

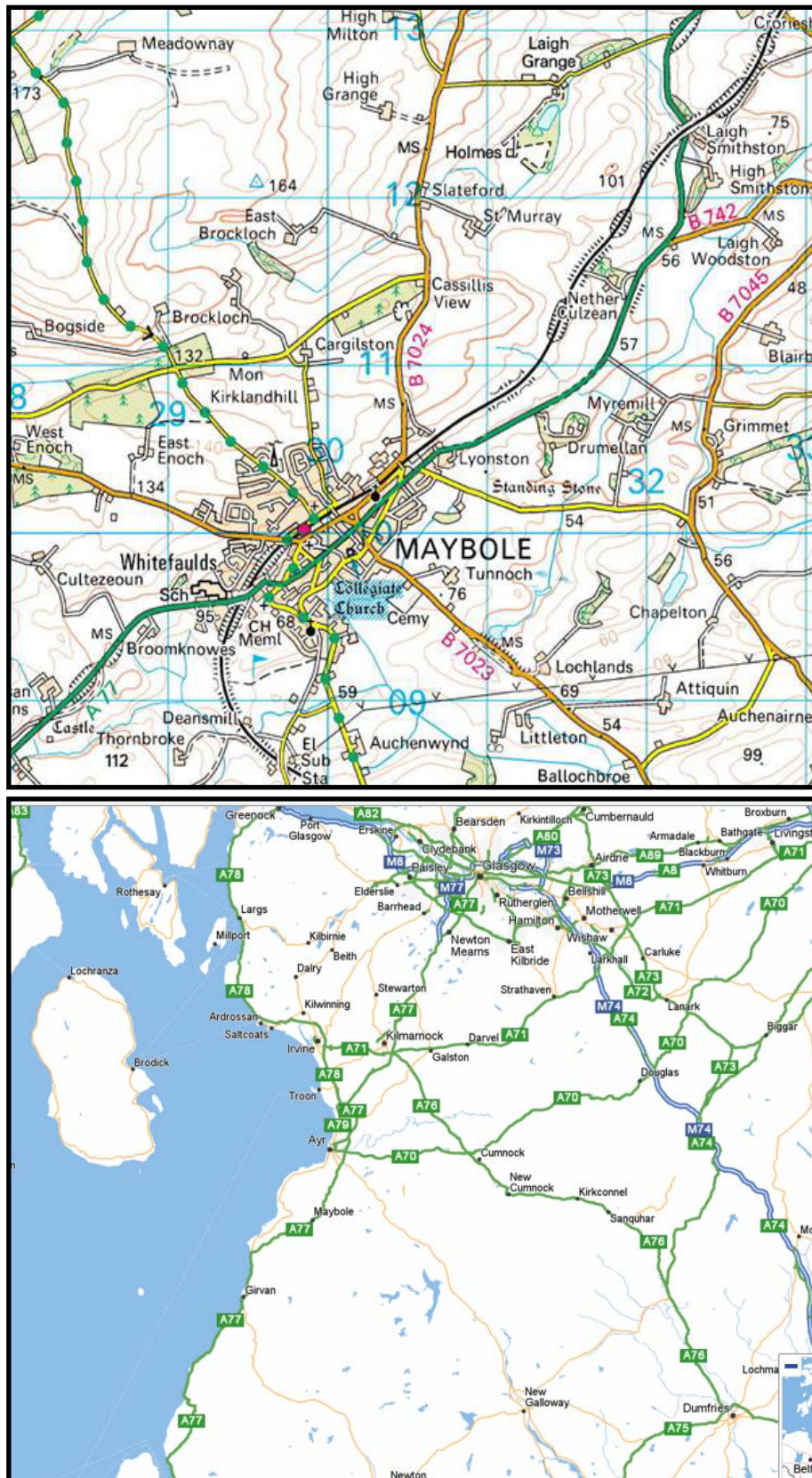
1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 The 126 kilometre-long M77/A77 is the main link from Glasgow and central Scotland to ports in Dumfries and Galloway. The ports at Troon, Stranraer and Cairnryan are the three main gateways from Scotland to Northern Ireland. The A77 is also the main link to Prestwick International Airport. The route of the existing A77 through Maybole town centre can be seen in Figure 1.1 below.
- 1.1.2 Maybole is one of the five main South Ayrshire towns which lie on the A77 trunk road. There are many existing traffic problems in Maybole, partly due to the large numbers of cars and heavy goods vehicles (HGV's) using the A77, which runs through the centre of the town.
- 1.1.3 In addition, where the A77 runs through Maybole it passes along the High Street which is the main retail area in the town. Developed since the medieval ages, the High Street currently has restricted carriageway and footway widths, which result in poor conditions for pedestrians and road users alike.
- 1.1.4 The findings of a STAG Part 1 assessment, announced in June 2006 by the Transport Minister Tavish Scott, recommended that route options for a bypass to the north and south of Maybole should be investigated. In his announcement, the Transport Minister confirmed that Transport Scotland would now take forward the design of bypass options so that a preferred route could be considered in the forthcoming Strategic Transport Projects Review.
- 1.1.5 The "Route Options Assessment Report"¹ submitted by Atkins in 2006, examined 9 bypass route options to the north west and south east of Maybole and a do minimum scenario. The conclusions from the report recommended that 3 routes to the north west of Maybole – the Blue, Red and Yellow Routes - and the do-minimum scenario be taken forward to DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment Report.

¹ Route Options Assessment Report, Atkins, 2006

Figure 1.1 – Existing Route of the A77 (local and regional)



1.2 Scheme Objectives

- 1.2.1 The scheme specific objectives defined by Transport Scotland are:
- Economy – improve journey times and journey time reliability
 - Safety – improve safety for motorise and non-motorised users
 - Environment – to protect and minimise impacts on the environment
 - Accessibility – improve community severance and social inclusion
 - Integration – contribute positively to local policies and plans
- 1.2.2 It is also important that the scheme be buildable, with minimum disruption during construction, be easily maintained, and be promotable through statutory processes.
- 1.2.3 This report examines various options designed to deliver improvements in line with the above objectives and draws some conclusions as to which best satisfies them.

1.3 Local Objectives

- 1.3.1 Local Objectives are set out in the local authority Structure Plans, Local Plans, Transport Policies and Programmes. The effect of these instruments have been considered in the development of the scheme options including the effects of any additional residential development or other known planning consents in the vicinity of the scheme.

1.4 Purpose of Report

- 1.4.1 The purpose of this report is to document the factors that have been taken into account in choosing alternative options, and to present those options here along with the engineering, environmental, traffic and economic advantages, disadvantages and constraints associated with those options.

1.5 Method of Assessment

- 1.5.1 This Stage 2 Scheme Assessment Report for the A77 Maybole Transport Study has been prepared in accordance with the Department of Transport (The Scottish Executive Enterprise Transport and Lifelong Learning Department), DMRB TD 37.
- 1.5.2 The report describes the current A77 alignment through Maybole and the proposed bypass options. Preliminary layout drawings have been prepared which illustrate the extent of the proposals. The options have been assessed to gauge their comparative impact and performance and to enable the appraisal of costs, engineering, traffic and environmental impacts for each option.

1.6 Report Structure

1.6.1 The report is structured around TD 37 and broadly follows the principles set out in the guidance on the preparation of the Stage 2 Report. The chapter headings generally follow the guidance given in Annex B of TD 37 as detailed below:

- Section 1 – Introduction
- Section 2 – Existing Conditions
- Section 3 – Description of Scheme Options
- Section 4 – Engineering Assessment
- Section 5 – Environmental Assessment
- Section 6 – Traffic and Economic Assessment
- Section 7 – Conclusions
- Section 8 – Overall Recommendation
- Section 9 – References