring applicants submit the appropriate supporting transport information with their planning application is key to enabling Transport Scotland to respond quickly to planning application consultations. To this end Transport Scotland actively encourages pre-application engagement with developers of large or small developments to discuss the information they need to provide. The advice we provide is bespoke to the individual development and location. The early engagement message is reinforced through the website and our guidance documents as well as in the Key Agency Joint Statement.
- We regularly have discussions with developers and their agents by telephone, in writing, at site visits and at meetings where guidance and advice is offered and recorded. We also actively participate in pre-application advice services provided by

Planning Authorities such as those of Aberdeenshire and The Highland Councils’.

- We have considered drafting a pre-application advice template for applicants to complete. Following a review it was found that applicants generally provide basic information as outlined in our guidance and that only further information that might be requested is normally so site specific that could not be prescribed in advance.
- Looking at a small sample of major applications we have reviewed how pre-application discussions influenced the time and nature of our planning application consultation response. We have found that whether pre-application discussions leads to an improved planning application submission, and therefore quicker response timescale, depends on whether the Applicant has chosen to follow the advice provided. In one case we received an application which included a new trunk road access when it was advised during pre-application discussions that this would not be acceptable for safety and other reasons.
- Looking more widely, developers and consultants that regularly work with Transport Scotland see the benefits of engaging with us at an early stage as they routinely do so. Even with the ‘engage early’ messages on our website and guidance there have been instances in the last year that those less familiar with working in Scotland have not approached us in advance of submitting a planning application. We will ask for feedback on the pre-application process within our Development Management Service Customer Survey to see what improvements we can make to reduce the instances of this occurring.

High quality development on the ground

- Transport Scotland has participated in a number of charrettes, both as part of the Scottish Sustainable Communities Initiative and those led by others, to encourage the creation of places where a high quality of life can be achieved.
- A review of the Development Planning and Management Transport Appraisal Guidance (DPMTAG) started within this reporting period and will report later in 2015. This will consider feedback that the Guidance should be streamlined, easier to read and to interpret.
- Transport Scotland provides input and advice to the spatial strategy of development plans including recommendations on the types of assessments/appraisals needed to determine potential impacts of plans on the strategic transport network. Working with planning authorities we promote DPMTAG to ensure appraisals are appropriate and proportionate. Collaborative working includes: at the strategic level, the on-going cross boundary cumulative impact study and associated strategic modelling exercise of the SESplan area, and at the local level modelling of several roundabouts in Dumfries undertaken for three sites included within the LDP. Transport Scotland is also working alongside East Ayrshire on their modelling and East Lothian’s assessment of their LDP.
- When considering planning applications, Transport Scotland’s involvement in the delivery of high quality development on the

ground is generally limited to commenting on the access onto the strategic trunk road network with Designing Streets and the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges being implemented as appropriate. It is generally out with our remit to comment on the specifics of the layout and design of the internal nature of a development where the local authority leads on such advice. This is also the case with the sustainable transport measures proposed, albeit Transport Scotland ensures that this has been appropriately considered by the applicant to ensure that the opportunity to travel by sustainable modes is maximised thereby reducing potential trunk road impacts.

Certainty

- The deliverability of infrastructure is key to the plan making process. Transport Scotland works with planning authorities to determine the nature and scale of strategic transport infrastructure necessary to deliver plan allocations, including how it will be funded and delivered. Transport Scotland is supportive of developer contribution mechanisms that align with Scottish Government Planning Policy and work with authorities in their preparation of these. This includes East Renfrewshire Council's draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Guidance, South Lanarkshire Council's Community Infrastructure Assessment Supplementary Guidance. We also have ongoing engagement with planning authorities on the Aberdeen City and Shire Strategic Transport Fund Supplementary Guidance adopted to obtain appropriate contributions and deliver infrastructure on the ground.
- To deliver consistency, all development planning issues are dealt with by one team who liaise internally with Transport Scotland major projects, ferries, ports and rail teams as appropriate. Rail related issues have increased with several development plans including new rail infrastructure proposals as part of their spatial strategy and doing so without the full support of the Scottish Government. Scottish Planning Policy states that the inclusion of new rail infrastructure should be discussed with Transport Scotland and have agreement prior to inclusion within a Plan and we are actively encouraging discussions around rail issues at the early plan stages. In relation to the TAYplan SDP and Fife LDP, Transport Scotland consistently stated its position on specific rail infrastructure during preparation of the Plan and when commenting on draft documents. However specific infrastructure references remained which resulted in Transport Scotland submitting representations to both Plans based on information and recommendations from rail colleagues.
- We remain committed to engaging with Planning Authorities on processing agreements and protocols. This is linked to our focus on pre-application engagement.
- We have recently worked with North Ayrshire Council to support and facilitate proposed developments within the Irvine Bay area. The Council and Transport Scotland have signed a Minute of Agreement where the Council has committed to carry out the trunk road improvements to mitigate the cumulative impact of this development. This removes the need to develop planning

obligations relating to improvements for future planning consents. While the full extent of the improvements needed will depend on what is proposed at the detailed stage, the A78/A738 Pennyburn Roundabout between Kilwinning and Saltcoats was a key area of concern for Transport Scotland during LDP discussions. We welcomed the opportunity to work with the Council as they sought a proactive approach in allocating capital funding towards the roundabout and the commitment made within the Minute of Agreement, thereby providing increased certainty to developers in relation to funding trunk road improvements.

- Within Transport Scotland, regular meetings ensure consistency in development plan and planning application consultation responses. Joint engagement between the Development Planning and Management teams, Local Authorities and developers is undertaken to aid consistency and clarity.

Communications, engagement and customer service

- The Transport Scotland website sets out information and guidance on development near trunk roads and the wider strategic transport network. Our complaints policy and process is available on the website, with none received in this PPF period. Quarterly statistical reports covering pre-applications, applications and other related responses are available on the website.
- A further review into the relevant sections of the Transport Scotland website has also commenced. This will encompass updates and references to revised guidance and customer surveys we are looking to publish, the implementation of changes in regulation with regard to Scottish Ministers being removed as a statutory consultee on Environmental Impact Assessments as well as making it more customer focussed. This should be complete in late 2015.
- We are fully committed to ePlanning which is being led by Scottish Government. Our database system allows electronic storage of information on all planning applications received and is shared with our Operating Companies and consultants who assist in keeping it up to date. Although predominantly a development management system we are investigating the potential to improve the system to report more fully on development plan actions and our wider workload.
- We are also preparing a questionnaire on our development plan service which will be available on the website and sent to authorities and via email. During the PPF period Transport Scotland has also drafted a Development Management Service Customer Survey. In the 2015/16 PPF period we plan to issue the survey electronically (or as appropriate) every six months to applicants, their consultants and planning authorities involved in planning applications that we have responded on in that period. It will provide important and regular feedback to enable us to continually improve the service provided and inform future Business Plan and PPF actions.

Efficient and effective decision-making

- We have a target to respond to all formal Development Plan consultations within the planning authority consultation period and to 90% of application consultations which do not require a Transport Assessment within 14 days of receipt from the planning authority. In the period covered by the PPF, we have responded to 97.2% of all local application consultations within the target of 14 days. Transport Assessments can vary in size and complexity and there are often extensive discussions and exchanges to obtain all the relevant information. We will respond to these within 14 days of receipt of all the required supporting information.
- All development planning responses are dealt with by a single team to ensure efficient preparation and clearance. The team's workload is split geographically providing consistent advice to authorities on key issues throughout all stages of plan preparation. The team also replies to formal and ad hoc correspondence from authorities and developers.
- We are supported by our experienced term consultants that have extensive and up-to-date technical expertise enabling us to provide efficient and informed responses.
- Transport Scotland worked with Scottish Government Planning and Architecture Division in the development of a brief for the review of SDPs. The final report was published in April 2014. Transport Scotland is working with the Scottish Government colleagues on the outcomes and actions from the report.

Effective management structures

- The Planning Performance Framework actions are integrated into Transport Scotland's business planning objectives. These feed into the personal development and Performance Appraisal objectives of both Development Planning and Management Team members.
- Transport Scotland has a dedicated Development Management team, as referred to earlier. This model allows us to efficiently deal with customers, and to manage our resources and work load.

Financial management and local governance

- Details on Transport Scotland's financial management and governance can be found on our website and within the Transport Scotland Annual Report And Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2014 available at

http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/system/files/uploaded_content/documents/reports/Transport%20Scotland%20Finance%20-%20Annual%20Accounts%202013-14%20-%20Annual%20Report%20and%20Accounts%20FINAL.pdf

Culture of continuous improvement

- See Transport Scotland's actions planned for 2015-16 and how we delivered those actions set for the 2014-15 period. This list is not exhaustive as actions will be undertaken throughout the year.
- Job specific training needs are identified as part of the Transport Scotland staff appraisal process in addition to access to Scottish Government training programme.
- We regularly meet with our Key Agency partners to share best practice and identify areas in which we can work together to address issues arising.

3. Supporting evidence

Part 2 of this report was compiled, drawing on evidence from the following sources.

- Development Management and Development Planning pages with the Transport Scotland website <http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/road/policy/planning>
This has recently been updated and contains a wealth of information on Transport Scotland, its role in the Planning Process and guidance documents including guidance on transport appraisal and assessment. This also contains a number of documents referred to in Part 2. Further enhancements are planned.
- Scottish Government Key Agency website <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/planning/modernising/cc/KeyAgencies> - This outlines the work of the Key Agency Group to date.

4. Service improvements: 2015-16

In the coming year, and in addition to continuing our proactive engagement throughout the planning process, we will:

Service improvements and actions for 2015-16

General

Clear and Consistent Planning Advice

- Refresh our development planning and management guidance to reflect changes in SPP, other key policies and changes to regulations. We will clarify processes and expectations where possible as well as also ensuring it is accessible to the relevant user.
- Work closely with Planning and Architecture Division on emerging policy, guidance and research.

Communications, engagement and customer service

- Continue with Appraisal User Group sessions and organise new engagement seminars.
- Propose a paper to be presented at the Scottish Transport Applications and Research Conference in May 2016 on proportionate and pragmatic transport appraisal in a development plan context.
- Develop proactive engagement and issue reminders and prompts to planning authorities at appropriate stages in their development plan process.

Developing skills and improving performance

- Ensure Development Planning and Management staff continue to engage in appropriate internal and external training and knowledge sharing.
- Continue work within the Key Agencies Group to identify areas for common approaches and shared understanding.

Development Planning

Measuring Performance

- Develop a questionnaire and seek feedback from PAs following engagement in the development plan process.

Efficient and Effective Decision-Making

- Schedule and maintain regular meetings with Development Management team and term consultants.

Development Management

Advice and Guidance

- Publish the *Transport Scotland Advice on Planning for Small Developments* Advice Note by the end of 2015. This will outline what small developers need to consider when preparing a planning application for a development near a trunk road.
- Review our EIA Guidance in light of the removal of Scottish Ministers (and therefore Transport Scotland) as a statutory consultee on EIAs.
- Complete our review of the Development Management Guidance and publish changes where identified.
- Complete our review of the Development Management Webpages taking into account the above.
- Launch the Development Management Service Customer Survey and use feedback to identify any future areas where changes to guidance is needed or requested.

Measuring Performance

- Sustain our service delivery by maintaining the percentage of applications without a Transport Assessment are responded to within 14 days at 90%.

Communications, engagement and customer service

- Publish the Development Management Service Customer Survey and identify further areas for improvement.
- Provide training for Operating Company to improve site inspections associated with applications.

High Quality (and Safe) Development

- Explore options to assist developers in ensuring access arrangements for smaller local applications are compliant with Road Safety Audit requirements. Any changes to the trunk road network require a Road Safety Audit to be undertaken in line with a recently revised European Directive. By the end of March 2016 we will investigate options to assist developers of smaller local applications in ensuring they meet these requirements.

Delivery of our service improvement actions in 2014-15:

Review of planned improvements and actions for 2014-15		
Actions	Status	Comments
<u>General</u>		
Clear and Consistent Planning Advice		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresh development planning and management guidance to reflect changes in SPP and other key policy and guidance and to clarify process and expectations where possible 	On-going	DPMTAG is currently being refreshed and updated. This is an on-going action expected to complete in Autumn 2015.
Communications, engagement and customer service		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Local Authorities in the training of elected members on strategic transport issues in planning Continue with Appraisal User Group sessions, refresh LA workshops and organise new engagement seminars 	No	A workshop is planned for 2015 – 2016.
	Yes	The Appraisal User Group continues and Transport Scotland attended and undertook a workshops at the DP and SEA Fora.
Developing skills and improving performance		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade ISIS, Transport Scotland's web based management system, to provide more efficient and effective system Develop ISIS for development plans 	On-going	ISIS is being upgraded and developed for development plans.

Review of planned improvements and actions for 2014-15		
Actions	Status	Comments
<p><u>Development Planning</u></p> <p>Measuring Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve and refine development plan resourcing spreadsheet with current actions and future workload to better manage the Development Planning workstream • Develop feedback questionnaire and seek feedback from Planning Authorities following development plan adoption/approval <p>Efficient and Effective Decision-Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule and maintain regular meetings with Development Management team and term consultants • Develop a development plan protocol outlining the development plan process and extent of Transport Scotland engagement 	<p>Yes</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>On-going</p>	<p>Internal processes have been updated and will continue to be reviewed, refined and improved.</p> <p>DP questionnaire has been drafted and is awaiting approval before issue.</p> <p>Informal and formal joint meetings take place on a regular basis.</p> <p>A protocol has been drafted and is awaiting approval before issue.</p>

Review of planned improvements and actions for 2014-15		
Actions	Status	Comments
<p><u>Development Management</u></p> <p>Continue to work with other Statutory Consultees and Scottish Government to:</p> <p>i. Develop and promote the use of eConsultation</p> <p>ii. Monitor and improve any eConsultation standards and advice already issued to Planning Authorities and Developers,</p> <p>iii. Develop the ePlanning system by testing the use of XML transfer of consultation notices</p>	<p>Complete from a Transport Scotland perspective – Scottish Government to lead on some aspects</p>	<p>This workstream is primarily being led by Scottish Government. Transport Scotland continues to engage with other Scottish Government colleagues as appropriate.</p>
<p>iv. Develop a standard Consultee response to planning consultations</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>Transport Scotland has a standard form used to submit to planning authorities which appears to be well understood. Further improvements may be identified through the Development Management Service Customer Survey</p>
<p>v. Promote pre-application discussions and develop means of recording this advice through ePlanning</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>Transport Scotland promotes pre-application discussions through its guidance, website and through discussions with developers, their transport consultants and planning authorities. Pre-application discussions are recorded on Transport Scotland's system. There was some under recording for a period which has now been addressed.</p>
<p>vi. Monitor effectiveness of pre-applications</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>See detail elsewhere in this PPF.</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress has continued to be made with the uptake of ePlanning but inconsistencies remain in the use of eConsultation. Transport Scotland's Development Management System (DEMS) has been launched to record all applications and pre-applications, the system is ready to accept XML transfers although the Scottish Government ePlanning software contractor has still to finalise the necessary changes with the Planning Authorities software. Scottish Government ePlanning team is considering how this service is to be provided. 	<p>Complete from a Transport Scotland perspective – Scottish Government to lead</p>	<p>This workstream is primarily being led by Scottish Government. Transport Scotland continues to engage with other Scottish Government colleagues as appropriate.</p>
<p>Advice and Guidance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish additional guidance for developers on the Transport Scotland website to ensure correct details are provided to allow Transport Scotland to assess planning consultations Provide additional information on the Transport Scotland website on (a) Siting of Wind Farms close to the trunk road network (b) Advertising on or adjacent to trunk roads and (c) Trading from trunk road lay-bys 	<p>Complete</p>	<p>The Transport Scotland Development Management pages have been updated, however it was decided to retain the generic contact details and direct queries from that point to allow flexibility in resourcing.</p> <p>A review into the need for these publications is ongoing with resources being allocated on the basis of need and customer priority. With regard to the windfarm guidance a review has commenced on what guidance will be required further to the upcoming changes in regulations which will mean that Scottish Government (and therefore Transport Scotland) will no longer be a statutory consultee on EIAs. Where a need has been identified advice has been provided on the website to assist with specific topics.</p>

<p>Measuring Performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustain our service delivery by maintaining the percentage of minor applications responded to within 14 days at 90% throughout the period of this Service Improvement Plan. Currently a 97% response rate achieved. 	<p>Complete</p>	<p>Transport Scotland has responded to 97.2% of all local application consultations within the target of 14 days.</p>
<p>Communications, engagement and customer service</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete questionnaire for feedback on Transport Scotland performance with developers and Planning Authorities 	<p>Not complete</p>	<p>We have drafted the Development Management Service Customer Survey, however we were not able to publish this during the PPF period. This remains a high priority to ensure that our service meets the needs of our customers and to identify future areas for improvements.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with Local Authorities on development management issues 	<p>Complete</p>	<p>Transport Scotland continuously engages with Local Authorities on development management issues. This takes place through regular discussions on specific applications and meetings to discuss specific area wide issues. When undertaking site visits, particularly in more rural parts of Scotland such as Highland, the opportunity is taken to meet local area teams to allow planners and transport local authority officers to meet Transport Scotland in person and informally discuss any current or emerging issues.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training for Operating Company to improve site inspections associated with applications 	<p>Not complete</p>	<p>This commitment was made during a time when the Operating Company contracts were in the process of being let. There has since been a period of adjustment and this action will be carried forward into this PPF.</p>