Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) Consultancy Support Services Contract

STPR

National Case for Change: Executive Summary

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Executive Summary

What is STPR2?

The second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) will guide the Scottish Government's transport investment programme in Scotland for the next 20 years and help to deliver the vision, priorities and outcomes that are set out in the new National Transport Strategy (NTS2)[1], published in February 2020. The aim of STPR2 is:

> *To conduct a Scotland wide, evidence-based review of the performance of the strategic transport system, across all transport modes, against multiple criteria including safety, environment, economy, integration, accessibility and social inclusion whilst fundamentally supporting Scottish Government's aims, including sustainable inclusive growth and the move to a low and zero carbon transport system.*
>
> *In so doing, STPR2 will make recommendations for potential transport investments for Scottish Ministers to consider as national investment priorities, in an updated 20-Year transport investment plan for Scotland.*

It is recognised that Scotland's geography is unique and varied, ranging from rural lowlands to remote uplands, and from large cities to sparsely inhabited islands, meaning no two parts of Scotland are the same nor are their travel patterns and demands. For that reason, STPR2 is being progressed at both a national and regional level in order to appraise options in the context of place. A total of eleven regions have been established for STPR2 as outlined in this report.

STPR2 will focus on Scotland's key strategic transport assets. In this context, the strategic transport network is defined as; all transport networks and services owned, operated and funded directly by Transport Scotland; transport access to major ports and airports and the inter-urban bus and active travel network including principal routes within the City Region areas. What may constitute a strategic project is more wide ranging but at this *Case for Change* stage, this will include:

- Any transport project that plays a significant part in supporting the NTS2 priorities and related outcomes;
- Projects or groups of projects related to transport networks owned, operated and funded directly by Transport Scotland;
- Passenger and freight access to ports and airports of national significance, and
- The inter-urban bus and active travel networks and principal corridors within urban areas.

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[1] New National Transport Strategy (NTS2), Transport Scotland, February 2020 www.transport.gov.scot/media/47052/national-transport-strategy.pdf

The Strategic Direction - NTS2

The new NTS2 sets out the Scottish Government's *Case for Change*, to achieve a more sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system which helps to deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors.

The NTS2 and STPR2 are set within the context of a Climate Emergency[2], with the Scottish Government committed to transitioning our transport system to one that is net-zero in carbon emissions by 2045. STPR2 has a key part to play in supporting the delivery of the national priorities and outcomes by making recommendations on a range of targeted measures to achieve a reduction in travel demand and a mode shift to more sustainable modes such as walking, cycling and public transport, whilst transitioning to an inclusive net-zero economy as outlined within the sustainable travel hierarchy in Figure A.1.
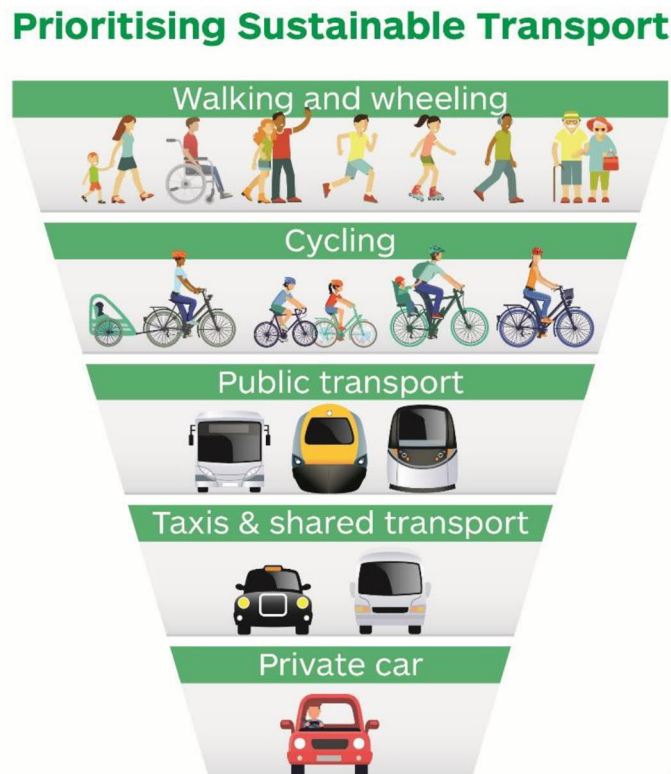
Figure A.1: NTS2 Sustainable Travel Hierarchy

The new NTS2 provides the national transport policy framework and provides a strong strategic direction for transport over the next two decades based upon the key priorities and associated challenges outlined in Figure A. 2

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[2] The Global Climate Emergency - Scotland's Response: Climate Change Secretary Roseanna Cunningham's statement, Scottish Government,14 May 2019 https://www.gov.scot/publications/global-climate-emergency-scotlands-response-climate-change-secretary-roseanna-cunninghams-statement/
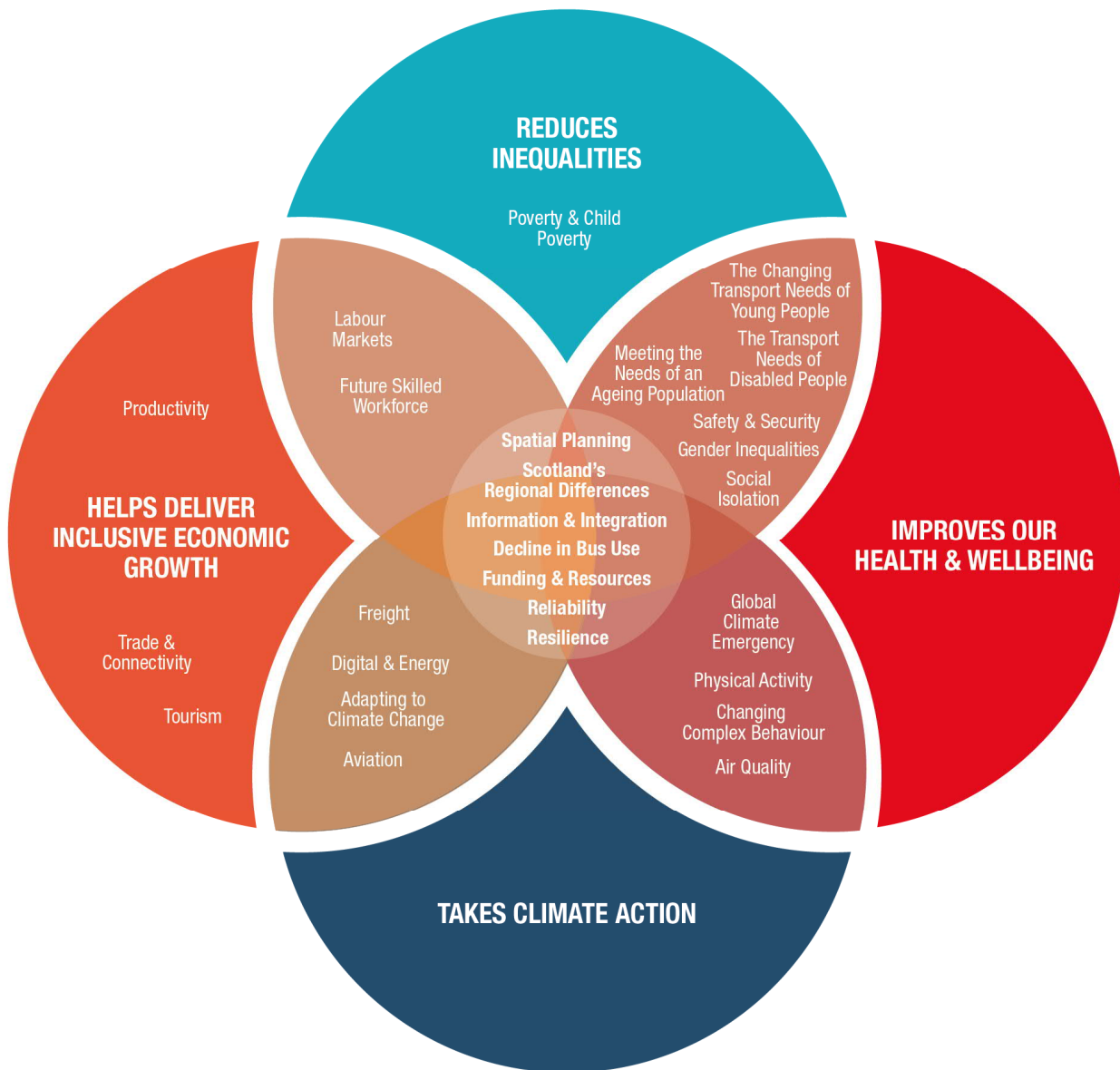
Figure A. 2: : Current and Future Challenges

STPR2 is being developed within a period of rapid policy change across Scottish Government and is working collaboratively with the teams developing the Climate Change Plan Update and National Planning Framework 4 during the course of 2020.

Key Challenges for Transport and Infrastructure

Building on the NTS2 and the extensive data analysis and stakeholder engagement undertaken during the first stages of STPR2, has identified the key challenges that need to be considered when planning for strategic transport and investment.   These include:

- Transport's contribution to the climate emergency and net zero targets, means that **there is a need to reduce travel and deliver modal shift towards walking, cycling and public transport.**   If we continue as we are now, forecasts suggest a 40% increase in vehicular travel by 2037.   However, recent work by the Committee on Climate Change[3] set out the need for a 10% reduction in car mileage with a modal shift from car to walking, cycling and public transport.

- To achieve a modal shift of the scale required to address the climate emergency, will require significant changes to the complex travel behaviours of users, operators and the public and private sectors.   In accordance with the sustainable travel hierarchy, **STPR2 should prioritise interventions that increase the modal share of shorter everyday trips by walking, wheeling and cycling; short to medium length trips by public transport and longer trips by rail and low emission vehicles**.

- Transport is a derived demand[4] and therefore key decisions and investments are required across several other sectors to meet net zero targets and in so doing put 'place' at the heart of the decision making process.   **Land use planning and digital connectivity are two areas not within the scope of STPR2 that will both have a significant part to play in meeting our net zero targets.** This will help develop more sustainable and inclusive communities that encourage walking, wheeling and cycling as well as public transport as the preferred choice of travel. This will increase physical activity and realise health and wellbeing benefits.

- It is clear that efforts over the last decade have not had a sustained impact on the increase in walking and cycling particluary as a means to travel to work or education.   In recent years, the Scottish Government, working with a number of key partners, has committed significant investment into active travel to help address this issue.   Whilst the outcomes of this investment are still to be realised, it is clear that to make the sort of transformational change required, **significant ongoing commitment to active travel investment is necessary, to not only deliver improved infrastructure and systems but to encourage the change needed in travel behaviours**.

- The decades of decline in bus use across most of Scotland is linked to a range of complex factors.   Despite this, bus use makes up three quarters of trips by public transport in Scotland.   It therefore has a vital role to play in delivering our interim net zero targets by 2030.   **STPR2 should prioritise interventions that increase the modal share of journeys by bus over the next decade and beyond.**

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[3]   Net Zero: The UK's contribution to stopping global warming, Committee on Climate Change, May 2019

[4]   Users of transport services are primarily consuming the service not because of its direct benefits, but because they wish to access other services (i.e. derived demand) such as jobs, health, education and leisure services.

- Whilst bus use in Scotland has been in decline, rail use has increased by over 30% in the last decade. Based on current forecasts for future housing and employment land uses there will continue to be **strong demand for rail services particularly within the key corridors to, from and between Edinburgh and Glasgow. This will further heighten the current terminal station capacity issues within Scotland's two largest cities.**

- The safe, efficient and resilient movement of goods is vital for Scotland's economy and related import/export market. Most freight in Scotland is moved by road. Maintaining efficient and resilient connections will continue to be important to business. However, the movement of goods and the freight industry in general will need to play its part in meeting net zero targets by 2045. Advances in low carbon technology for the movement of goods by aviation, maritime, rail and road will play a significant part and **STPR2 will explore further opportunities to increase rail freight and reduce the level of goods transported by road.**

- Scotland has strong trade links with over 100 countries across nearly 100 different industries and sectors. **Over the coming years, Scotland's economic success will be increasingly realised through its ability to connect with and compete within a global market.** Strengthening links with the global economy will mean increased trade, inward investment and create an environment for sharing skills, expertise and collaborating with others to support sustainable inclusive growth.

- The maintenance of safe and resilient transport networks and systems is also a vital part of the daily lives of all communities, businesses and visitors to Scotland. Recent examples of this include the A83 Rest and be Thankful, Winchburgh Junction and tunnel on the main rail line connecting Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the CalMac ferry network which all require further investment to maintain safe and resilient transport connections to all parts of Scotland. **The sustainable investment hierarchy outlined within NTS2 makes clear that interventions should be prioritised firstly by their ability to reduce the need to travel and secondly their ability to help maintain and safely operate existing assets. This investment hierarchy will be imbedded within the STPR2 appraisal process.**

- Fundamental to the delivery of an inclusive net zero economy and thus improve health and wellbeing, is the requirement to **support and accelerate the just transition to low emission vehicles**. A collaborative public and private sector relationship will be crucial in achieving this just transition.

STPR2 Objectives

STPR2 is being carried out in accordance with Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)[5], Transport Scotland's appraisal guidance. STAG is an objective led appraisal process, requiring Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) to be developed that take full account of evidence on the particular problems and opportunities identified.

The new NTS2 sets out the *Case for Change* for Scotland and is at the heart of the objective setting process for STPR2. Following extensive engagement, review and iteration, five overarching TPOs have been developed that are directly linked to the NTS2 priorities and outcomes. The STPR2 TPOs are:

- **A sustainable strategic transport system that contributes significantly to the Scottish Government's net-zero emissions target**

- **An inclusive strategic transport system that improves the affordability and accessibility of public transport**

- **A cohesive strategic transport system that enhances communities as places, supporting health and wellbeing**

- **An integrated strategic transport system that contributes towards sustainable inclusive growth in Scotland**

- **A reliable and resilient strategic transport system that is safe and secure for users**

At the regional level, each *Case for Change* report aligns with the above TPOs whilst also seeking to reflect the specific regional transport challenges and outcomes identified during the evidence gathering phase of STPR2.

Appraisal Approach and Next Steps

STAG represents best practice in transport appraisal guidance adopting an evidence-based and objective-led process. The four key phases of STAG are illustrated in Figure A.3.

Figure A.3: The Four Key Stages to the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance

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[5] Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG), Transport Scotland, www.transport.gov.scot/media/41507/j9760.pdf

The Initial Appraisal: *Case for Change* constitutes the first stage of STAG. This report summarises the national *Case for Change* as laid out within the new NTS2, drawing upon additional and relevant data analysis and stakeholder engagement.

A long list of multi-modal options that may potentially address the identified problems, opportunities and key challenges is currently being developed. The initial long list will be 'sifted' to a more manageable and proportionate short list in line with the proposed approach presented in this report. This includes their fit with the sustainable investment hierarchy outlined in Figure A.4.

Figure A. 4: Sustainable Investment Hierarchy

Subsequent phases of the STAG process, the Preliminary and Detailed Appraisal phases, involve more detailed appraisal work, considering the feasibility and performance of options to tackle the identified transport-related problems and opportunities. These will be developed as the STPR2 process moves forward and will include scenario planning analysis. This analysis will help to understand how the short list of options would perform in a range of possible futures and thus help to mitigate against future uncertainty on how the Scottish and Global economies will develop over the next two decades.