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A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements

A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Strategic Assessment Report

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background to the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements

The A75 Trunk Road in the south west of Scotland is 159km long and extends from Stranraer in the west to Gretna and the A74(M) in the east. The route forms part of the E18 Trans European Road Network and constitutes the main east-west link in the South of Scotland region, linking the mainland of Great Britain to Northern Ireland through ferry terminals at Cairnryan, just north of Stranraer. The route is primarily a single-carriageway standard road, with several Wide Single 2+1 (WS2+1) carriageway sections and short sections of dual carriageway that provide overtaking opportunities. The principal towns along the A75 route are Stranraer, Newton Stewart, Gatehouse of Fleet, Castle Douglas, Dumfries, Annan and Gretna.

With the completion of the Dunragit Bypass east of Stranraer, the settlements of Springholm and Crocketford are the only two remaining settlements that the A75 Trunk Road still directly passes through and both necessitate the reduction of the speed limit to 30 miles per hour. Springholm and Crocketford are situated between the larger towns of Castle Douglas to the west and Dumfries to the east, which is one of the key economic centres within Dumfries and Galloway and the South West Scotland region.

Realignments of the A75 at Springholm and Crocketford were originally identified as part of the A75 Gretna to Stranraer – Route Action Plan – Firm Strategy Report, published in October 1999. The Route Action Plan recommended a Long Term Strategy for Improvement, which included a Springholm Bypass that could consist of an off-line upgrade to WS2+1 standard, whereas a Crocketford bypass was appraised as a long-term option but not ultimately recommended to be progressed at that time. The first Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR), published in October 2009, also recommended a 'targeted programme of measures to improve links to the Loch Ryan port facilities from the Trans European Network', with measures including 'physical works aimed at providing safer overtaking opportunities'.

The South West Scotland Transport Study - Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (SWSTS) was published in January 2020. This was one of three pilot studies for the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) and included a recommendation for the development of capacity enhancement measures on the A75, such as the introduction of a bypass of Springholm and Crocketford. STPR2, published in December 2022 by Transport Scotland, presented the Strategic Case for improved access to Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan with Recommendation 40 that included A75 realignment around Springholm and Crocketford as a potential location for improvement schemes.

In November 2021, the Union Connectivity Review (UCR) was published that included a recommendation for the UK Government to offer funding to the Scottish Government in order to support the upgrade of the A75 Trunk Road in Dumfries and Galloway. This funding was recommended to support the improvement of the critical connection between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. In March 2024 Scottish Ministers were formally granted funding from the Union Connectivity Development Fund to progress Recommendation 40 from STPR2, specifically to take work in relation to the realignment of the A75 around

Springholm and Crocketford through the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 and Stage 2 Scheme Assessment process.

1.2 Purpose of the Strategic Assessment

In November 2024, Transport Scotland commissioned Jacobs to progress design and assessment work in relation to the realignment of the A75 around Springholm and Crocketford. This commission includes undertaking and reporting on a Strategic Assessment, and depending on the outcome of the Strategic Assessment may then include the preparation of a DMRB Stage 1 Scheme Assessment Report for the initial development and assessment of proposed improvement strategies for the A75 Trunk Road. The commission also sets out the requirement for a DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment for route option assessment and identification of a preferred route and the development of a draft Outline Business Case (OBC) and a draft Scottish Trunk Road Infrastructure Project Evaluation (STRIPE) plan.

This document reports on the Strategic Assessment, which has reviewed the previous work and studies completed to date that relates to the A75 and provides the context and background development leading up to the current commission. The Strategic Assessment identifies what is required to 'bridge the gap' between the more strategic-level appraisal undertaken previously as part of the STPR2, and the next stages of more detailed DMRB scheme assessments and the development of the OBC. The report provides a summary of the identified gaps that exist from the previous analysis work used to identify problems and opportunities, with evidence-bases presented that will be used to address these gaps. Information from the analysis of selected datasets that have already been updated has also informed the refinement of the draft scheme objectives for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements, also referred to as the proposed scheme.

1.3 Structure of this Strategic Assessment

This Strategic Assessment has been structured as follows:

- **Section 2 Background Context:** Outline of the assessment corridor and a comprehensive desktop review of current socio-economic and transport conditions within the assessment corridor.
- **Section 3 Relevant Policies, Strategies and Previous Studies:** Summary of relevant studies, policy and strategy documents that have led to the development of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements.
- **Section 4 Strategic Review:** Detailed summary of the content, data and analysis presented in previous studies that are of particular relevance to the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements.
- **Section 5 Gap Identification:** Summary of the gaps that have been identified through the review presented in previous sections. This includes consideration of the available evidence-base required to address the identified gaps and reaffirm the previously identified problems and opportunities.
- **Section 6 Environment Review:** Summary of the strategic environmental assessments previously undertaken as part of the STPR2 and Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) work

- **Section 7 Objective Mapping and Refinement:** Review of initial draft scheme objectives to 'map' the alignment with the broader regional and national objectives set out in STPR2 and the SWSTS. This includes the initial refinement of the objectives to ensure that they better align with the over-arching STPR2 objectives and follow SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound) principles.
- **Section 8 Summary and Next Steps:** Presents a summary of the Strategic Assessment findings and identification of next steps for the progression of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements.

2. Background Context

This section outlines the background context of the assessment corridor and covers the following topics:

- Assessment Corridor
- Socio-Economic Context
- Location of Key Services
- Existing Road Network
- Traffic Data
- Accident Locations and Severity
- Active Travel Provision
- Public Transport Provision

For the purposes of this Strategic Assessment, a high-level overview is given to provide the existing context. Further detail on this and other existing conditions will be outlined in the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 Scheme Assessment Report.

2.1 Assessment Corridor

The A75 Trunk Road serves as a primary road in South West Scotland, spanning approximately 159 kilometres connecting Stranraer in the west to Gretna in the east as shown in Figure 2-1. The A75 Trunk Road plays a vital role in local, regional and national connectivity, linking the ferry ports at Cairnryan near Stranraer with the A74(M) motorway at Gretna.

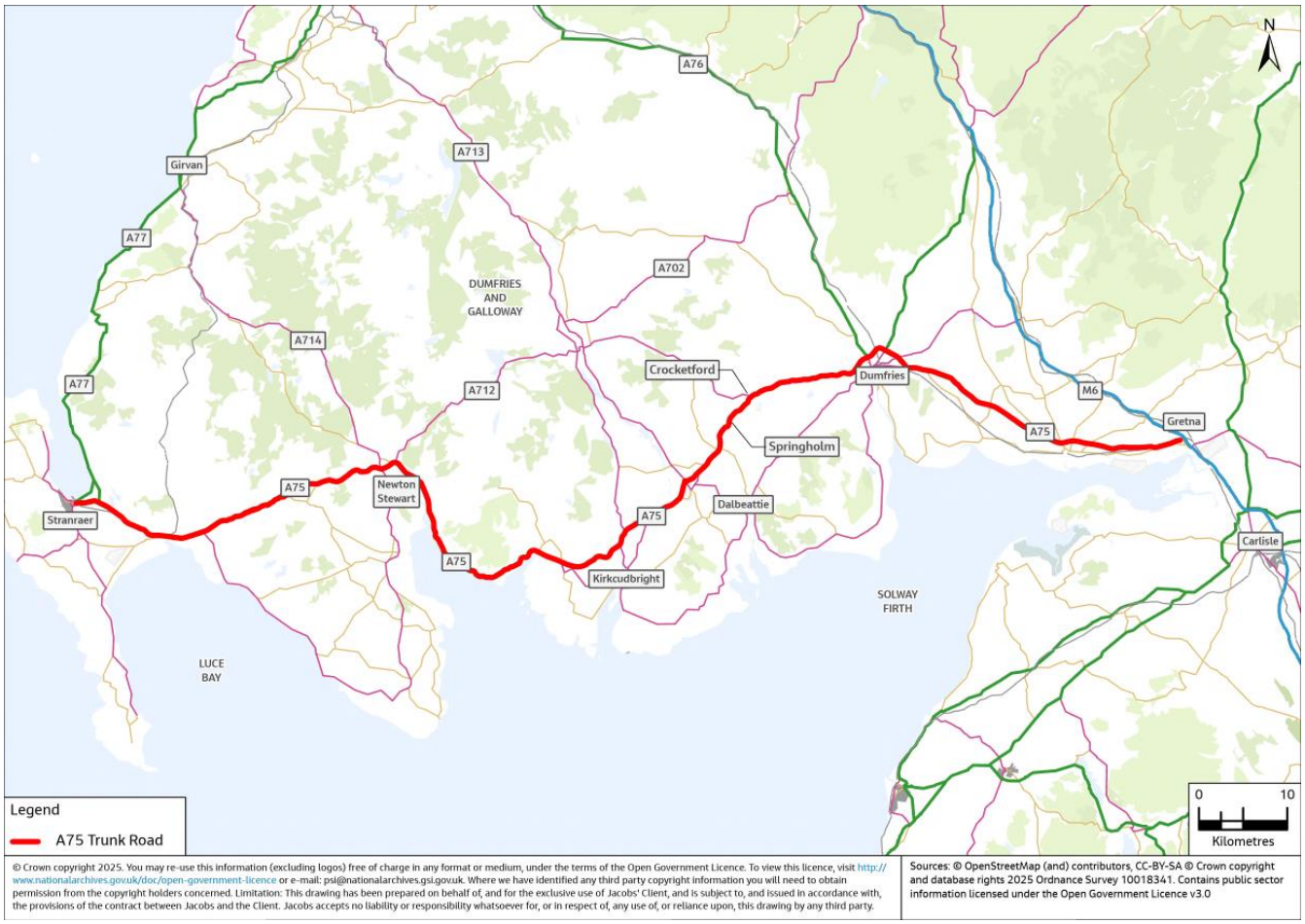

Figure 2-1 A75 Trunk Road

The Assessment Corridor for the proposed scheme, as shown in Figure 2-2, has been defined by considering existing constraints and potential improvement strategies through which road alignments could be developed to realign the existing A75 around Springholm and Crocketford, taking account of relevant road design standards in the DMRB. The assessment corridor extends from Allanton Roundabout in the west to Drummore Roundabout in the east, encompassing approximately 19km of the A75 and the communities of Springholm and Crocketford, where the existing A75 passes directly through the two villages.

In addition to the two roundabouts, the assessment corridor encompasses several junctions where the A75 intersects with other roads. In terms of A and B roads, the A712 Maiden Row near Crocketford is a minor road that connects to the A75 via a priority junction. Similarly, the B794 Corsock is a minor road that intersects the A75 at a priority junction, leading north to the Old Bridge of Urr. The B794 Haugh Road, another minor road, also joins the A75 at a priority junction and leads south to the Old Haugh of Urr.

There are a number of minor junctions and accesses including ten junctions with C roads or unclassified roads, and several other minor accesses serving commercial, private, residential and agricultural purposes that connect to the A75 Trunk Road.

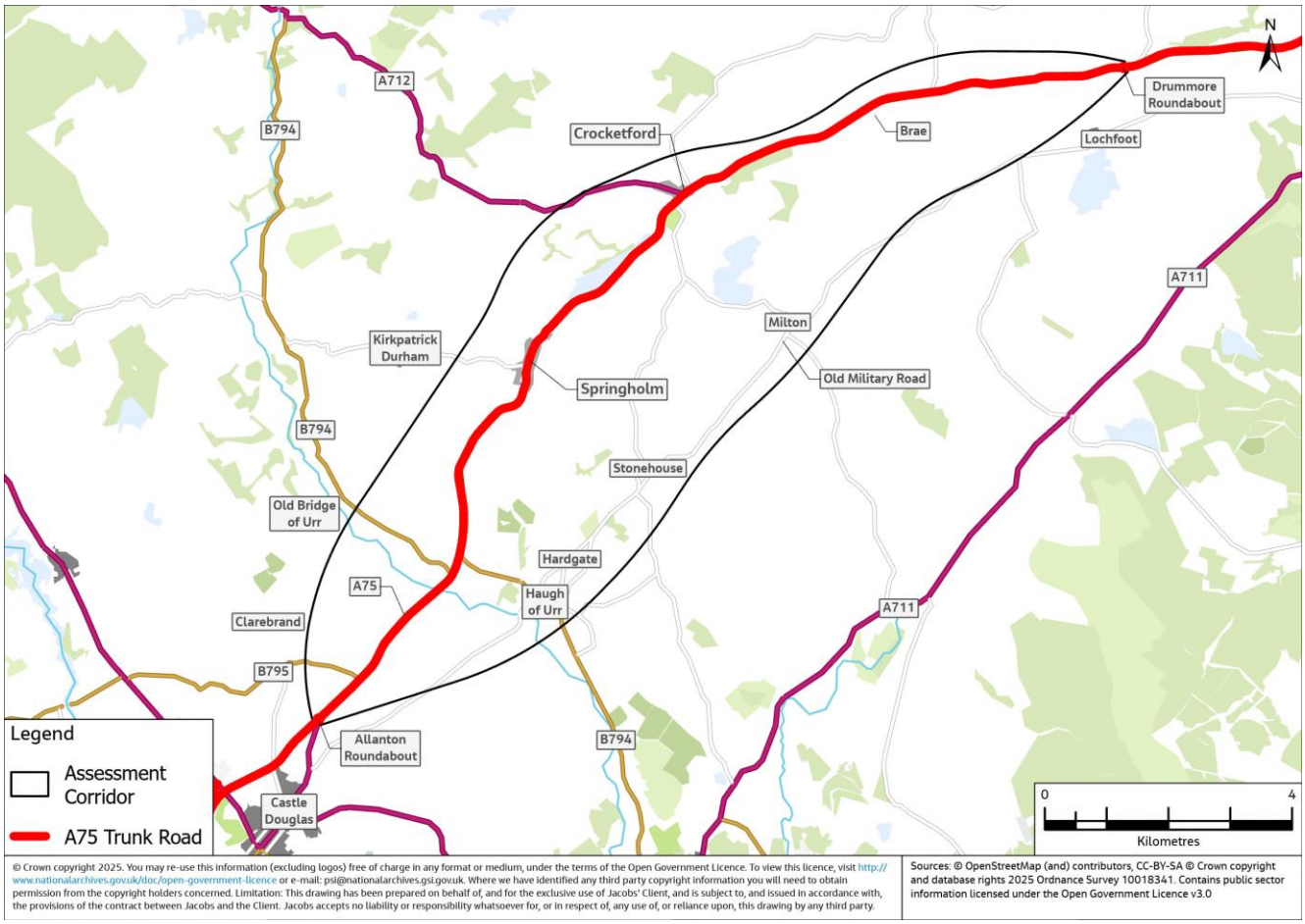

Figure 2-2 Assessment Corridor

2.2 Socio-Economic Context

As far as possible the statistics, results, and data presented within this section are based on the defined Scotland Census finest level of detail. Where this has not been possible other data is presented at either a Scotland Census data zone or local authority level.

2.2.1 Population

Analysis of the 2022 Scotland Census data shows that Crocketford and Springholm have populations of 310 and 542 respectively, as shown in Table 2-1. Collectively, the village population is approximately 46% of the total assessment corridor population of 1,834. The remaining population comprises residents from other villages such as Haugh of Urr, as well as those living in more rural areas or communities.

Table 2-1 Population statistics (2022 Census)

Settlement	Population
Crocketford	310
Springholm	542
Others within Assessment Corridor	982

The South West Scotland Transport Study - Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (SWSTS), published in 2020, examined the rationale for improving transportation infrastructure in the South West region. It focused on road, rail, public transport, and active travel mode options along strategic corridors, including the A75. Demographically, the SWSTS notes that the region has a larger proportion of older residents, and a smaller working-age population compared to Scotland as a whole.

The 2022 Scotland Census data, shown in Figure 2-3, confirms that the assessment corridor has an older population. Both the assessment corridor area and Dumfries and Galloway have 27% of their population aged 65 and over, notably higher than Scotland's 20%. The contrast is more pronounced when considering the combined 50-64 and 65 & over age groups, which account for 53% of the assessment corridor population and 51% of Dumfries and Galloway, compared to just 42% for Scotland overall.

Conversely, the age group 16-64, representing most of the working age population, is proportionally smaller in the assessment corridor and Dumfries and Galloway. The assessment corridor has 58% of the population in this age range, comparable with Dumfries and Galloway (57%), but both lower than the Scotland average (65%).

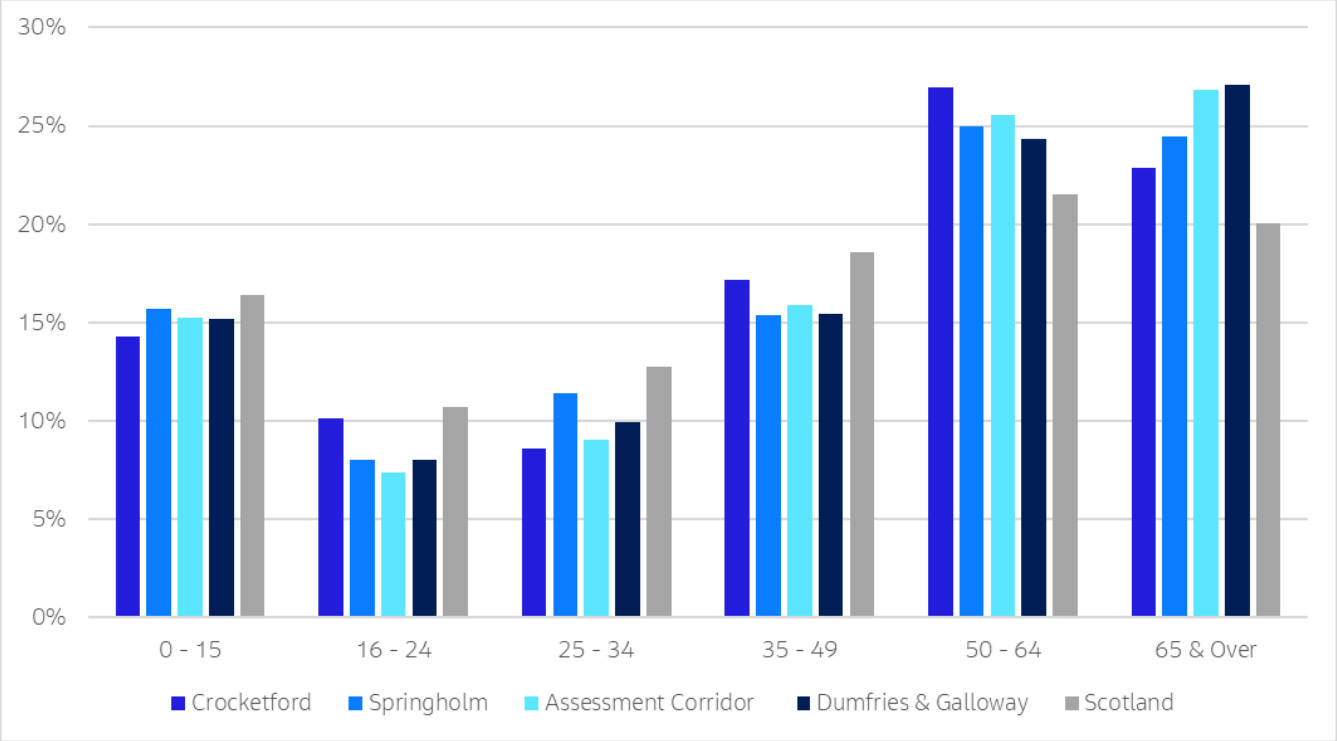

Figure 2-3 Population Age Profile (2022 Census)

This age profile, combined with the area's rural nature, places additional demands on healthcare, public transport, and other services typically required by an elderly population, as noted in the SWSTS.

2.2.2 Travel To Work Mode Share

The method of travel to work mode share data from the 2022 Scotland Census is shown in Figure 2-4. Springholm has the highest car usage at 63%, significantly greater than the national average (49%). Car usage in Crocketford is 50% and in line with the national average. The assessment corridor car use is approximately 57%, which is equal to the Dumfries and Galloway car use mode share. Crocketford has a higher percentage of people working from home (46%) compared to the Scottish average of 32%, whereas this is only 29% in Springholm. The assessment corridor demonstrates a work-from-home rate of 36%, therefore, higher than the national average.

The data also highlights a significant difference in public transport and active travel usage between the villages in the assessment corridor compared with the wider regional and national averages. Crocketford and Springholm show minimal use of public transport (0% and 1% respectively) compared to Dumfries and Galloway (2%) and across Scotland (6%). Both villages also have lower rates of active travel modes compared to the regional and national averages. The mode share of walking to work in the villages is 2% in Crocketford and 4% in Springholm, compared to 9% for Dumfries and Galloway and 7% for Scotland. For cycling, the mode share is 0% for both villages, slightly below both Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland (both 1%).

The low levels of public transport and active travel mode share, and the reliance on private car in the two villages, are exacerbated by a number of key services being located elsewhere and is likely to be related to the limited accessibility to these services by public transport and active travel.

It is important to note that the 2022 Scotland Census data was collected after the majority of COVID-19 pandemic restrictions were lifted, which likely had a substantial impact on travel patterns. The high percentage of people working from home in some areas may reflect the response to pandemic-related restrictions and rapid shifts in work culture. However, as return-to-office policies are implemented, there may be a resurgence in travel to a physical workplace over time.

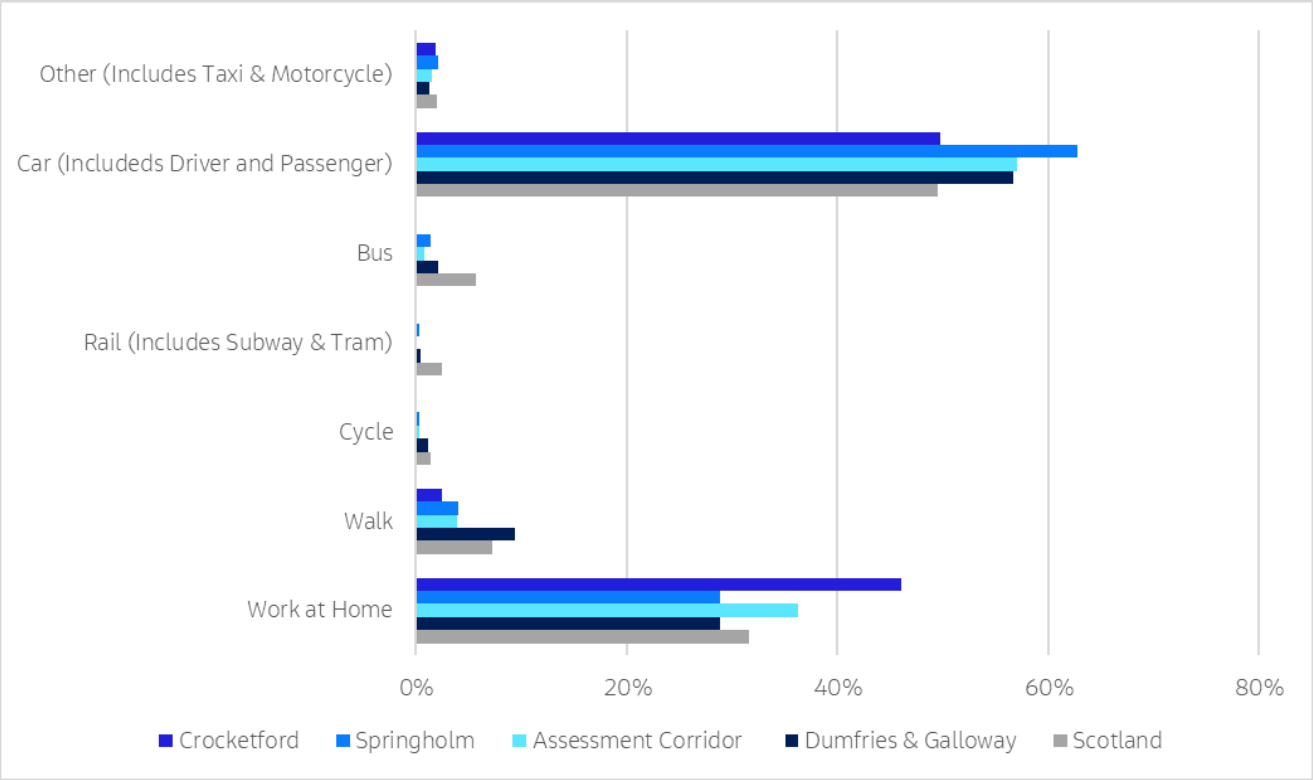

Figure 2-4 Method of travel to place of work (2022 Census)

Comparing the 2022 Scotland Census data with pre-pandemic figures (from 2011 Scotland Census data), the work-from-home rate for Crocketford has increased from 35% to 46%, whilst Scotland's overall rate nearly tripled from 11% to 32%. Despite the significant rise in remote working, car usage decreased less severely in Crocketford (from 57% to 50%) and Springholm (from 67% to 63%), compared to a more substantial decrease from 62% to 49% nationally. This suggests that whilst the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically altered work locations, it had a less pronounced effect on car dependency in Springholm and Crocketford specifically.

2.2.3 Vehicle Availability

Limited access to services correlates strongly with higher vehicle accessibility in Crocketford and Springholm, as shown by the 2022 Scotland Census data in Figure 2-5. These rural

communities show a higher proportion of multi-car or van households compared to both the regional and national averages. Specifically, 47% of households in Crocketford and 49% in Springholm have two or more cars or vans available, significantly exceeding the equivalent figure for Dumfries and Galloway (35%) and Scotland overall (31%). Moreover, the percentage of households with access to three or more cars or vans in both Crocketford (14%) and Springholm (17%) is notably higher than the Dumfries and Galloway region (9%) and national (7%) averages.

This pattern of high car ownership in areas with more limited accessibility to services strongly suggests a reliance on private vehicles for residents to meet their daily needs and access essential services.

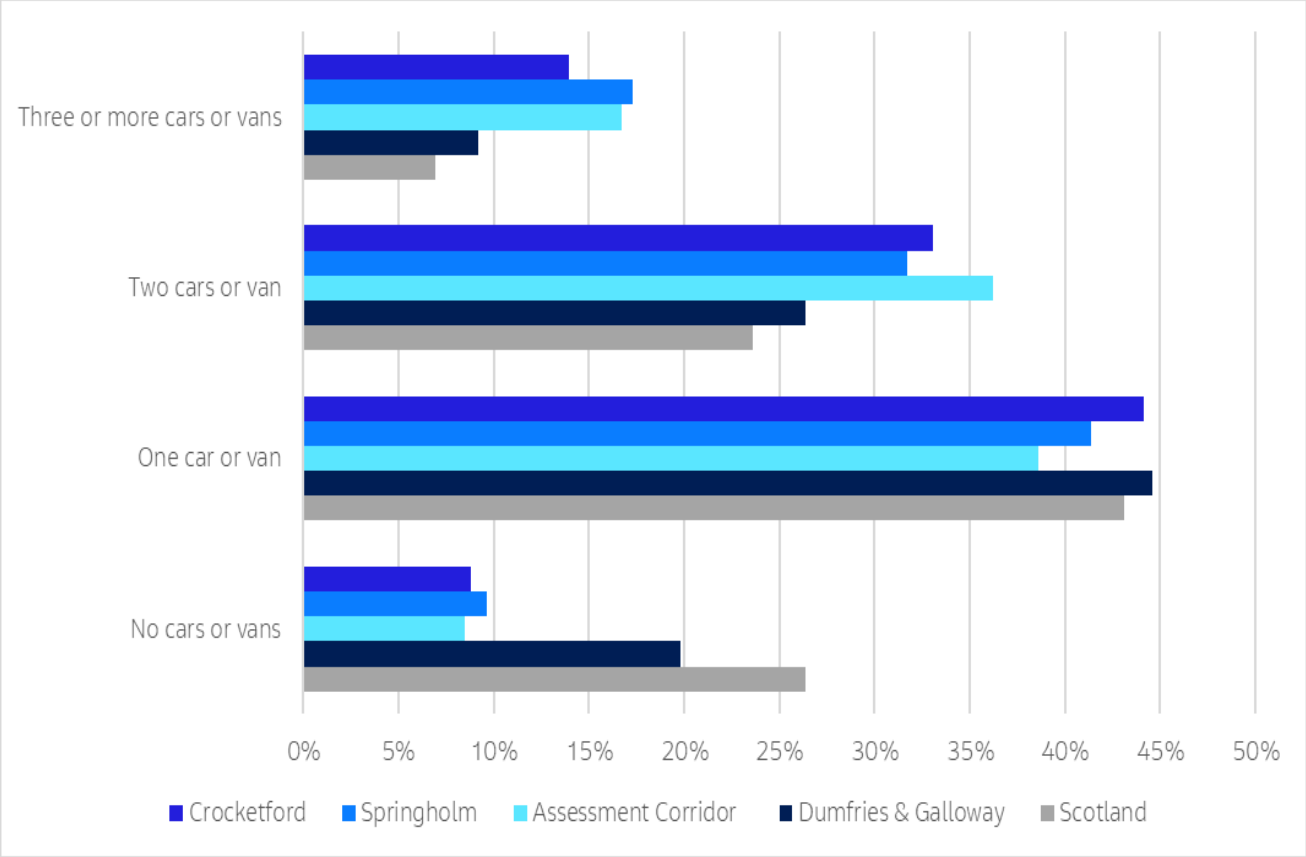

Figure 2-5 Car or van availability per household (2022 Census)

2.2.4 Education

Figure 2-6 illustrates 2022 Scotland Census data for the highest level of qualification achieved. The data shows that Crocketford and the whole assessment corridor area have slightly higher percentages of degree-level education (31%) compared to the national average (28%), while Springholm matches the national average.

The percentage of individuals with no qualifications ranges from 15% to 21% across all areas. Crocketford and the assessment corridor have the lowest proportion (15%) of people with no qualification, slightly less than the national average of 17% and Springholm (17%). The

Dumfries and Galloway region has the highest proportion of people with no qualifications at 21%.

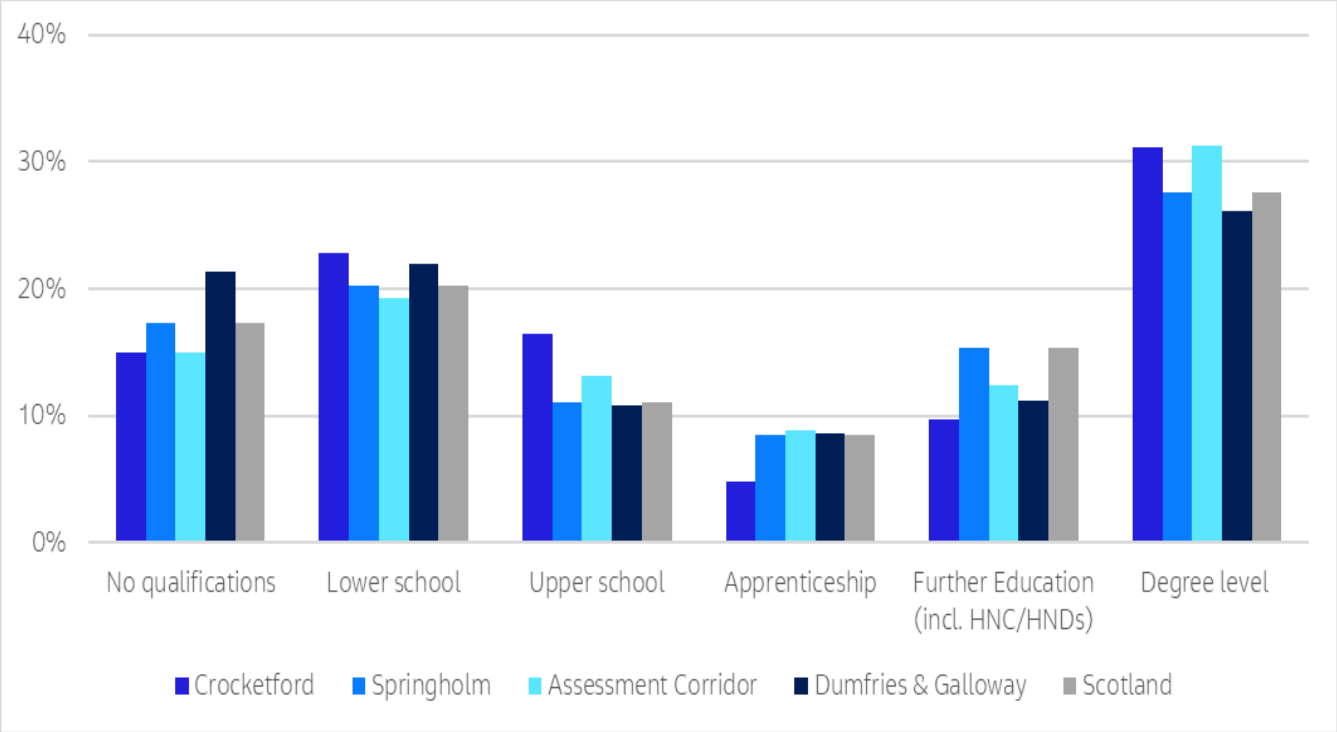

Figure 2-6 Highest qualification achieved (2022 Census)

2.2.5 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD)

The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) shows the socio-economic variation experienced across the assessment corridor as of 2020. The overall SIMD rank of an area is dependent on multiple domains, including income, employment, health, education, housing, geographic access and crime. Whilst it is a combination of these domains that defines the overall SIMD rank, each can be interrogated individually to determine specific domains of strength and weakness of an area. Figure 2-7 illustrates the overall SIMD decile ranking of data zones within the study area.

The assessment corridor encompasses five data zones, which fall within the 5th to the 8th decile of the SIMD across Scotland (where one is most deprived and ten least deprived), indicating a moderate to good level of socio-economic status across much of the assessment corridor. Haugh of Urr has the highest ranking of 8, while Crocketford and the Springholm/Kirkpatrick Durham area have the lowest ranking of 5, representing the most deprived data zones in the assessment corridor. No data zone within the assessment corridor falls within the top 20% most deprived across Scotland.

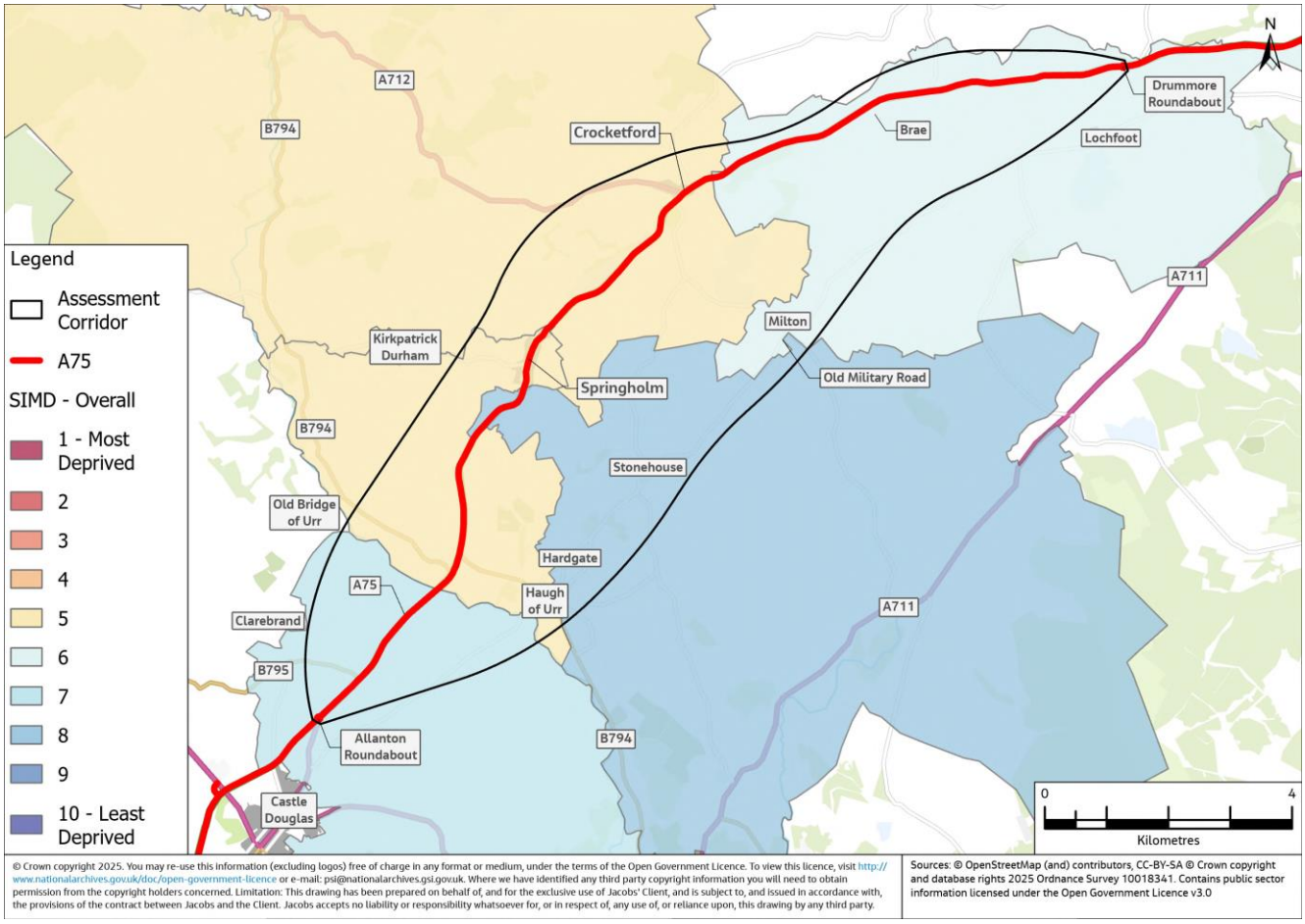

Figure 2-7 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – Overall

Figure 2-8 presents the SIMD Geographic Access Indicator domain scores for data zones included within the assessment corridor. The geographic access domain within SIMD refers to the ability of residents to reach a number of key services, with sub-domains for public transport journeys and journeys by private car. It evaluates the ability for residents to reach key services such as health facilities, educational institutions, retail centres, fuel stations, and post offices.

The majority of data zones (four out of five) have a ranking of 1 for the Geographic Access domain, indicating very poor access to services. This is true for the data zones encompassing the settlements of Crocketford and Springholm, as well as Haugh of Urr, Milton and Kirkpatrick Durham, as well as the surrounding rural areas. The sole exception is the zone east of Castle Douglas, which has a slightly better ranking of 2; however, this still suggests poor access to services, albeit marginally better than the other data zones within the assessment corridor.

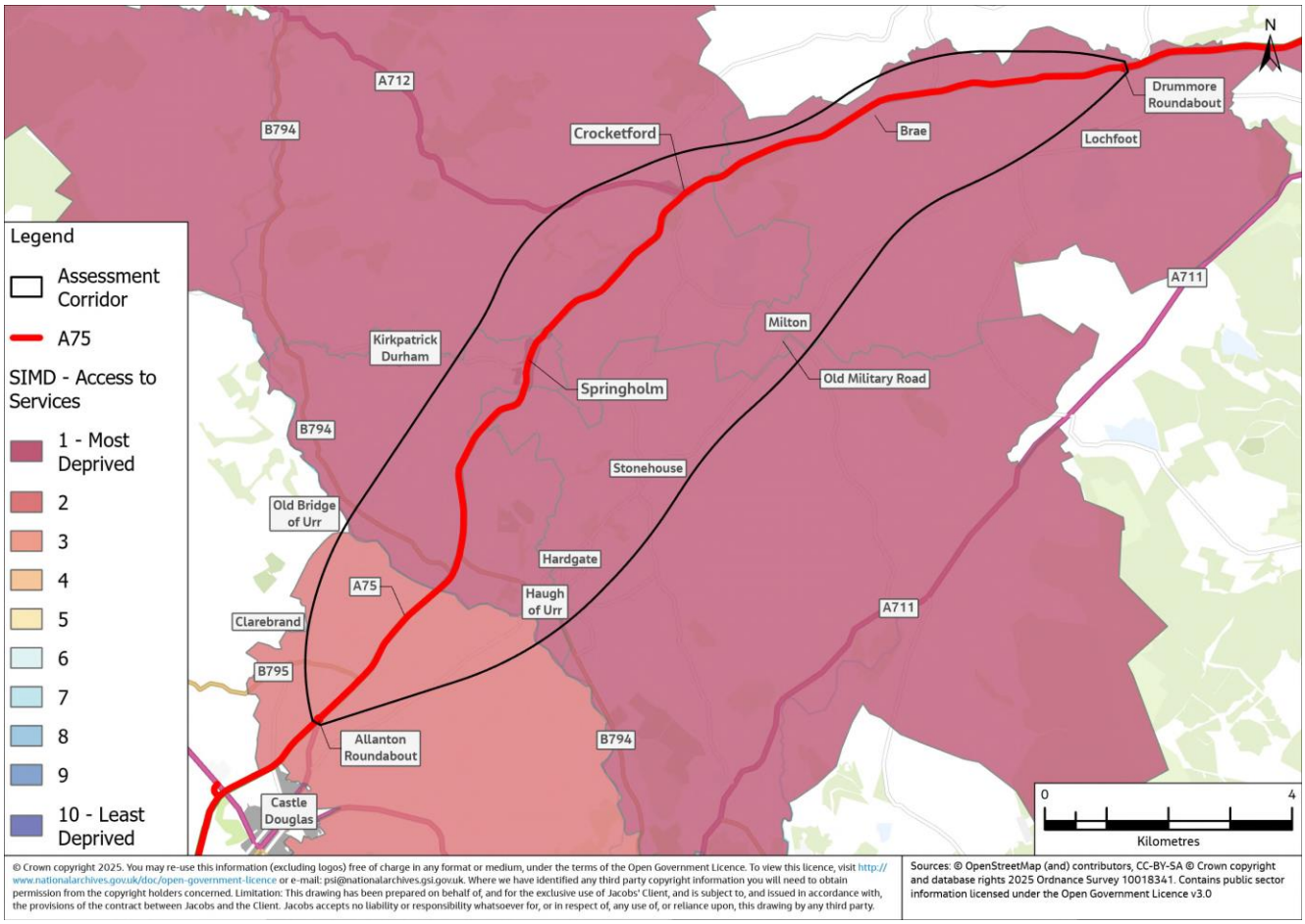

Figure 2-8 Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) – Geographic Access Domain

2.2.6 Digital Connectivity

Table 2-2 shows the average percentage of households that receive Superfast Broadband (SFBB) and Ultrafast Broadband (UFBB) according to Ofcom data for 2024 across Springholm and Crocketford in the assessment corridor, compared to Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland overall. SFBB is defined as speeds of 30Mbps or greater, while UFBB refers to speeds of 300Mbps or greater. SFBB availability is 92% for households within the assessment corridor boundary, with Crocketford at 99% and Springholm at 100% specifically. UFBB availability is significantly limited, with 11% in Crocketford and 2% in Springholm. While the assessment corridor shows 39% UFBB coverage overall, there is variation between the 12 output areas (OAs), with five OAs having less than 20% availability but the other seven having approximately 40-80% coverage.

Table 2-2 Broadband Connectivity (Ofcom)

Area	SFBB (30mbps) availability (% premises)	UFBB (300Mbps) availability (% premises)
Crocketford	99%	11%
Springholm	100%	2%
Assessment Corridor	92%	39%
Dumfries and Galloway	93%	34%
Scotland	96%	77%

2.2.7 Economy & Labour Market

A review of the SWSTS indicated an above-average dependence on the public sector for employment in the region compared to Scotland as a whole. Figure 2-9 illustrates the percentage distribution of industry sectors for the assessment corridor, Dumfries and Galloway, and across Scotland. This data is derived from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) 2023 and is based on employment location. Due to the geographic representation of BRES data, for the purpose of this analysis, the most relevant 2011 Scotland Census data zones have been selected to represent the assessment corridor, allowing for a more localised comparison with regional and national figures.

Education is the dominant employer within the assessment corridor, accounting for 44% of employment. This figure is markedly higher than both the Dumfries and Galloway region and Scotland, where Education represents only approximately 8% of employment in each case. The high proportion of education employment is largely due to one data zone in particular representing the region east of Crocketford and encompassing the A75 Trunk Road and the settlements of Lochfoot and Milton. In this data zone, 600 people were employed in 'Other Education', which significantly alters the averages for the assessment corridor.

The second largest sector within the assessment corridor is Human Health & Social Work, comprising 14% of employment. This is slightly below the regional figure of 17% and the national figure of 16%. Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing is more prominent in the assessment corridor (8%) compared to the national average (3%), but less than the regional figure for Dumfries and Galloway (14%). In contrast, several sectors are notably underrepresented within the assessment corridor, including for example the IT, Finance & Real Estate sector, which accounts for just 1% of employment in the assessment corridor but approximately 8% across Scotland.

This employment distribution corroborates the SWSTS findings, highlighting a pronounced focus on public sector employment within the assessment corridor, particularly in the Education sector.

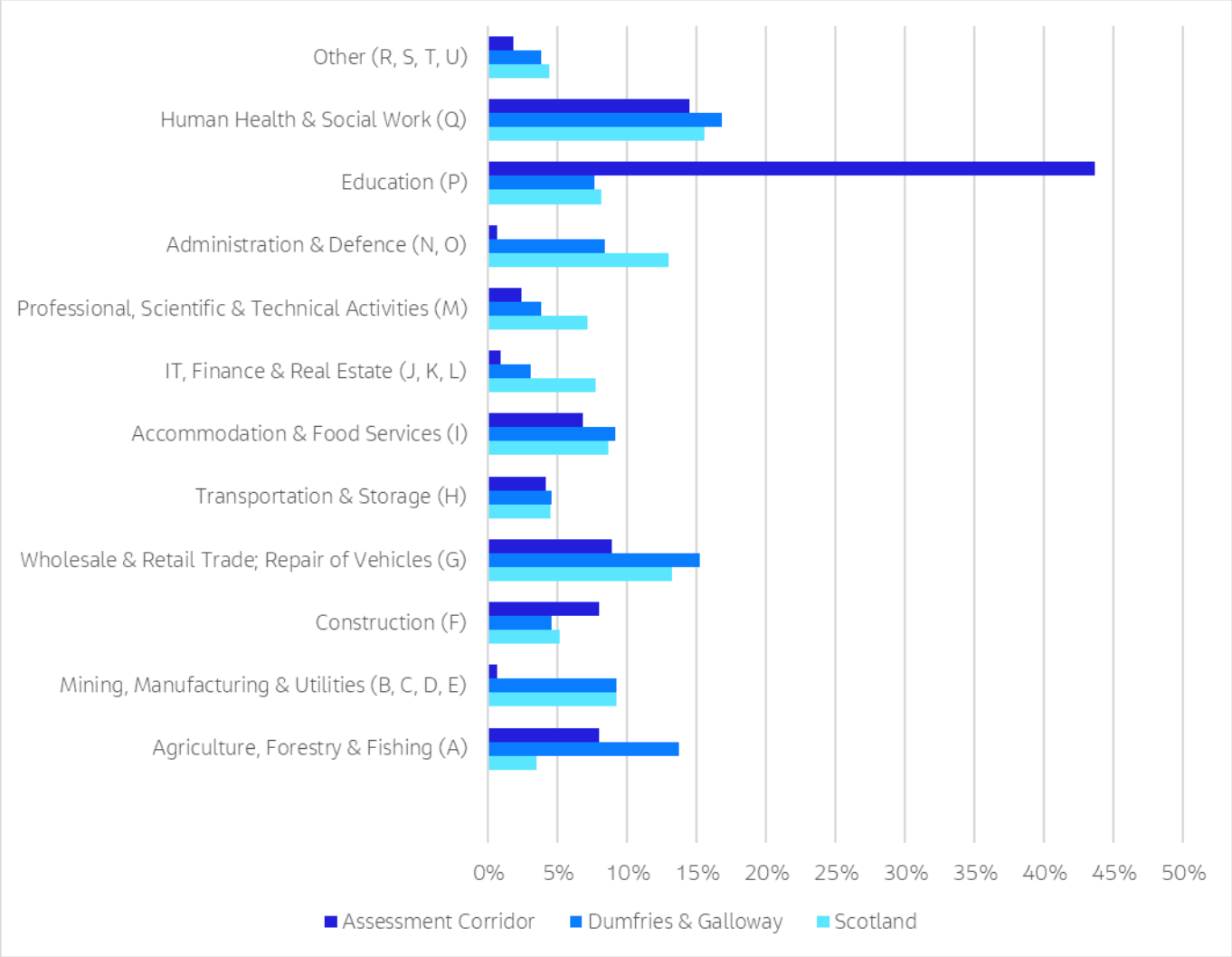

Figure 2-9 Industry sector comparison (BRES)

Figure 2-10 presents 2022 Scotland Census data comparing the economic activity of individuals within the assessment corridor to the Dumfries and Galloway region and Scotland averages. Economic activity refers to individuals aged 16 and over who were working or seeking work in the week preceding the Census. The data classifies individuals into two main categories: economically active (including full-time and part-time employees, self-employed individuals, and those unemployed but seeking work) and economically inactive (comprising retirees, students, homemakers, individuals with long-term illnesses or disabilities, and others not participating in the labour market).

The assessment corridor area has an economic activity rate of 62%, which is largely in line with the national average (61%), but greater than Dumfries and Galloway (56%).

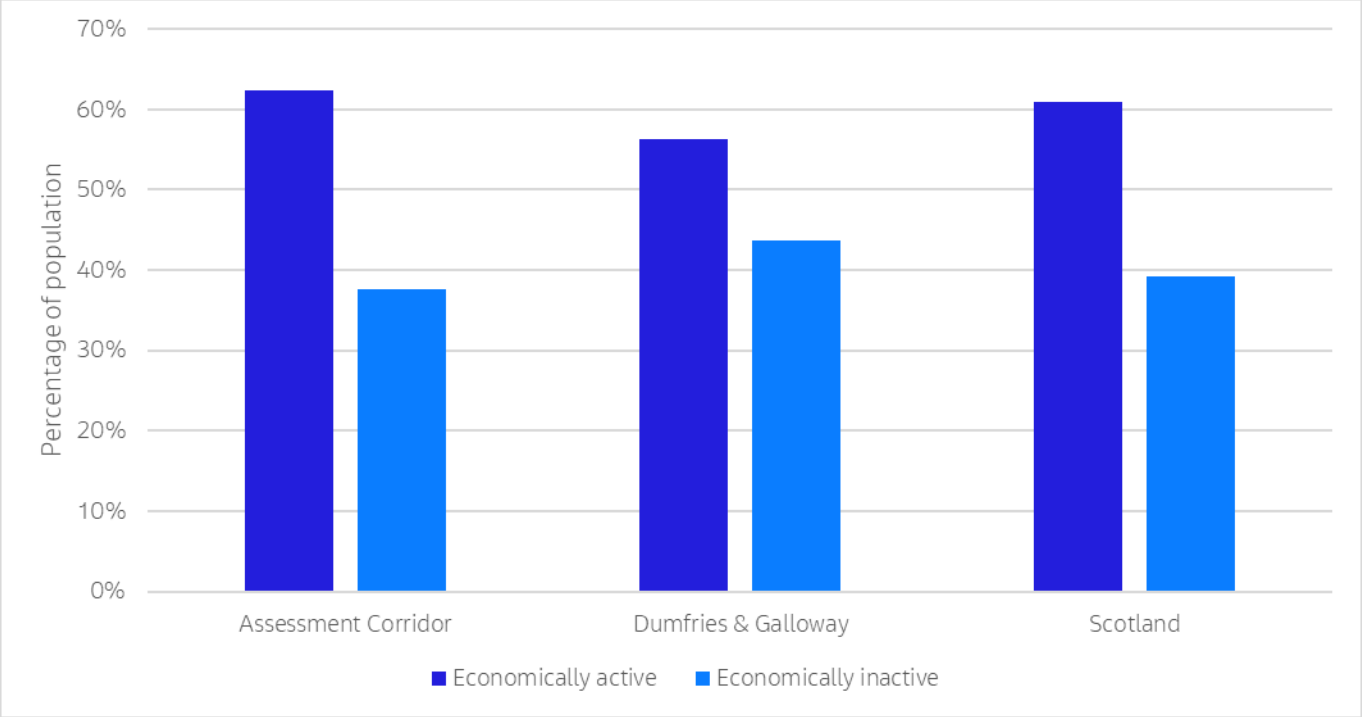

Figure 2-10 Economic activity rate comparison (Census 2022)

2.3 Location of Key Services

A review of key services and amenities within the assessment corridor has been undertaken, to identify the locations of the nearest healthcare facilities, education, electric vehicle (EV) charging points, retail stores, and any other notable community facilities (e.g. libraries and community buildings).

Within the assessment corridor, the villages themselves have some limited services. Springholm has a local Primary School, a village hall and a small convenience store and Crocketford has a village hall, a small convenience store and a hotel. There is also a further hotel with restaurant and pub facilities situated between the two villages. Within the Assessment corridor there are no GPs, pharmacies, Secondary Schools or electric vehicle charging points. The nearest Accident and Emergency Services department is located within the Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, Dumfries. Outside of the assessment corridor there are various GP and pharmacy services, located in Dumfries, Castle Douglas and Dalbeattie. In terms of education, the closest Secondary School is in Castle Douglas. The closest electric vehicle charging points are located in Castle Douglas, at Garden Hill Primary Care Centre, and Market Street Car Park in the town centre.

Dumfries is the nearest town which has a variety of services and community facilities including leisure facilities, large retail parks and further education at the Dumfries and Galloway College. Table 2-3 notes the nearest facility, of various types, to both Springholm and Crocketford. Figure 2-11 highlights the lack of key services in Springholm and Crocketford, evidencing that to access the majority of services Springholm and Crocketford residents must travel to Dumfries or Castle Douglas.

Table 2-3 Location of Key Services Nearest to Springholm and Crocketford

Facility Type	Location
Primary School	Springholm Primary School, Springholm
Secondary School	Castle Douglas High School, Castle Douglas
Further Education (College or University)	Dumfries and Galloway College, Dumfries
Healthcare – GP	Garden Hill Primary Care Centre, Castle Douglas
Healthcare – Pharmacy	Garden Hill Primary Care Centre, Castle Douglas
Hospital (Emergency Services Department)	Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, Dumfries
Grocery Store (Convenience Store)	Springholm Shop, Springholm Crocketford Shop, Crocketford
Grocery Store (Large Supermarket)	Tesco Superstore, Castle Douglas
Electric Vehicle Charging Point	Garden Hill Primary Care Centre, Castle Douglas
Library	Castle Douglas Library, Castle Douglas

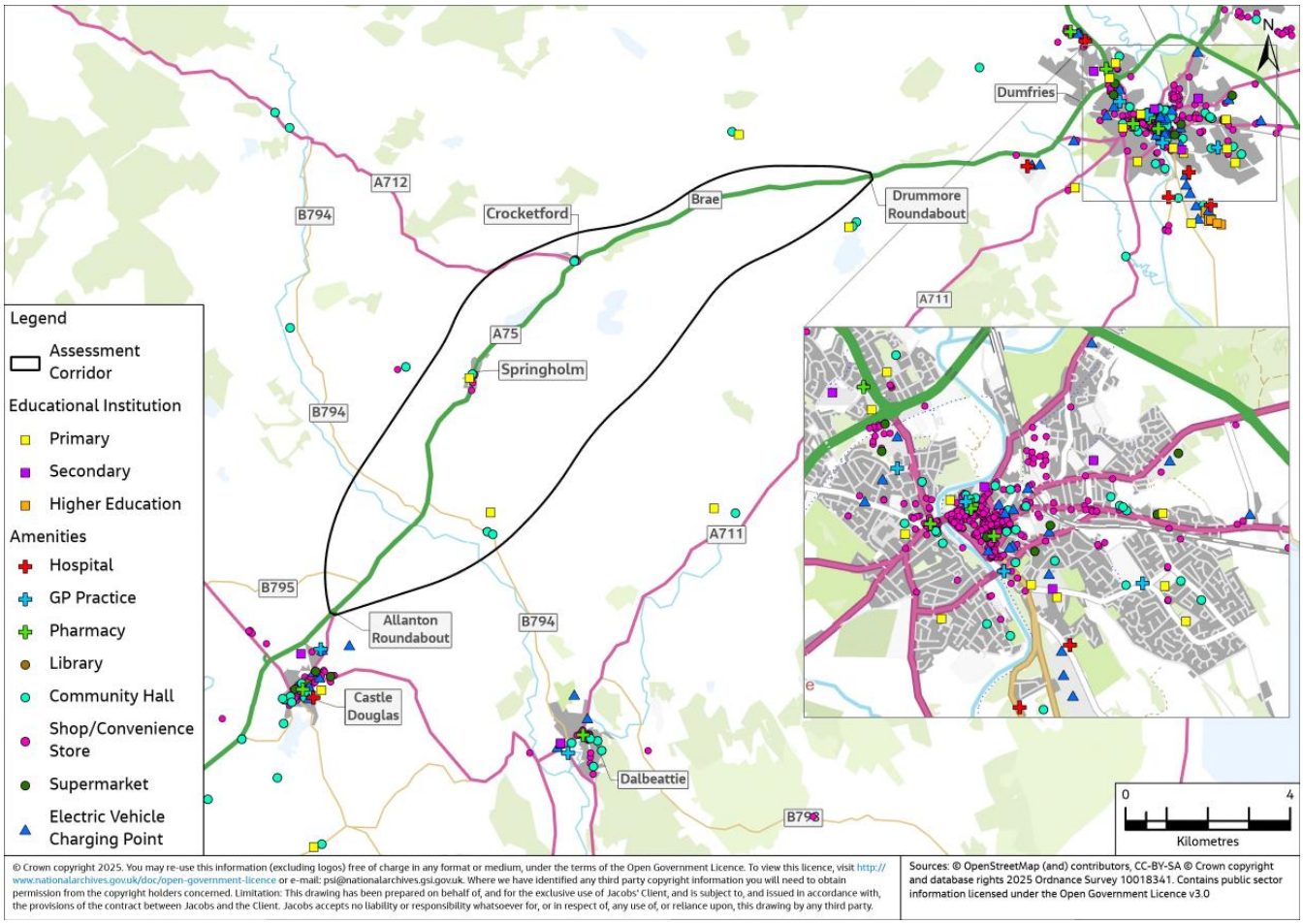

Figure 2-11 Key Services Within the Assessment Corridor and Surrounding Area

2.4 Existing Road Network

This section summarises the existing road network, reviewing the road standard across the assessment corridor and the wider A75 as well as reviewing speed limits, traffic controls and provision of laybys and rest areas.

2.4.1 Road Standard

Within the assessment corridor, the A75 is primarily single carriageway with three overtaking lane sections (WS2+1 which consists of two lanes of travel in one direction and a single lane in the opposite direction). One of these is located in the eastbound direction from Allanton Roundabout and two of these overtaking lanes are located in the westbound direction, one on the westbound approach to the Allanton Roundabout and one on the westbound approach to Crocketford, approximately 1.85km north of the town. In total, there are 15 WS2+1 as well as five dual carriageway sections along the A75 Trunk Road between Stranraer and Gretna, as illustrated in Figure 2-12.

In August 1997, A Route Action Plan Study for the A75 was commissioned by the then Scottish Office to review existing conditions and bring together options for improvements. The Route Action Plan examined the baseline condition on the A75 between Stranraer and

Gretna and indicated that the width of the single carriageway varies between 6.8 metres and 7.3 metres, with few sections featuring visible hardstrips.

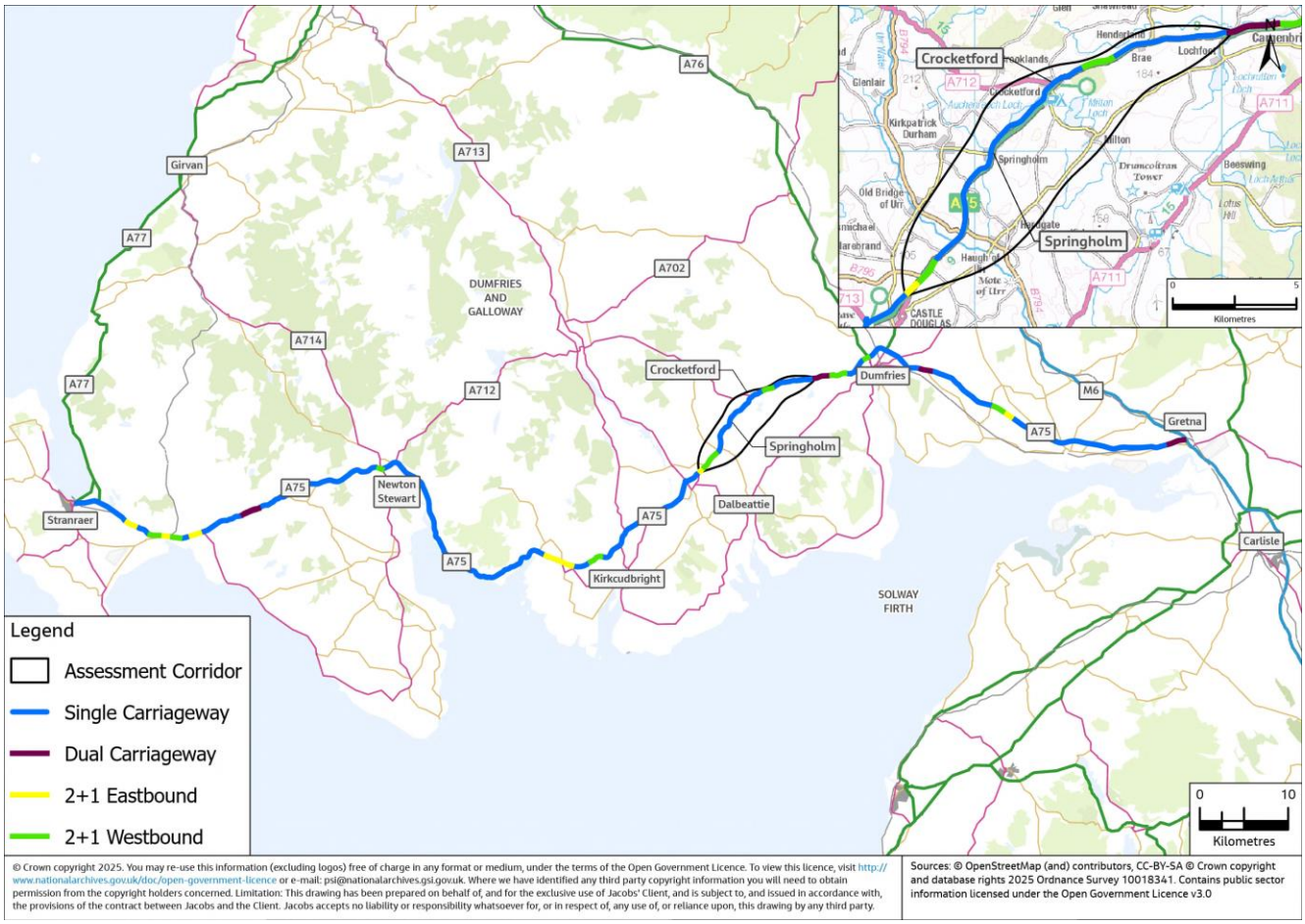

Figure 2-12 A75 Road Standard

2.4.2 Speed Limit and Traffic Controls

Within the assessment corridor, the A75 is subject to the national speed limit of 60mph, reducing to 30mph on the approaches to and through the villages of Springholm and Crocketford, as highlighted in Figure 2-13. Speed management schemes are in place in Springholm and Crocketford, which include speed limit gateway features, road markings and vehicle activated speed indication signs. In addition, the traffic signal controls on entry and exit to Springholm are speed activated and switch to red if approaching vehicles are detected exceeding the 30mph speed limit. In addition to the speed activated signals, signal-controlled pedestrian crossings are located north of Victoria Street, leading to Springholm Primary School and to the east of the A712 Maiden Row junction in Crocketford.

Outwith the assessment corridor, the remainder of the A75 operates under the national speed limit for single carriageway (60mph) and dual carriageway (70mph) roads except at the section of the route where a 50mph speed limit is in operation where the A75 passes adjacent to the village of Castle Kennedy. At its westernmost extent, the speed limit is reduced to 30mph again through Stranraer.

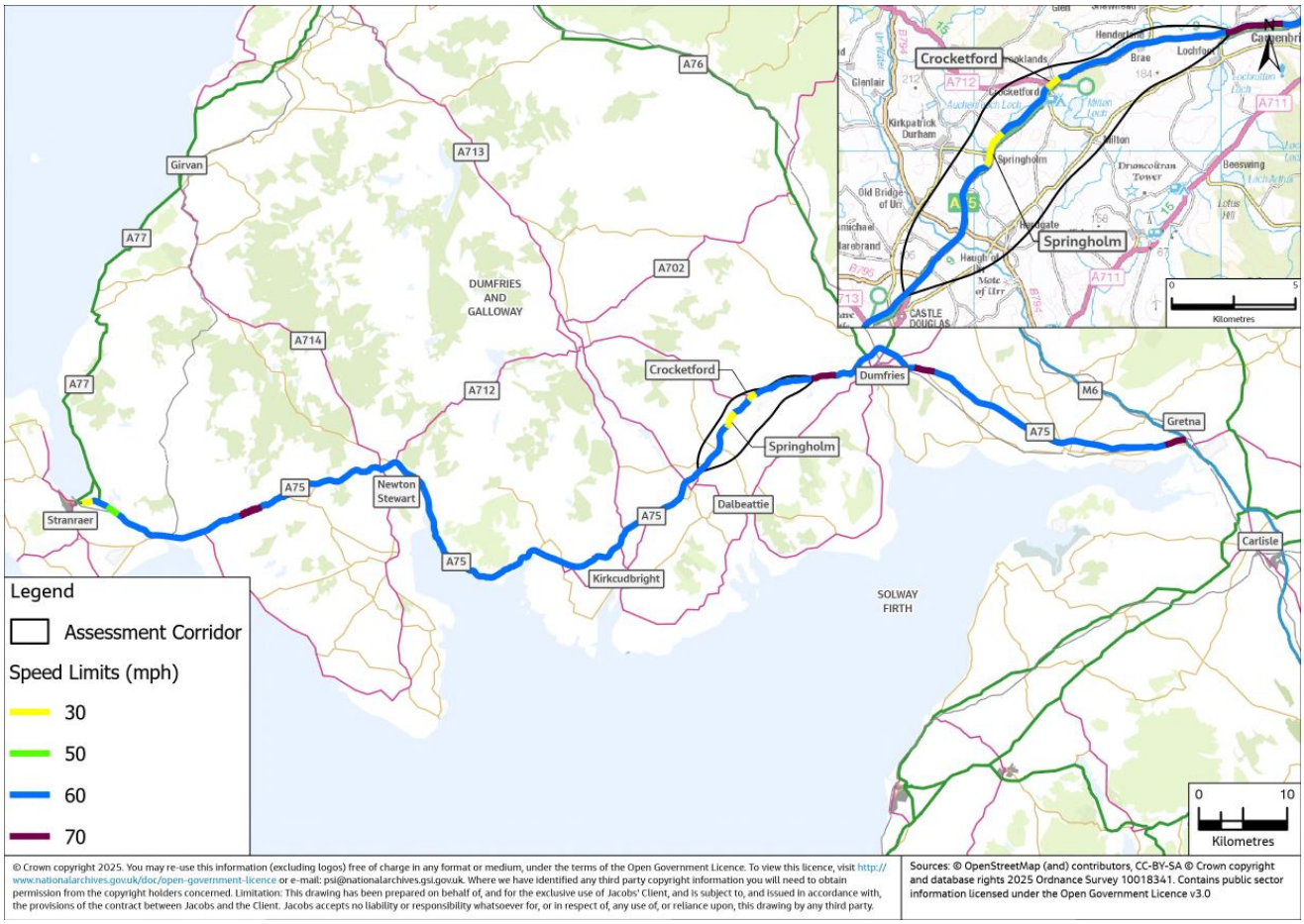

Figure 2-13 A75 Speed Limit

2.4.3 Lay-bys and Rest Areas

Figure 2-14 highlights the 13 lay-bys within the assessment corridor; six in the eastbound direction and seven in the westbound direction which serve the following functions: provide safe stopping areas for drivers traveling in either direction, offer emergency refuge areas and facilitate short-term parking for maintenance vehicles or emergency services. No formal HGV or large vehicle rest areas were identified in the assessment corridor.

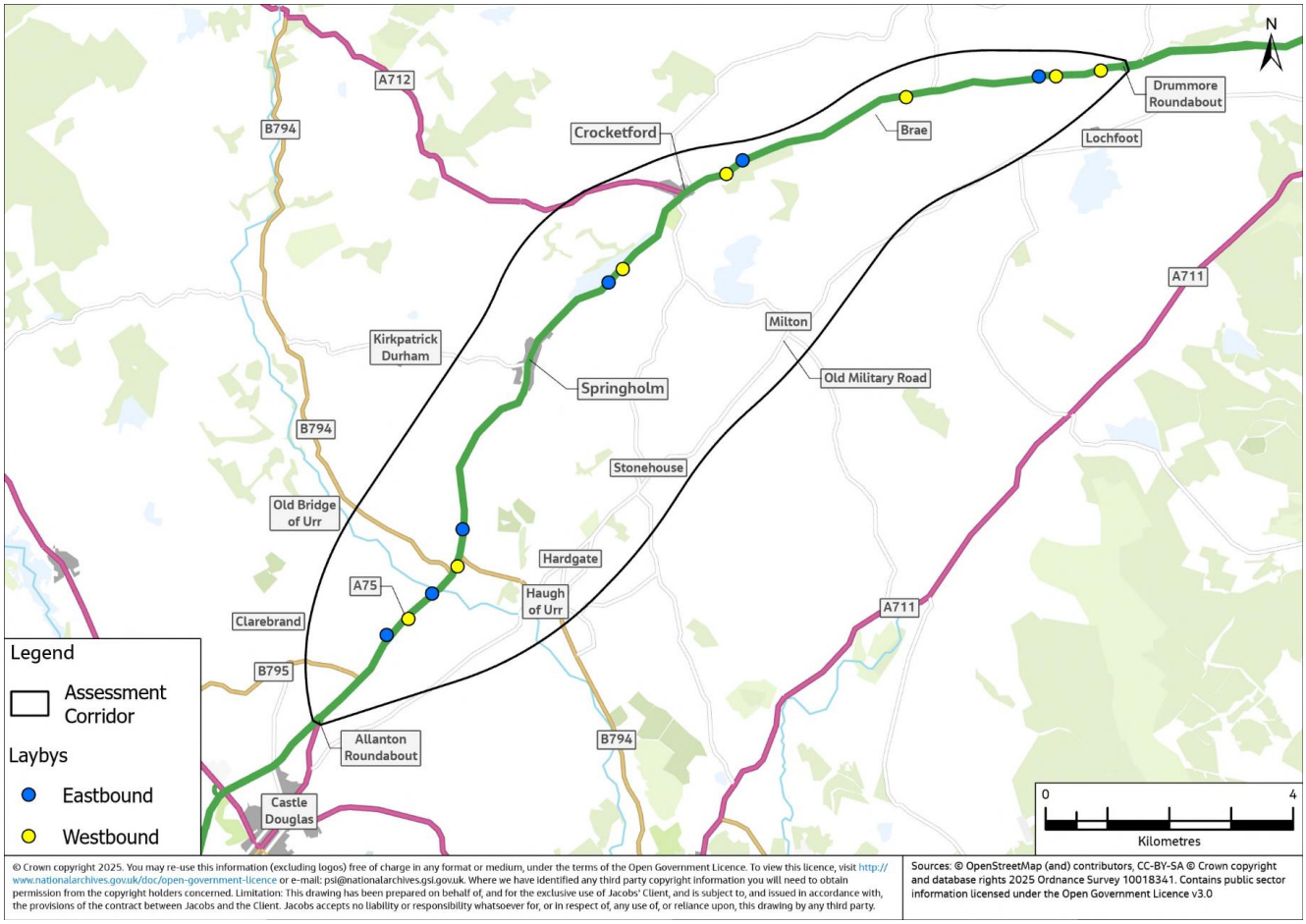

Figure 2-14 A75 Lay-by Locations in the Assessment Corridor

2.5 Traffic Data

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flows along the existing A75 have been determined using Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) data obtained from Transport Scotland's National Traffic Data System. The assessment corridor contains two permanent ATC sites. Additionally, there are three ATC sites situated outside the assessment corridor edges; one east of Drummore Roundabout, another east of Garroch Roundabout and the third south of Allanton Roundabout. There are varying degrees of reliability at each site and therefore the most representative months and year has been selected for analysis.

The ATC located in Crocketford (JTC00375) recorded 64% coverage for 2024, missing data for most of January and from September through to the end of December. As the months missing data include the typically lowest traffic volumes, it was determined that the AADT flow recorded for 2024 would not be representative of typical conditions. Consequently, 2023 data has been utilised as the next best year with sufficient coverage to be representative of AADT. The 2023 AADT at the site in Crocketford was 9,300. The most reliable data is reported from a counter situated 2km south of Springholm (ATC115321), which achieved 100% coverage for 2024 and recorded an AADT of 9,000.

Based on the most recent available data, the estimated daily traffic flow ranges from approximately 6,200 (south of Allanton Roundabout, near Castle Douglas) – 16,000 (east of Garroch Roundabout, near Dumfries) vehicles. Traffic levels generally drop from Garroch Roundabout towards Allanton Roundabout throughout the assessment corridor from east to west. The range of AADT flows recorded is shown in Table 2-4.

Table 2-4 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Flows

A75 Section	AADT (rounded to nearest 100)
A75 south of Allanton Roundabout (Castle Douglas) (2024)	6,200
A75 South of Springholm (2024)	9,000
A75 Crocketford (2023)	9,300
A75 east of Drummore Roundabout (2024)	10,700
A75 east of Garroch Roundabout (2024)	16,000

AADT flows for the period 2012-2024 show that the two counter locations near the villages saw, on average, AADT flows of approximately 9,000 over the 13-year period. However, AADT flows in Crocketford in 2024 were higher than historic years analysed (excluding COVID-19 impacted years of 2020 and 2021) and flows south of Springholm were typical of historic years (excluding COVID-19 impacted years).

Analysis of AADT flows in Springholm in 2024 and Crocketford in 2023 show that a typical weekday morning peak occurs at 08:00, which is followed by relatively consistent traffic volumes throughout the day until the evening peak is observed between 15:00 and 18:00. Weekend traffic volumes demonstrate a different pattern, with a slower build-up and peak occurring later, around 11:00. Figure 2-15 illustrates the average daily traffic volume south of Springholm and in Crocketford, based on data from ATC115321 and JTC00375 respectively.

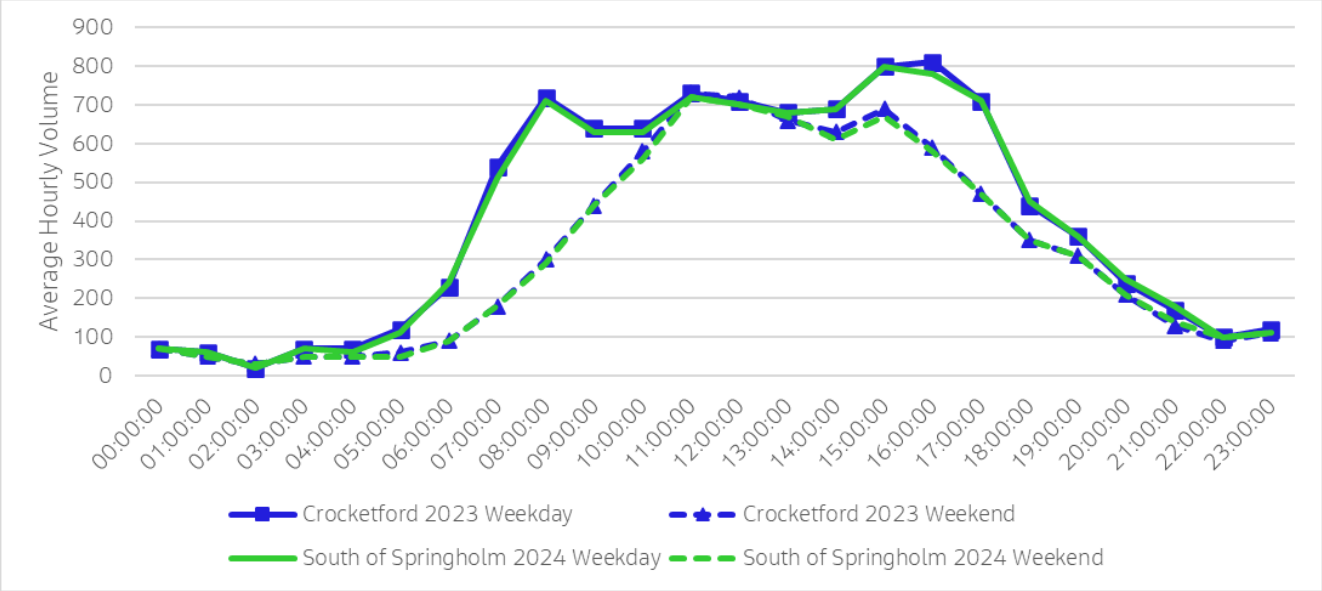

Figure 2-15 Two-Way Average Hourly Traffic Volumes: South of Springholm (2024) and Crocketford (2023)

Further to this, Figure 2-16 illustrates the average daily traffic volume by month recorded at the Crocketford and South of Springholm traffic counters, using the most recent year with complete data. Monthly traffic volume trends suggest seasonal traffic patterns on the A75, with noticeably higher volumes during summer. August consistently recording the highest traffic volumes at both locations. Springholm experiences a peak of 10,900 vehicles in August, while Crocketford reaches 10,400, representing increases of 21% and 12% over the respective AADTs of 9,000 and 9,300. These summer peaks likely reflect increased tourism and holiday travel in the region, in particular to travelling to Northern Ireland. Conversely, winter months, particularly December and January, show the lowest traffic volumes, with Springholm's January count of 7,600 and Crocketford's 7,100.

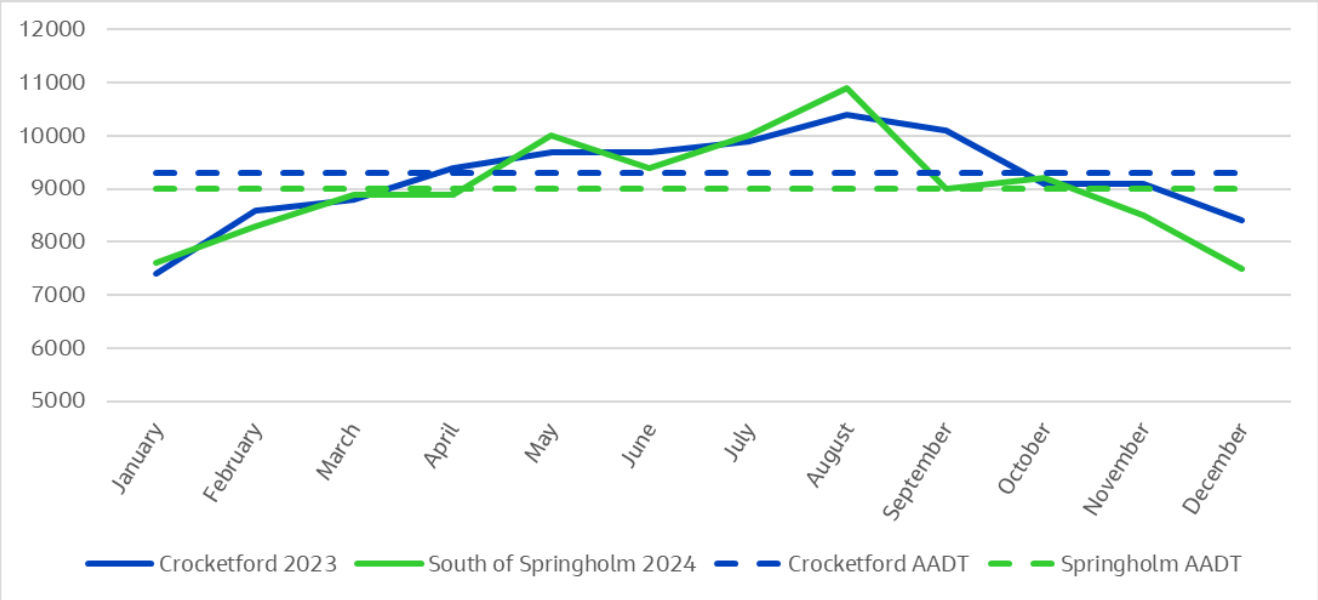

Figure 2-16 Monthly traffic variations

The counters also report information on flows by vehicle class and speed, as seen in Table 2-5. Not all years of the 13-year period have data available, therefore the most recent year with data has been used to report baseline speed and vehicle class statistics. The Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) as a percentage of total vehicles was between 12% and 16%, and speeds were approximately 52 miles per hour on the A75 south of Springholm, and between 25 and 28mph within Crocketford. Again, there were marginal differences in speed and percentage HGV between directions.

Table 2-5 Traffic Characteristics

Location	Eastbound	Westbound
Daily Percentage HGV-South of Springholm (2024)	14%	13%
Daily Percentage HGV-Crocketford (2019)	16%	16%
Mean Speed (mph)-South of Springholm (2024)	53	52
Mean Speed (mph)-Crocketford (2019)	25	28

Analysis of journey time has been evaluated using data collected from INRIX for the A75 assessment corridor showing that the average journey times, for both eastbound and westbound traffic, were approximately 16 and 15 minutes during weekdays and weekends respectively. Further analysis of daily journey times for 2024 on a monthly basis show that despite an increase in AADT during summer months there does not appear to be any significant adverse impact on journey times between Castle Douglas and Dumfries.

When incidents or planned maintenance occur on the A75, the recommended diversion routes are often via minor roads that pass through small villages and can result in significantly longer journey distances and increased travel times. The recommended diversion route between Garroch Loaning (Dumfries) and Haugh of Urr Road End (South of Springholm), the main diversion route within the assessment corridor, is approximately 28km, adding an additional 9km of distance travelled compared to the A75 itself. The longest recommended diversion route for the A75 is for a closure between Cardoness Castle Junction (Gatehouse of Fleet) and Calgow Junction (Newton Stewart). This diversion adds approximately 105km to the journey for both eastbound and westbound traffic compared to the A75.

2.6 Accident Locations and Severity

This section summarises road accidents that occurred on the A75 between Stranraer and Gretna over the period 2012 to 2024. Accident data, disaggregated by severity, is also shown for select five-year periods as can be seen in Figure 2-17. Note that for Figure 2-17, Serious includes accidents that were classified as Very Serious, Moderately Serious and Less Serious for 2019 onwards.

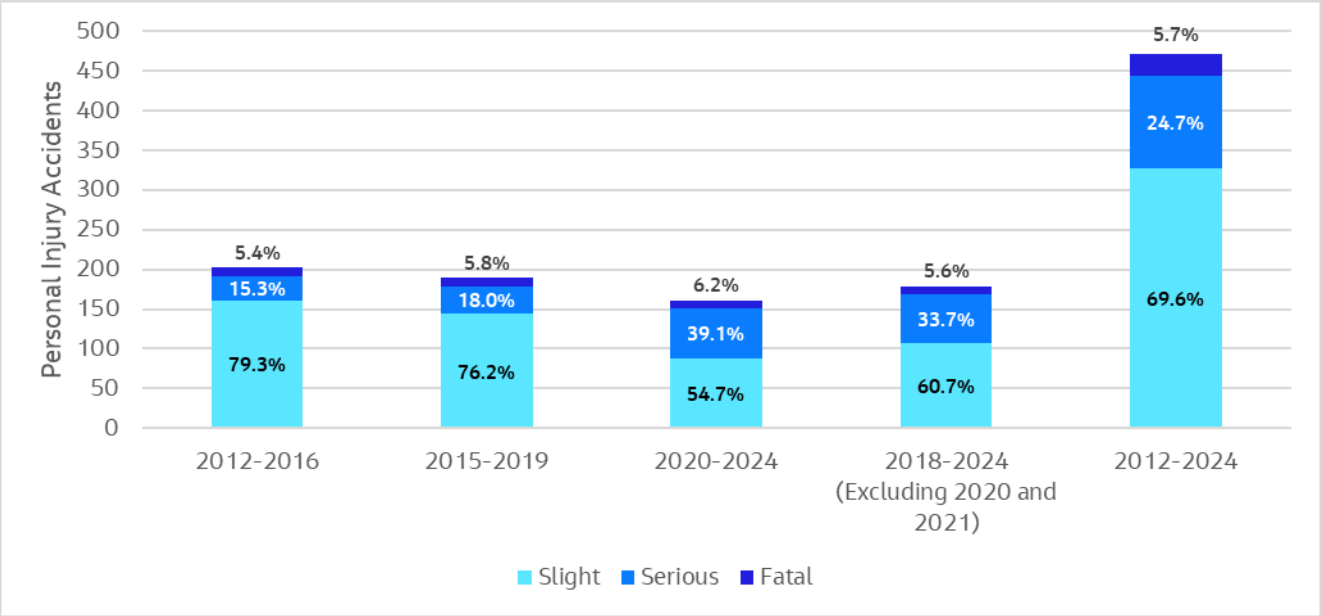

Figure 2-17 Personal Injury Accidents on the A75 by Severity

Accident data analysis shows that over the full 2012 to 2024 period 5.7%, 24.7% and 69.9% of accidents were recorded as fatal, serious and slight respectively. Disaggregating into five-year periods shows the same trends in terms of accident severity between the 2012 to 2016 period and the 2015 to 2019 period with a very similar proportion of fatal accidents, albeit with some variation in the proportion of accidents that are serious or slight. Over the period 2020 to 2024 inclusive a different trend in accident severity is evident particularly for serious and slight accidents. Given the change in travel patterns recorded throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and the considerable reduction in vehicles travelling on the road network, accidents and the associated severities recorded over this period may not be representative of the accident characteristics on the A75. Therefore, data was also analysed for the period 2018 to 2024 excluding 2020 and 2021 (where travel was impacted by COVID-19) to identify the severity proportions excluding the COVID-19 affected years.

As Figure 2-17 shows, the proportion of fatal accidents remains very similar across all the periods analysed, varying by less than 1%. However, the proportion of accidents that were recorded as serious was significantly higher in both the 2020 to 2024 period and the 2018 to 2024 period (excluding 2020 and 2021) at approximately 39% and 34% respectively, compared to the earlier time periods. Similarly, the proportion of slight accidents recorded in the 2020 to 2024 period and the 2018 to 2024 period (excluding 2020 and 2021) is significantly lower at between approximately 55% and 61%, than the proportions analysed for the earlier time periods analysed. It appears, therefore, that whilst accident data was likely

affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, the analysis also indicates that there may be inherent differences in severity rates when comparing the more recent data to the older periods data.

The locations of accidents on the A75 including within the immediate vicinity of the assessment corridor between the period 2012 to 2024 (excluding 2020 and 2021) can be seen in Figure 2-18.

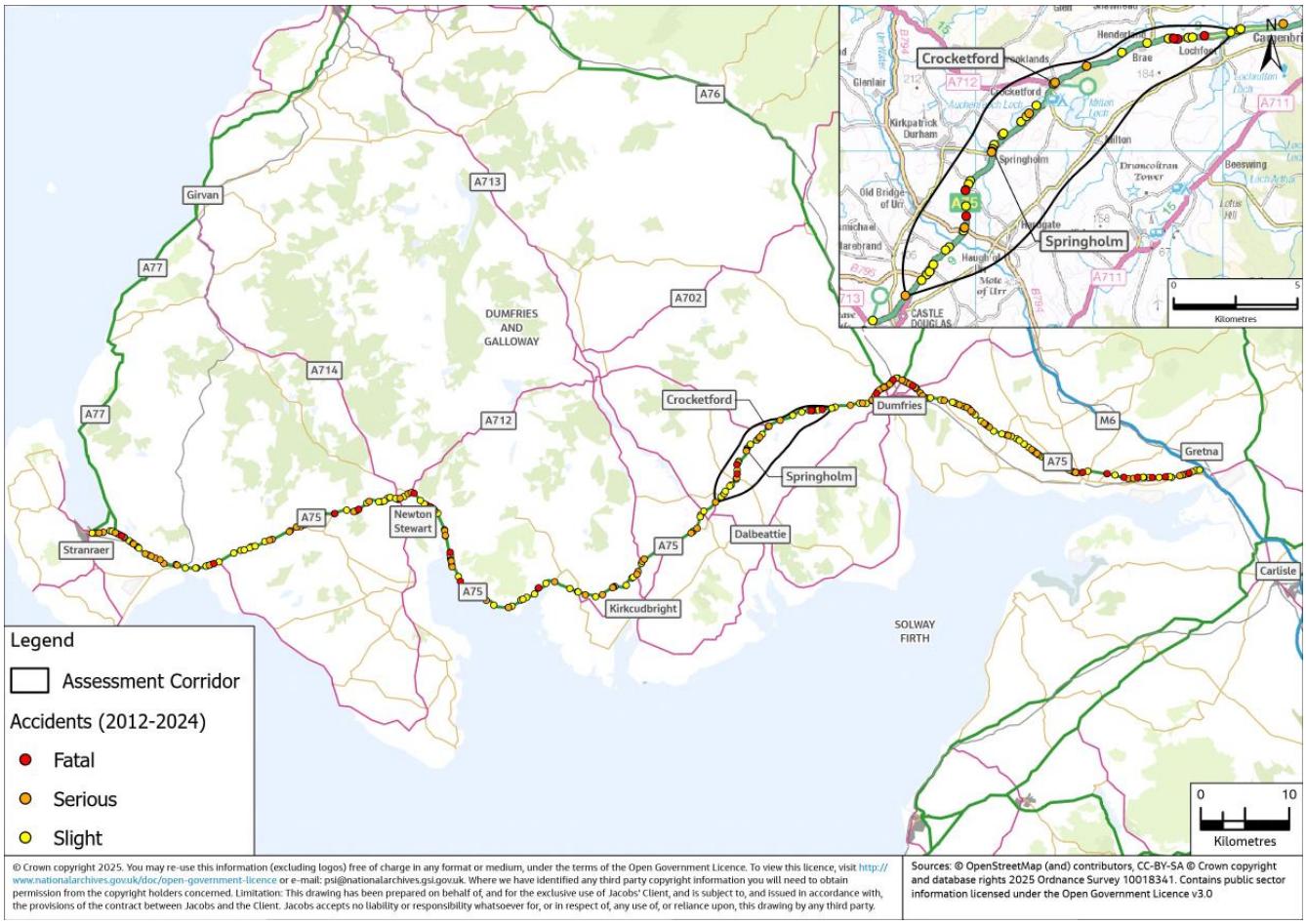

Figure 2-18 Location of Accidents on A75

Accident rates have also been calculated for the full A75 route between Gretna (to/from the A74(M) Slip Road) and Stranraer (to/from the A75/A77 Innermessan junction), as well as for Crocketford and Springholm. These rates have been compared to the national rates for built-up and non-built-up areas, with built-up rates compared to Crocketford and Springholm, and non-built-up rates used for the full A75 route.

Table 2-6 and Table 2-7 provide the accident rates for the A75 and Crocketford and Springholm respectively, as well as the national rates. Accident rates are expressed in Personal Injury Accidents (PIA) per Million Vehicle Kilometres (MvKM). This metric allows for a standardised comparison of accident frequencies across different road sections and national averages, taking into account both the number of PIAs and the volume of traffic on each road segment (note: the national accident rate is only currently available to the end of 2023; however, this does not materially impact the comparison ratio shown). Figures pre and post

COVID-19 have also been included, with the post COVID-19 figures representing a shorter time period that may not fully reflect long-term trends.

Table 2-6 A75 Full Route Accident Rates

Period	A75 Accident Rate (PIA/MvKM)	National Accident Rate - Non-Built Up (PIA/MvKM)	Local/National Accident Rate Ratio
2012-2024	0.085	0.080	1.1
2012-2024 (Excluding 2020-2021)	0.088	0.085	1.0
2012-2019 (Pre-COVID)	0.091	0.093	1.0
2018-2024 (Excluding 2020-2021)	0.079	0.064	1.2
2022-2024 (Post-COVID)	0.084	0.055	1.5

The A75's accident ratio for the entire 2012-2024 period is 1.1 times the national rate, with 0.085 PIA/MvKM compared to the national 0.08 PIA/MvKM. In the pre COVID-19 period (2012-2019), the ratio was 1.0, indicating parity with the national rate. However, the period of 2022 to 2024, after the travel restrictions imposed during COVID-19 pandemic were lifted (post COVID-19) shows a marked increase, with the ratio rising to 1.5. The most recent years (2018-2024, excluding 2020-2021) demonstrate a ratio of 1.3, though it's important to note this doesn't represent a full 5-year assessment period.

Table 2-7 Springholm and Crocketford Accident Rates

Period	Crocketford Accident Rate (PIA/MvKM)	Springholm Accident Rate (PIA/MvKM)	National Accident Rate - Built Up (PIA/MvKM)	Crocketford/ National Accident Rate Ratio	Springholm/ National Accident Rate Ratio
2012-2024	0.096	0.086	0.134	0.7	0.6
2012-2024 (Excluding 2020-2021)	0.111	0.099	0.147	0.8	0.7
2012-2019 (Pre-COVID)	0.077	0.082	0.167	0.5	0.5
2018-2024 (Excluding 2020-2021)	0.119	0.087	0.077	1.5	1.1
2022-2024 (Post-COVID)	0.194	0.146	0.065	3.0	2.2

The long-term trend (2012-2024) shows both villages with lower accident rates than the national average (0.134 PIA/MvKM), with Crocketford at 0.096 PIA/MvKM (ratio 0.7) and Springholm at 0.086 PIA/MvKM (ratio 0.6). This trend persists even when excluding COVID-19 affected years.

However, recent years show a shift. For 2018-2024 (excluding COVID-19 years), both villages exceed the national average. The period of 2022 to 2024, after the travel restrictions imposed during COVID-19 pandemic were lifted (post COVID-19) shows the highest rates, with Crocketford at 0.194 PIA/MvKM (ratio 3.0) and Springholm at 0.146 PIA/MvKM (ratio 2.2), compared to the national rate of 0.065 PIA/MvKM. However, this shorter timeframe may not indicate a long-term trend.

2.7 Active Travel Provision

This section summarises the existing active travel provision of relevance to the assessment corridor. There are sections of two National Cycle Network (NCN) routes in Southwest Scotland: NCN Route 7 and NCN Route 83. NCN Route 7, which connects Newton Stewart to Dumfries and generally runs parallel to the A75 between Castle Douglas and Dumfries, along Old Military Road. The provision is largely on road with some off road, traffic free provision in the towns. Beyond the assessment corridor, NCN Route 7 connects with Route 83 in Newton Stewart with onward connection to Stranraer, as well as further connections in the east beyond Gretna and into the north of England.

The assessment corridor and the wider area also encompasses various core paths promoted by Dumfries and Galloway Council.

A dedicated shared-use path has been implemented to facilitate active travel modes on the westbound approach to Crocketford, running parallel to the climbing lane. This infrastructure is an exception as the majority of provision within the assessment corridor is on road and thus shared with general traffic.

Figure 2-19 shows National Cycle Network routes, core paths and other active travel infrastructure in the assessment corridor.

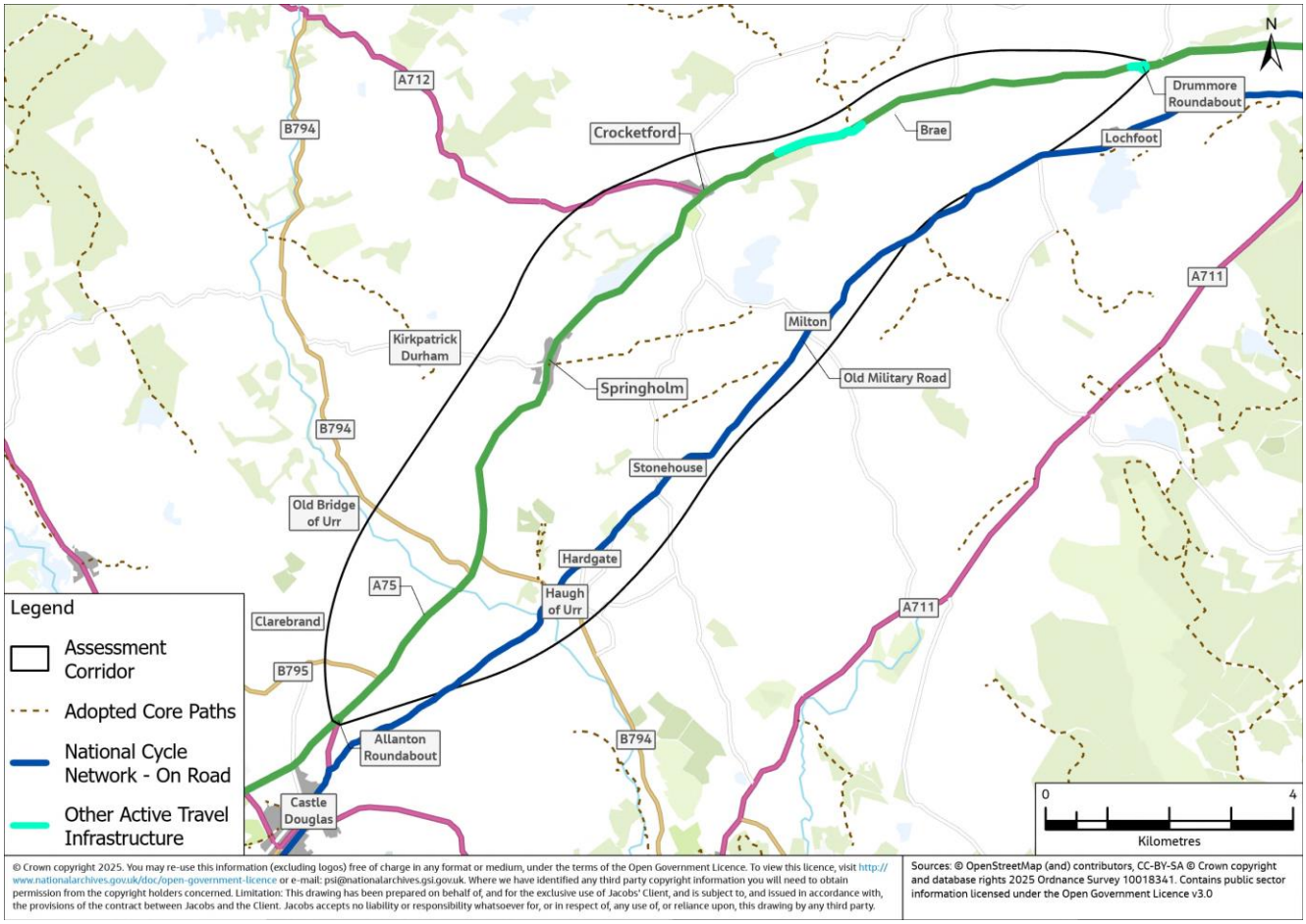

Figure 2-19 Active Travel Provision

2.8 Public Transport Provision

2.8.1 Bus Network

There are several bus services in operation in the settlements along the A75 corridor. The A75 route between Stranraer and Dumfries is covered by the Stagecoach West Scotland 500 bus service, stopping at most of the towns and villages along the route including Springholm and Crocketford. To traverse the entire A75 corridor, passengers must connect to the service 79 bus at Dumfries to continue their journey to Gretna. In addition, Stagecoach operates services 75 and 416 providing connections between Newton Stewart and Stranraer, and services 79 and 179 connecting Dumfries to Gretna and Carlisle. It should be noted that in June 2025, Stagecoach announced that it would be ending most of its services in the Dumfries and Galloway region including the 500 service which operates along the A75. At the time of writing, it is not known whether another operator will take over the routes currently operated by Stagecoach, which came to an end in August 2025.

Public transport services in the assessment corridor and surrounding regional area are provided by multiple operators. McCalls Coaches and Dumfries and Galloway Council offer services that serve both Springholm and Crocketford. Houston Coaches also operates in the region; however, their routes do not include stops in either Springholm or Crocketford. The

502 and 503 services operated by McCalls stop in both Springholm and Crocketford and provide connections between Dumfries and Castle Douglas. Dumfries and Galloway Council operate service number 555 which stop in both Springholm and Crocketford, running between Dumfries and Castle Douglas / Kirkcudbright.

Table 2-8 provides a summary of the bus services that operate within the assessment corridor along with their approximate weekday frequency. Figure 2-20 presents the average number of buses per hour that travel in the region and along the A75, based on information collated for bus operation in May 2025.

Table 2-8 Bus Services and Frequency Along the A75 (In Operation May 2025)

Service No.	Route	Operator	Approx. Frequency
75	Stranraer – Newton Stewart	Stagecoach West Scotland	2 per day (Monday-Friday)
79	Dumfries - Annan - Gretna - Carlisle / Annan - Gretna - Carlisle	Stagecoach West Scotland	27 per day (Monday-Friday)
179	Dumfries - Annan - Gretna - Carlisle / Annan - Gretna - Carlisle	Stagecoach West Scotland	5 per day (Monday-Saturday)
373	Dumfries - Terregles - Shawhead	Houstons Coaches	5 per day (Monday-Saturday)
379	Annan - Gretna	Houstons Coaches	5 per day (Monday-Friday)
385	Dumfries - Carrutherstown - Dalton - Annan	McCalls Coaches	7 per day (Monday-Saturday)
416	Newton Stewart - Stranraer	Stagecoach West Scotland	4 per day (Monday-Friday)
500	Dumfries - Stranraer	Stagecoach West Scotland	6 per day (Monday-Friday)

Service No.	Route	Operator	Approx. Frequency
502	Dumfries - Castle Douglas	McCalls Coaches	5 per day (Monday-Saturday)
502 A	Kirkcudbright - Castle Douglas	McCalls Coaches	12 per day (Monday-Saturday)
503	Dumfries - Springholm - Castle Douglas	McCalls Coaches	8 per day (Monday-Saturday)
555	Dumfries - Castle Douglas / Dumfries - Kirkcudbright	Dumfries and Galloway Council Buses	2 per day (Monday-Friday)

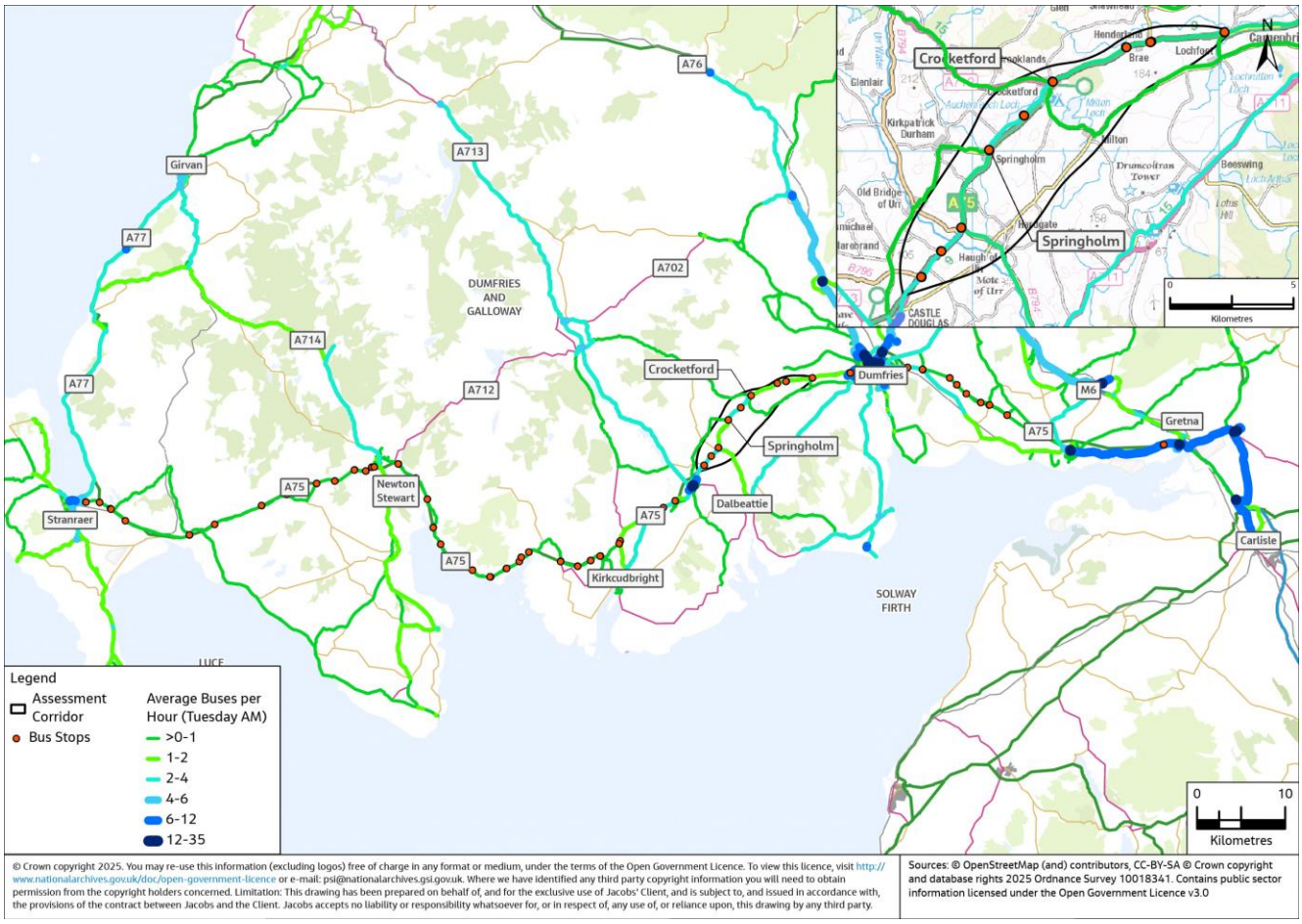

Figure 2-20 Average Number of Buses per Hour

2.8.2 Ferry Services

This section outlines the current ferry services and routes operating from the ports at Cairnryan (including Loch Ryan Port, 1.5 miles North of Cairnryan Port), based on information collated on services available as of May 2025. Two commercial operators, P&O Ferries and Stena Line, provide services, each with distinct schedules as follows:

- **P&O Ferries** offers a route between Cairnryan Port and Larne, located about 20 miles north of Belfast. The crossing time is approximately two hours. During the week from Tuesday to Friday there are six departures from Cairnryan, with a reduced schedule of five departures on Mondays and Saturdays and four on Sundays. P&O Ferries initiates its service at 04:00 with the last ferry embarking at 23:59.
- **Stena Line** operates between Loch Ryan Port and Belfast, with a crossing time of around 2 hours and 15 minutes. The Stena Line ferry service commences its daily operations with the first departure at 03:30, continuing throughout the day until the final crossing at 23:30. The schedule includes six departures from Loch Ryan from Tuesday to Friday, five on Saturdays and Mondays, and four on Sundays.

On a typical weekday, there are a total of 12 arrivals and 12 departures each day to and from the ports at Cairnryan. Figure 2-21 shows ferry routes between ports at Cairnryan and Belfast and Larne in Northern Ireland.

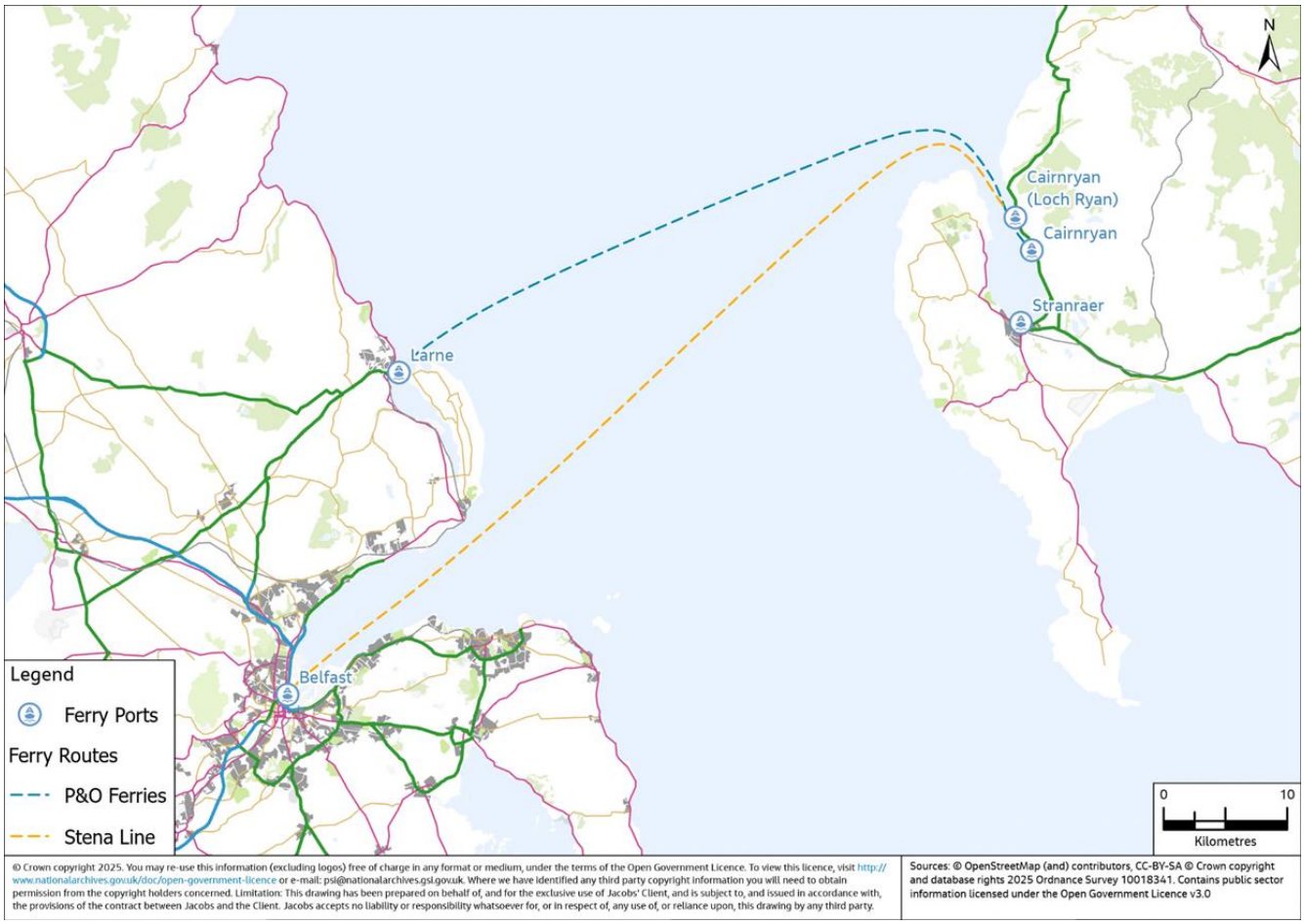

Figure 2-21 Ferry Routes Between Cairnryan and Northern Ireland

2.8.3 Ferry and Bus Integration

A review of the ferry timetable against available bus services has been undertaken, comparing ferry departure and arrival times to the nearest available connecting bus service that allows onward travel, as detailed in Table 2-9 and Table 2-10. Note that for onward travel to destinations along the A75, a separate connection to another bus service is required in Stranraer. The following criteria were applied when determining viable connections:

- Arriving Ferries: A connection is considered valid if the bus departure time falls within one hour of the ferry arrival time.
- Departing Ferries: Bus services are only deemed as viable connections if they align with the specified check-in times stated by ferry companies, ensuring passengers can meet the ferry operators' requirements. Stena Line passengers must check in at least 30 minutes before the scheduled departure time and P&O passengers are required to check in 60 minutes before the scheduled departure time.

Table 2-9 Ferry Arrivals and Connecting Bus Services (In Operation May 2025)

Ferry Company	Daily Ferry Arrivals	Connecting Services 358/360/60 (Cairnryan - Ayr)	Connecting Services 358/360/60 (Cairnryan - Stranraer)	Connecting Services 923 (Cairnryan - Ayr/Glasgow)
Stena Line	6	0	0	3
P&O Ferries	6	0	0	0

Table 2-10 Ferry Departures and Connecting Bus Services (In Operation May 2025)

Ferry Company	Daily Ferry Departures	Connecting Services 358/360/60 (Ayr - Cairnryan)	Connecting Services 358/360/60 (Stranraer - Cairnryan)	Connecting Services 923 (Ayr/Glasgow - Cairnryan)
Stena Line	6	0	0	3
P&O Ferries	6	4	0	0

3. Relevant Policies, Strategies and Previous Studies

This section provides a summary of the previous studies and relevant policy and strategy documents that have been reviewed to inform the Strategic Assessment, as identified in Table 3-1, Table 3-2 and Table 3-3. Those that provide key information to inform the ongoing development and assessment of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements are examined further in the Strategic Review section of this report, where details of data analysis, appraisal stages and relevant problems and opportunities are presented.

Table 3-1 National Policy and Strategy Documents

Document	Purpose
Strategic Transport Projects Review (2008)	The first Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) set out 29 transport investment priorities for the Scottish Government to 2032. Relevant to the A75 Trunk Road STPR recommended a targeted programme of measures to improve links to the Loch Ryan port facilities. The recommendation included provision of safer overtaking opportunities such as 2+1 sections, climbing lanes and overtaking lay-bys.
National Transport Strategy 2 (2020)	The second National Transport Strategy (NTS2) sets the vision for the country's transport system over the next 20 years 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. NTS2 highlights the need to make it as easy as possible for Scottish firms to do business abroad and for foreign firms to do business here in its goal to develop inclusive economic growth. It highlights the challenge with lack of direct freight and logistics routes to the continent, with Scotland currently being dependent on routes via England for most imports and exports. The strategy also stresses the need to have a transport system that is resilient and speedily recovers from disruption, thus minimising impacts of delayed journeys on our networks and users.
Update to the Climate Change Plan 2018-2032: Securing a	The Climate Change Plan update (CCPu) sets out the pathway to be taken by Scottish Government to the targets set by the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction

Green Recovery on a Path to Net Zero (2020)	Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019. The CCPu sets out both the Scottish Government's approach to delivering a green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, and a pathway to deliver the climate change targets, including achieving net zero emissions by 2045, with a focus on the period up to 2032. The CCPu presents a coordinated approach to achieving the targets, providing policies and proposals for each sector that includes transport. On transport, the CCPu aligns with the vision of NTS2 in having a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system that contributes to a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors. It highlights that a key focus will be on technological advances to green vehicles, but also that managing transport demand and embedding behaviour change will be of vital importance.
Union Connectivity Review (2021)	The Union Connectivity Review (UCR) examined how best to improve road, rail, air, and sea links across the UK. Within the UCR there is a recommendation that the UK Government offer funding to the Scottish Government in order to support the upgrade of the A75 Trunk Road which would improve journeys between Northern Ireland and Great Britain. The UCR noted opportunities for improvement around average speeds, safety and a lack of alternative routes. It also noted how stakeholders raised issues on the A75 and A77 repeatedly. The funding for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements is via the Union Connectivity Funding as a result of the direct recommendations made from this review, with it being suggested that the majority of strategic benefits would fall outside of Scotland.
Infrastructure Investment Plan for Scotland 2021 to 2026 (2021)	The vision of the Infrastructure Investment Plan (IIP) is that "our infrastructure supports Scotland's resilience and enables inclusive, net zero, and sustainable growth." It sets the context of future investment in transport to deliver an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the key longer-term trends of climate change, technological developments and demographic change.

	The IIP identifies delivery under three themes: enabling the transition to net zero emissions and environmental sustainability; driving inclusive economic growth; and building resilient and sustainable places.
Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 (2021)	Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 sets out ambitious and compelling long-term goals for road safety where no-one dies or is seriously injured by 2050. To help achieve this vision, the framework sets out five strategic outcomes which describe the road safety environment it aims to deliver. The outcomes align with the five pillars of the Safe System: safe road use, safe vehicles, safe speeds, safe roads and roadsides and post-crash response.
Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 (2022)	In 2019, Transport Scotland commenced the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) to help inform transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years. The final reporting of STPR2 lists 45 Recommendations for transport improvements across all regions of Scotland and across all modes. Recommendation 40 "Access to Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan" proposes safety, resilience and reliability improvements are made on the A75 and A77 strategic road corridors, connecting Stranraer and Cairnryan to the rest of Scotland and the UK. This would include, but is not limited to improving junctions, enhancing overtaking opportunities with WS2+1 or climbing lanes at appropriate locations where slow-moving traffic leads to risky overtaking manoeuvres, and widening or realigning carriageways to alleviate 'pinch points' such as narrow structures or at stretches of older standard single carriageway. Specific reference to the villages were made with examples of locations of improvement schemes including A75 Realignment around Springholm and Crocketford.
A Route Map to Achieve a 20 per cent Reduction in Car Kilometres by 2030 (2022)	The route map was created to support the target of a 20% reduction in car kilometres committed to in the CCPu as a means to help achieve the overall target of achieving net zero emissions by 2045. The route map considers the need for ongoing collaboration and partnerships between national, regional and local government as well as groups and organisations

	representing societies across Scotland to deliver a national shift in travel behaviour. It notes that a uniform 20% kilometre reduction will not be stipulated in all geographical areas. The route map presents a framework of four sustainable travel behaviours; reducing the need to travel, living well locally, switching modes and combining trips or sharing journeys. These are applicable in both rural and urban settings as well as for those with specific mobility needs. The route map sets out the actions to be taken up to 2030 to support each of these four behaviours, focusing in the near-term predominantly on actions including investment and legislative changes to encourage alternative behaviours. Note: In April 2025, Scottish Government announced that the targets set out by the Route Map would not be achievable, however the commitment to reduce car kilometres was maintained. A renewed policy statement was issued by Transport Scotland in June 2025 which sets out the current approach to enabling reduction and identifies opportunities to go further and apply lessons learned, with further work commissioned to inform future revision of car use reduction targets.
Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation (2022)	This document sets out the priorities for Scotland's economy, as well as the Programmes of Action needed to maximise opportunities over the next decade (to 2032). The IIP and NTS2 directly support this strategy in the pursuit of creating and sustaining a resilient national infrastructure that can support a high productivity economy. Policy 4 'Productive Businesses and Regions' within the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET) aims to make Scotland's businesses, industries, regions, communities and public services more productive and innovative. Part of the Productive Businesses and Regions Programme of Action within the NSET is to deliver the STPR2 to help make Scotland more accessible for residents, visitors and businesses; create better connectivity with sustainable, smart and cleaner transport options; and highlight the vital contribution that transport investment can play in enabling and sustaining Scotland's economic growth.

National Planning Framework 4 (2023)	The National Planning framework 4 (NPF4) provides a long-term plan for Scotland setting out where development and infrastructure is needed, guiding spatial development to 2045, setting out national planning policy and the designation of nationally significant developments. NPF4 highlights the need to support the regeneration of Stranraer through the 'Stranraer Gateway', which is identified as a National Development. High quality place-based regeneration will help address socio-economic inequalities in Stranraer and support the wider population of south west Scotland by acting as a hub and providing a platform for future investment. This will be supported by any strategic transport interventions, including road and rail, as identified in STPR2.

Table 3-2 Regional Policy and Strategy Documents

Document	Purpose
South West Scotland Transport Study – Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (2020)	The first stage of the STPR2 was to develop the case for change in accordance with STAG including that for the South West of Scotland. The South West Scotland region, which included Dumfries and Galloway, was undertaken in advance of STPR2, with The South West Scotland Transport Study – Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (SWSTS) comprising this first stage of the STAG process. The SWSTS considered multi-modal improvements on key strategic corridors in the South West, with a particular focus on access to the ports at Cairnryan. This included the A75 Trunk Road between Stranraer and Gretna. The SWSTS identified 56 options, including A75 Bypasses (Springholm and Crocketford). Options were then packaged, with 23 option packages across the assessment corridor recommended for taking forward for further assessment as part of STPR2. Option Package 15 A75 Capacity Enhancements included the option for A75 bypasses along with the development of capacity enhancement measures on the A75, such as partial dualling, town/village bypasses and improved overtaking opportunities.
Borderlands Growth Deal (2021)	The Borderlands Partnership (growth deal signed 2021) is a £452m investment programme bringing together the five cross-border (Scotland and England) local authorities of Carlisle City Council, Cumbria County Council, Dumfries and Galloway Council, Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council. Projects from the partnership are delivered under four themes - Enabling Infrastructure; Improving Places; Supporting Business, Innovation and Skills; and Encouraging Green Growth.
South Of Scotland Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy (2021)	The indicative Regional Spatial Strategy (iRSS) articulates several shared outcomes and strategic development projects the region wishes to see achieved and delivered by 2050 which will: respond to the climate change emergency, secure sustainability in our energy supplies

	and land use practices; deliver an inclusive economy; bring meaningful improvements to the health and wellbeing of all of our citizens; facilitate the responsible management of our high quality landscape and heritage resources; and, deliver optimum connectivity to, from and throughout the region. The iRSS highlights a number of strategic development projects, which include development project 22 "Transport Corridor Improvements - A75(T) & A77(T)". This project aims to strengthen the A75 transport corridor which links the Cairnryan Ferry hub to the A74(M)/West coast main rail line, and the A77 corridor north to Ayr and the central belt. The iRSS notes it is important for the future of the south west of Scotland that the appropriate improvement of the A75 (such as dualling) and investment in transport connectivity on this transport corridor (along with the A77 towards Ayr) is planned to support the ports of Cairnryan whilst improving connections across the area.
A75 Gretna - Stranraer A77 Ayr - Stranraer Strategic and Economic Impacts Report (2023)	This report presents a strategic and economic assessment of various improvement packages relating to the A75 and A77 trunk roads in southwest Scotland. The options considered include settlement bypasses and carriageway improvements, full dualling of both the routes, as well as other road improvements and rail upgrades. Whilst no costs were developed for any of the packages, present value benefits were reported, with journey time reduction, improved safety and wider economic impacts anticipated for all packages. Two of the packages assessed included bypasses along the A75 and A77 without full dualling of either trunk road, with results showing that improvements and bypasses along the A75 should be prioritised over the equivalent measures along the A77.
SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy 2023-42 (2023)	The key purpose of the SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) is to identify the transport challenges in Dumfries and Galloway and set out a long-term approach to address them, up to 2042. The document highlights the strategic importance of the A75 for travel associated with Cairnryan and the resulting

	constraints on journey times that arise with the significant car and Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) demand. It notes that as the A75 passes through the villages of Springholm and Crocketford, it negatively impacts these communities and extends journey times further. A priority of the RTS is therefore to investigate the feasibility of bypasses for Springholm and Crocketford on the A75, as well as other communities on the trunk road network in the Region.

Table 3-3 Local Policy and Strategy Documents

Document	Purpose
A75 Gretna to Stranraer Route Action Plan Study/Reports (1997- 2000)	In August 1997 the then Scottish Office commissioned a Route Action Plan Study for the entire length of the A75 to bring together options for improvement. This required the preparation of a number of Supplementary Reports to recommend a number of options for improving the performance of each section of the route, as well as a Firm Strategy Report to summarise and draw together all previous elements of the Route Action Plan Study to create a firm strategy for improvements along the whole route. The Firm Strategy Report was also required to identify a programme of schemes and appropriate improvements within the overall strategy framework suitable for phased implementation in the short, medium and long term to improve safety, increase performance and decrease travelling times. One of the long-term recommendations in the Firm Strategy Report was for a Springholm Bypass (which the strategy noted as being of Wide Single 2+1 standard to provide guaranteed eastbound overtaking opportunities). A bypass of Crocketford was appraised as a long-term option but not ultimately recommended to be progressed as part of the Firm Strategy for the Route Action Plan Study at that time.
Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2 (2019)	The Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) sets out the spatial strategy to guide future land use and development within Dumfries and Galloway, with the LDP2 Vision covering the next 20 years. Within the LDP2, it considers strategies for the economy, energy, retail,

	housing, transport, active travel and green networks and waste management. It provides the planning framework and guides the future use and development of land in towns, villages and the rural area. Policy T1 of the LDP2 considers that the Council will support any improvement of existing transport infrastructure and, where appropriate, the provision of new transport infrastructure and/or services provided they accord with the Regional and Local Transport Strategies. The Council must also be satisfied that any proposals, following appropriate assessment where required, would have no adverse effects either alone or in combination on the integrity of any Natura site. It also notes that the national and strategic role of routes including trunk roads, motorways and the rail network should not be compromised by development which individually or incrementally materially reduces the level of service of a route. In the LDP2, Springholm is considered a local centre within the Stewartry Housing Market area, with a planning objective to consolidate and enhance Springholm's role as a Local Centre within the settlement hierarchy.
Dumfries and Galloway Active Travel Strategy 2022 – 2032 (2022)	This strategy and delivery plan was adopted to provide a combined approach to active travel infrastructure and culture within Dumfries and Galloway, allowing the region to better respond to sustainability challenges as part of the declaration of a Climate Emergency, carbon reduction targets and wider priorities. The strategy is designed to promote and drive change to make essential daily destinations accessible by active and sustainable modes and engage people with healthy lifestyles. Key objectives include making places (such as the villages of Springholm and Crocketford) and streets safer for walking, cycling and other forms of active travel and improving connections between urban and rural areas, thus improving inter-settlement connectivity. A key theme of the document is safety, noting schemes and policies for safer active routes need to provide both road safety and personal safety when walking, wheeling, and cycling, recognising that perception can be as significant a barrier as actual risks.

4. Strategic Review – Direct Relevance to the A75 Trunk Road

4.1 Introduction

This section provides a more detailed review of the content, data and analysis of the documents identified in the Relevant Policies, Strategies and Previous Studies section of this report that have a direct relevance to the A75 Trunk Road and ongoing work for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements. Whilst this has a focus on the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) process, it also provides a more detailed summary of the previous strategic and economic assessments undertaken in relation to the A75 and the Union Connectivity Review (UCR) which resulted in funding being granted for progression of this scheme.

4.2 Union Connectivity Review

The UCR, by Sir Peter Hendy CBE, assessed the transport network within the UK to identify how transport connectivity can better support economic growth, jobs, housing and social cohesion. The UCR sought views from stakeholders and a public call for evidence received 147 submissions which identified a range of issues relating to travel between the nations of the UK.

In relation to the whole of the UK, the UCR recommended that the UK Government should *"Design and implement UKNET – a strategic transport network for the whole of the United Kingdom, and commit funding to improve the network, in particular, the parts that are not performing well".* To support this network, the UCR recommended a series of transport infrastructure enhancements to improve capacity, reliability, journey times and sustainability on key strategic links.

The UCR identified the 'North Channel Corridor' which incorporates the A75 and A77, as a key strategic transport corridor within the UK and notes some of the key issues currently facing this corridor which include road standards, speed limits, platooning and a lack of alternative routes that lead to the risk of long diversions in the event of a closure. The UCR also suggests that *"the majority of strategic benefits of improvements to the A75 would fall outside of Scotland,"* given its critical for connectivity for passengers and freight between England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. At the time of publication, the UCR reported that Cairnryan is Scotland's busiest port, handling 2.7 million tonnes of domestic cargo in 2020 and serving demand from England as the shortest ferry trip between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The Cairnryan to Belfast route is also the second busiest passenger ferry route between Great Britain and Ireland, with 1.3 million passengers annually.

The UCR Final Report was published in November 2021 and made 19 recommendations to the UK Government. Three of these recommendations focused specifically on supporting connectivity to, from and via Scotland, with Recommendation 6 stating to "*offer funding to support the upgrade of the A75 to improve journeys between Northern Ireland and Great Britain*".

The UK government formally responded to the independent UCR in 2023, where a programme of priority actions to develop the UCR Recommendations was set out. This included committing funding to "*deliver targeted improvements to the A75 between Gretna and Stranraer, starting with providing £8 million to the Scottish Government to support their business case development*". A Memorandum of Understanding was agreed between the Department for Transport and Scottish Government which allowed design development and assessment work on the realignment of the A75 around Springholm and Crocketford to commence. The UK Government funding therefore allows for progression of design and assessment work to consider options for the realignment of the A75 around Springholm and Crocketford as a potential improvement scheme in line with Recommendation 40 of STPR2.

4.3 Strategic Transport Projects Review 2

4.3.1 Introduction

The strategic case for "Recommendation 40 – Access to Stranraer and ports at Cairnryan" was established through the STPR2 process. This recommendation includes for A75 realignment around Springholm and Crocketford as a potential improvement scheme to be taken forward. The STPR2 process is summarised in Figure 4-1 with further details on each of the stages and key outcomes relating to the A75 provided below.

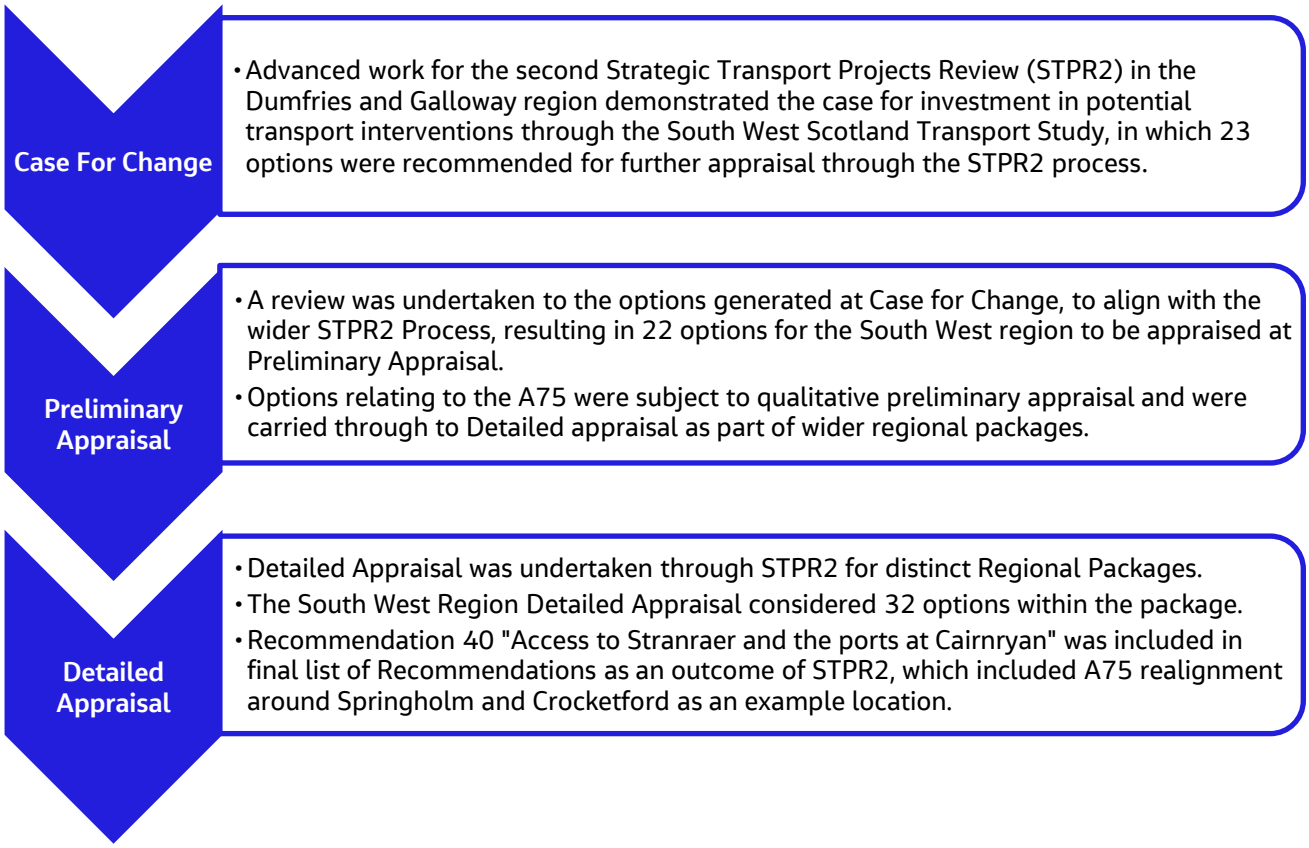

Figure 4-1 STPR2 Appraisal Process Stages

4.3.2 Southwest Scotland Transport Study; Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (2020)

Within STPR2, the following 11 'regions' were established: Argyll and Bute, Ayrshire and Arran, Edinburgh and South East Scotland, Forth Valley, Glasgow City Region, Highlands and Islands, North East Scotland, Scottish Borders, Shetland Islands, South West Scotland and Tay Cities.

The South West Scotland region, along with the Scottish Borders and North East Scotland regions, formed 'advanced' studies with their respective Cases for Change developed prior to the commencement of STPR2. The other remaining regions had their respective Cases for Change developed as part of the wider STPR2 process.

The South West Scotland Transport Study - Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (SWSTS) presents the results of the first stage of appraisal, undertaken in accordance with Scottish Transport appraisal Guidance (STAG). The SWSTS established the Case for Change and identified a range of multi-modal improvements to road, rail, public transport and active travel on key strategic corridors in the South West of Scotland, including those served by the A75 and A77 trunk roads, with a key focus being on access to the ports at Cairnryan.

This SWSTS undertook a detailed data analysis and a stakeholder engagement programme to establish the evidence base for problems and opportunities linked to transport on key corridors across the South West of Scotland. From this, Regional Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) were developed to guide the ongoing development of solutions. Initial option generation, sifting and development was undertaken to identify a short list of options to be taken through Preliminary and Detailed Appraisal to be considered as part of STPR2.

An initial long list of over 650 individual options for improving transport in the region were identified through review of previous studies, public and stakeholder engagement and data analysis. Initial sifting considered geographic coverage and location of options, and whether they were within the agreed scope, as well as removal of duplicates to reduce the number of options remaining to approximately 210. These options were then broadly grouped by theme and corridor to result in 56 options to be considered.

Outcomes from the high-level appraisal demonstrated that each of the options had the potential to meet the Regional TPOs. However, a process of further option sifting was undertaken based on the likely impacts on implementability criteria, which considers feasibility, deliverability and public acceptability. Through further consolidation/packaging of similar options by route and mode, a final list of 23 options was subsequently identified.

As the South West Scotland region formed an 'advanced region' within STPR2, with the Case for Change developed prior to the commencement of STPR2 itself, the approach to option sifting differed slightly from that undertaken in STPR2 for the other regions. Therefore, to ensure consistency for the remainder of the STPR2 process, the advanced region option sifting exercises were reviewed to re-assess their options long lists by applying the STPR2 option sifting methodology. The updated results for the advanced regions were fed into the subsequent appraisal stages in parallel with the eight other regions. Ultimately, the updated option sifting exercise for the South West Scotland region using the STPR2 sifting

methodology identified a total of 22 options that were taken forward for more detailed development and appraisal through the next stage of the STPR2 process.

The following options that were taken forward to the next stages of appraisal in STPR2 as detailed further below, are considered relevant to this scheme:

- Development of the Strategic Active Travel Network: Package of measures to develop the Strategic Active Travel Network in the South West of Scotland to better connect communities to key destinations, including cycle paths parallel to trunk roads and improvements to the National Cycle Network
- Development of the Timber Transport Network: Package of measures to support the transport of timber freight by road, rail and sea in the South West of Scotland.
- A75 Capacity Enhancements: Development of capacity enhancement measures on the A75, such as partial dualling, town/village bypasses and improved overtaking opportunities.
- A75 Safety Measures: Implementation of targeted measures, such as improvements to road geometry, bends and junction improvements to improve safety on the A75. Package will also include consideration of safety camera deployments through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme annual site prioritisation exercise.

4.3.3 Preliminary and Detailed Appraisal

Preliminary Appraisal Outcomes

Prior to preliminary appraisal, options generated at Case for Change were assigned to groupings, as there were many options that shared common traits across the regions and many options which in isolation would not deliver the strategic improvements the STPR2 is seeking to deliver. The options generated above for South West Scotland were assigned to applicable groupings and were subject to qualitative preliminary appraisal.

The main purpose of the Preliminary Appraisal was to capture the likely impacts of groupings and any key dependencies, with more detailed quantitative assessment to be undertaken at the Detailed Appraisal phase.

Decisions on whether or not to take Groupings forward from Preliminary to Detailed Appraisal were made based on overall performance against the TPOs, STAG criteria, and deliverability criteria, with consideration of alignment with established policy directives, Impact Assessments and performance against Transport Behaviour Scenarios.

The Grouping for “Improve Routes to Major Ports and Airports” captured options relating to the A75 capacity enhancements and safety measures, subsequently linking to Recommendation 40 of STPR2 “Access to Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan”.

Detailed Appraisal – South West Region Recommendation 40

The grouping and interventions identified to be taken forward from Preliminary Appraisal were developed into eleven regional packages to be assessed at Detailed Appraisal stage.

Groupings made up of location-specific interventions were assigned directly to regions based on the location of the component interventions, ensuring that region-specific problems and opportunities are addressed.

Detailed Appraisal Summary Tables (AST) were created for each region, with the South West Scotland Region AST including 31 Regional Recommendations to be considered. This included Recommendation 40 "Access to Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan", which was also included in the final list of 45 recommendations that emerged from STPR2.

STPR2 Recommendation 40 recommends that safety, resilience and reliability improvements are made on the A75 and A77 strategic road corridors, in turn supporting placemaking opportunities. STPR2 envisages that this could include, but is not limited to; improving junctions, enhancing overtaking opportunities with WS2+1 or climbing lanes at appropriate locations where slow moving traffic leads to risky overtaking manoeuvres, and widening or realigning carriageways to alleviate 'pinch points' such as narrow structures or at stretches of older standard single carriageway. STPR2 also notes examples of locations of improvement schemes to include A75 realignment around Springholm and Crocketford.

The recommendation is noted as meeting the key STPR2 objectives relating to Sustainable Inclusive Growth and Safety, Reliability and Resilience, as well as the Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Economy, and Equality and Accessibility STAG criteria. Recommendation 40 aligns with wider strategy and policy including the NPF4 National Development site at Stranraer Gateway, the Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal and the Dumfries and Galloway Local Development Plan 2, which sets out plans for regeneration of the waterfront at Stranraer.

4.4 Transport Improvement Study, A75 Gretna – Stranraer A77 Ayr – Stranraer, Strategic and Economic Impacts Report (2023)

Following the findings of the UCR, SWSTS and STPR2, Dumfries and Galloway, South Ayrshire and Mid & East Antrim Borough Councils commissioned the Transport Improvement Study A75 Gretna – Stranraer A77 Ayr – Stranraer, which consisted of a Strategic and Economic Impacts Report and an Economic Activity and Location Impacts Report.

The Economic Activity and Location Impacts Report (EALI) presents information on the transport and socio-economic baseline conditions, as well as information on business and stakeholder consultation, in the South West of Scotland. Whilst it also assesses the geographic distribution of economic benefits at both a regional and national level, it does not identify any additional economic impacts to those covered in the Strategic and Economic Impacts Report. Further to this, economic analysis presented in the EALI covers the impacts of a 'do maximum' option, involving full dualling of both the A77 and A75 (as well as other additional transport improvements in the region). For these reasons the findings of the EALI have not been detailed in this report.

The Strategic and Economic Impacts Report reports the details of assessment of a number of transport infrastructure improvements throughout the region and quantifies the anticipated economic benefits. The report examines seven different improvement packages, each with variations of bypass and dualling options along the A75 and A77 trunk roads, junction

improvements along both trunk roads and rail improvements throughout the region. The report provides analysis of the potential economic benefits, including transport user savings, accident reductions, wider economic impacts and land-use changes, concluding with an overall Present Value of Benefits (PVB) for all packages.

The report utilised the Transport Model for Scotland (TMfS) to provide a broad representation of transport supply and estimates of transport demand within the region, using the TMfS18 Do Minimum as the reference case and Without Policy scenarios for 2030 and 2045 forecast years, as the comparators for intervention assessment. The sections within the assessment corridor of the 2030 and 2045 networks were interrogated, with coding changes also made to the baseline models to reflect real-world conditions.

Of the seven improvement packages assessed, Package 5 “Bypasses of key towns and junction improvements along the A75” included providing bypasses of Springholm and Crocketford alongside other targeted road enhancement measures such as improvements to junctions on the A75 and provision of further capacity on existing bypasses, and rail improvements throughout the region. It should be noted the bypasses of Springholm and Crocketford were assumed to be dual carriageway within this package.

The introduction of this package was anticipated to lead to significant Transport Economic Efficiency (TEE) improvements with traffic experiencing less delay, travelling at faster speeds and therefore experiencing lower journey times. The introduction of bypasses at Springholm and Crocketford and other enhancement measures along the A75 resulted in approximately £146 million in TEE benefits, the majority of these benefits accruing to business journeys. Further benefits were identified through journey time savings for bus users, albeit of a significantly smaller magnitude. In addition, accidents savings of approximately £26 million were estimated. These were approximately £5 million more than the savings resulting from an equivalent package of improvements to the A77, with the report highlighting that A75 improvements should be priority.

The improvements also result in significant Wider Economic Impacts (WEI) of approximately £44 million, seen through major positive labour supply and economic output impacts. These impacts are concentrated in the Dumfries and Galloway council area with slightly lower benefits elsewhere. Significant accessibility improvements were also anticipated, which for those without access to a car is largely focussed in Dumfries, whereas for those with access to a car these benefits are seen throughout the region and on several sections of the A75.

The report further assesses dynamic agglomeration effects, changes seen as a result of business relocation to areas of denser economic activity, which tend to be more productive than areas of less dense economic activity. All packages see an overall positive dynamic agglomeration effect, suggesting that there will be an increase in employment growth and therefore economic activity in the region. Whilst dynamic agglomeration impacts for packages consisting of bypasses without dualling were not calculated, estimates were made based on labour supply and static agglomeration impacts. For the A75 bypasses and measures package this impact was predicted to be negative in South Ayrshire, with an overall positive impact across South Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway. This means that whilst the overall growth

in economic activity in the region is positive, the A75 bypass measures are likely to draw employment growth away from South Ayrshire into Dumfries and Galloway.

The report measures the wider spatial and social context of public expenditure, measuring benefits to households and other agents from changes to accessibility as a result of transport improvements and land use change. This analysis is often not covered by conventional economic appraisals and as such has been calculated using ULTrA software. This is a novel approach that applies welfare-based cost-benefit analysis to the zonal variables of the Transport and Economic Land-use Model of Scotland. For the A75 bypasses package the calculated impact was estimated to be approximately £752 million. It should be noted that this report considered traditional TEE and WEI analysis in conjunction with this new approach. The reported benefits associated with each should not be taken together, as ULTrA should represent an alternative method of calculating transport infrastructure methods.

Given the importance of the A75 as a key connector between the north of England and Northern Ireland it is expected that interventions that improve accessibility throughout the region would also have significant impacts in England and Northern Ireland. The Strategic and Economic Impacts report, however, does not include cross border impacts within its scope and does not report on the expected Dynamic Economic Impacts in England and Northern Ireland.

Overall, accounting for all economic impacts the report finds that when comparing bypass interventions on the A77 and A75, those on the A75 bring significantly higher benefits. Overall, the Present Value Benefits of the A75 bypasses and measures package were estimated to be approximately £1.1 billion, according to the report and noting there may be an over estimation due to the use of both traditional analysis and ULTrA methodology.

Given the detail and certainty required to develop accurate costs estimates for these interventions, the report does not provide any indication of potential capital and operational expenditure. This means that no Net Present Value or Benefit to Cost Ratio can be determined for the improvement packages.

The economic assessment of any options or packages identified as part of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements will, therefore, be more specific and targeted to the villages and immediate surrounding area. This will allow for detailed economic analysis and cost estimates to be developed for the specific options identified and an indicative Benefit to Cost Ratio determined.

4.5 Problems and Opportunities

The evidence-based assessments undertaken through STPR2, described earlier in this section, led to the identification of a number of problems and opportunities in the South West Scotland region. Those which are of direct relevance to the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements are summarised in Table 4-1, Table 4-2 and Table 4-3 below, with the evidence base utilised at the time also identified. Commentary on the evidence base is provided to assist in the identification of gaps for future analysis, further detailed in the Gap Identification section of this report, to reconfirm these problems are still relevant at later stages of assessment, i.e. during Outline Business Case preparation. This, therefore, is

intended to bridge the gap between the work undertaken at STPR2 for the higher level strategic case and the specific assessment work to be undertaken for the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 Scheme Assessment Report for the proposed scheme.

Data supporting the listed problems and opportunities was largely collected at the Case for Change stage through the SWSTS and subsequently utilised in the assessment of options through the STPR2 preliminary and detailed appraisal stages.

Table 4-1 Road Based Problems

Problem(s) derived from SWSTS	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
Road Standard / Vehicle Platooning / Route Consistency	This problem relates to a range of issues with regards to the road network which impact upon performance and how the network is perceived locally and by those in other parts of Scotland and the UK. Traffic platoons can form regularly on the A75, with some a result of the high volume of HGV traffic and the lack of overtaking opportunities on these routes, owing to its current standard. This leads to a slower overall road speed, increasing driver frustration and a higher propensity for severe accidents (refer to the problem below for further detail on journey time issues noted in the SWSTS). The impacts of traffic, including HGVs, travelling through settlements located on or adjacent to the strategic road network have been identified as having an environmental impact in the form of air quality, noise, vibration and severance impacts on communities in the South West of Scotland.	The SWSTS presents Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Data from 2017, sourced from Transport Scotland and Department for Transport count sites. The analysis also provides a comparison to volumes in 2008. The data notes two-way AADT of around 9,000 vehicles per day at count sites near the villages of Springholm and Crocketford, with an increase of around 5% evident from 2008 to 2017. Roadside interviews (RSI) were undertaken in 2016 to provide more detailed information about traffic in the study area, including vehicle composition. The RSI site at Lowthertown on the A75 between Annan and Gretna had the highest proportion of HGVs, accounting for 19% of the vehicles. The proportion of HGVs recorded at the A75 East of Castle Douglas site (12%) was lower than that recorded at Lowthertown, likely reflecting the role of Dumfries as a key origin and destination of freight. The RSI data also confirmed a high proportion of traffic on the A75 originates in Northern Ireland. Specialised Goods Vehicle Counts (SGVC) were undertaken in Dumfries and Ayr to support a greater

Problem(s) derived from SWSTS	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
		understanding of the freight-based activity in the area and further highlight the importance of the A75 in supporting the role and operation of the ports at Cairnryan. The A75 SGVC site was located at the A75/A76 roundabout in Dumfries and noted 3,700 freight vehicles over the survey period, of which 35% was port related. Based on the SGVC observations and valuations of the type of goods being transported, approximately £26 million worth of goods per day is estimated to use the A75 East of Dumfries and £20 million on the A75 West of Dumfries. The SWSTS did not specifically quantify the number and length of overtaking opportunities (either dual carriageway or WS2+1 provision) on the A75. This has been reviewed as part of the background context for this report.
Slow Vehicular Journey Times and Journey Time Competitiveness	The traffic mix and the standard of road on the A75 can contribute to slower journey times compared to other comparable strategic routes and could be a factor in affecting journey route choice, potentially undermining the competitive position of the ports at Cairnryan.	Journey Time data used in the SWSTS was obtained from INRIX for 2017. To assess average speeds on the strategic road network and compare these against other key corridors in Scotland, an analysis of journey time data was undertaken. This examined typical journey times and speeds along several key

Problem(s) derived from SWSTS	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
		strategic corridors in Scotland during the interpeak period. The analysis showed a typical journey time of 124 minutes and speed of 45mph on the A75 (over 95 miles), which is well below some of the other strategic routes in Scotland, including the A9 between Perth and Inverness and the A90 between Perth and Aberdeen which were identified in the SWSTS as both having typical speeds of around 51mph for an equivalent distance. Analysis also considered typical average road speeds for the 'last 100 miles' of journeys to Irish Sea ports: Cairnryan (from Gretna) - 44 mph; Heysham (from M6 north) - 55 mph; Liverpool Stena Terminal (from M6 north) - 51 mph; and Holyhead (from M56/M6) - 58 mph. On this basis, travelling the last 100 miles to Cairnryan (from Gretna) takes up to 30 minutes longer than the equivalent trip to Holyhead.
Accident Rates and Severity	The issues around road standard are thought to lead to more severe accidents, and there is a perception of high number of road traffic accidents on the A75 and in the South West	The SWSTS and STPR2 present accident data analysis for 2012-2016 inclusive, comparing the A75 to rates for the strategic routes in South West Scotland, namely the A77, A76 and A701 to national accident rates. This highlighted that while there is a perception that there are a high number of accidents on the

Problem(s) derived from SWSTS	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
	of Scotland, with SWSTS evidence noting higher KSI accidents at the time of analysis.	strategic roads within the study area, the observed accident rate per million vehicle kilometres travelled on the full A75 corridor is lower than the equivalent national rate. However, the proportion of killed and seriously injured accidents is higher than the equivalent national values across all routes. This indicates that although accidents may be less likely to occur, when they do occur there is a greater risk of these being more serious in nature.
Road Maintenance	There is a perception that the condition of the A75 is poor, which can have implications for safety and can contribute to longer and unreliable journey times. In comparison to the Scottish average, a higher proportion of roads in the SWSTS assessment corridor either have some deterioration and require investigation or are in poor overall condition and require planned maintenance soon.	The SWSTS used evidence from the Scottish Road Maintenance Condition Survey from 2018 to demonstrate that a higher proportion of 'all roads' in the Dumfries and Galloway region were "rated as Red or Amber i.e. likely to require investigation, compared to national figures, which may support the perception of limited roads maintenance in the region".
Traffic Levels in and around Dumfries	The A76 and A701 trunk roads both intersect the A75 at the Dumfries bypass, with traffic delays in and around the town centre highlighted as having an impact on the ability of traffic to move around the town. This affects journey times for traffic on the trunk	The SWSTS presents journey time information from 2017 that highlights there is a high degree of journey time variability in the peak periods on the Dumfries bypass and in the town suggesting a higher volume of traffic around these times being a potential factor in congestion.

Problem(s) derived from SWSTS	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
	road routes, increases carbon emissions and negatively impacts air quality.	
Diversionary Routes	When a diversionary route is required due to an incident on the A75, the alternative route generally requires travel on local roads through rural communities, with the potential to substantially increase journey distance and time. For businesses in particular, this can increase costs associated with fuel and staff and add to the wear and tear to vehicles that impacts on operations. This can lead to a 'loss of faith' in the reliability of port access.	The SWSTS undertook a review of the diversionary routes for closures on the A75 Trunk Road and established that the longest recommended diversion route can add up to 2 hours and 20 minutes to the journey times. This was a key point of dissatisfaction expressed in the stakeholder engagement undertaken for the SWSTS, with 58% of those living in the A75 corridor being dissatisfied with the diversionary routes.
HGV Parking / Rest Areas	There is a lack of formal HGV parking / rest areas. During consultation as part of the SWSTS, concerns were also raised regarding HGVs stopping in local villages, particularly prevalent during incidents on the road network.	Survey work undertaken for the SWSTS to better understand freight movements in the region highlighted that while layby parking supply on the A75 was generally seen as sufficient in number, there are few formal rest area opportunities or locations with eating, toilet or rest facilities. Issues with vehicles stopping in local villages was noted as a result of timber vehicles having defined routes, so where incidents result in a road closure, vehicles are reported as parking in villages causing safety and amenity issues for local communities.

Problem(s) derived from SWSTS	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure	There are limited EV charging points in South West Scotland, which may constrain uptake in EVs, especially given the distances involved in making strategic trips in the region.	The SWSTS utilised ChargePlace Scotland to identify locations of EV infrastructure in the region, highlighting the few locations of chargers on the network, including along the A75 corridor. Analysis at the time indicated that the A75 corridor had more charging points than the A77 corridor for example, but that there were still relatively long gaps in the charging network.

Table 4-2 Active Travel Based Problems

Problem(s)	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
Active Travel Facilities and Links to Key Interchanges	There is a lack of safe, off road active travel facilities alongside trunk road route, including the A75, in the South West Scotland region, offering limited accessibility across the area and to bus and railway stations for interchange opportunities.	The SWSTS presents information on active travel facilities in the region from a variety of sources including mapping and plans from Sustrans and Dumfries and Galloway Council. The SWSTS highlights National Cycle Network (NCN) routes, including the NCN Route 7, which runs along the Old Military Road to the south of the A75 through the section between Castle Douglas and Dumfries. The SWSTS did not have baseline active travel levels available, however, it draws upon the findings of previous work undertaken in Dumfries and Galloway region and stakeholder feedback to identify the barriers and constraints to active travel, such as lack of dedicated cycle and pedestrian facilities or active travel access to public transport being noted in Dumfries and Galloway Active Street Review.

Table 4-3 Public Transport (Excluding Rail) Based Problems

Problem(s)	Description	Evidence Base (per SWSTS and STPR2)
Public Transport Service Integration	There is a lack of integration between bus services, as well as with other public transport modes including rail and ferry. This can result in extended wait times for passengers that increases journey times and impacts accessibility to employment, healthcare and higher education opportunities for those without access to a car.	The SWSTS demonstrated via some specific case studies that there is a lack of integration between connecting bus services, bus and rail and bus and ferry services. For example, the Stagecoach 500 service no longer runs between Carlisle and Stranraer and requires a connection to Service 79 in Dumfries, with the waiting times ranging between 20 minutes and 2 hours adding significant time to public transport journey.
Public Transport Connectivity and Frequency	Public transport coverage across the South West Scotland area varies greatly by location. Rural areas face challenges with connectivity, potentially limiting access to employment opportunities, healthcare and further and higher education. With an ageing population, the ability to access healthcare for example is becoming increasingly important. Limited access to healthcare from rural locations could place a financial burden on the Health Service and the communities themselves to ensure suitable access.	The SWSTS undertook detailed analysis to establish the level of connectivity by public transport from 36 localities in the assessment corridor (identified by SWSTS) to key destinations including employment opportunities, healthcare and further and higher education. For employment, analysis undertaken for the SWSTS found that Dumfries and the south east of the region close to the border is relatively well connected to employment by public transport. Areas to the south of the A75 corridor face the most challenge with connectivity in terms of access to larger towns and cities. The analysis also highlighted that connectivity between key towns in the assessment corridor and rural towns and villages can be particularly problematic after 21:00 due to

		reduced frequency of bus services. In terms of public transport access to the ports at Cairnryan, analysis in SWSTS show the shortest public transport journey times occur between 08:00 and 16:00.

Opportunities

As well as the gathering of evidence and consultation feedback to understand the problems in the region, the SWSTS has identified and presented some key opportunities that transport improvements in the South West of Scotland could support and help to realise. Opportunities tend to be presented at a higher level than the problems, and therefore a specific evidence base is not attributed. The main themes in terms of opportunities noted are therefore outlined below.

The SWSTS presented opportunities that largely relate to promoting sustainable economic growth. One specific opportunity is encouraging inward investment through delivering accessibility improvements that can help stimulate investment, with associated positive impacts on the economy. The SWSTS also noted Growth Deals as an opportunity. Both Ayrshire and the Borderlands present opportunities to drive economic development across the region and will require support by appropriate consideration of transport infrastructure improvements to maximise potential. A further opportunity relates to how transport improvements can assist in realising specific development opportunities. A number of high-profile development opportunities have been identified in the region, including the redevelopment of Stranraer Waterfront, which could be realised if improved transport infrastructure and increased transport accessibility is also enabled.

Another opportunity is supporting tourism in the South West of Scotland, with it being noted that the area has a strong tourism offering with including the likes of 7Stanes mountain bike sites, the Southern Upland Way footpath route, Galloway Forest Park, the UNESCO Biosphere and numerous castles, golf courses and museums. However, concerns were raised during consultation that inadequate transport connections were inhibiting this potential, with poor connectivity including long journey times within and to the region considered a major deterrent to attracting visitors to the area. It is considered that improved transport connectivity, including public transport and active travel, and reduced journey times could attract a greater number of tourists to the region. It was also felt that longer term economic benefits and local employment opportunities could be generated from an increase in active travel tourism that would support local communities.

Increased electric vehicle use was also identified as an opportunity. An increase in the availability of charging infrastructure has the potential to encourage more sustainable travel throughout the region. The SWSTS notes this could have subsequent environmental benefits as a result of fewer emissions.

5. Gap Identification

5.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the gaps that have been identified in the Strategic Review section of this report, including consideration of the available evidence-base that relates to the previously defined problems and opportunities. The evidence base is largely drawn from the South West Scotland Transport Study - Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (SWSTS), and the further work done within the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2). This review has identified that, for the most part, further assessment work for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements will require existing datasets to be updated, with the latest available datasets used to re-affirm that the problems and opportunities identified in the SWSTS remain valid. In addition, there are some areas where gaps have been identified due to limited data being previously available, or where any detailed assessment work was yet to be undertaken in support of the previous more strategic assessments.

The updates and analysis of data will be undertaken to support the traffic and economic assessments of the proposed scheme and inform the development of the Outline Business Case, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 Scheme Assessment and DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment.

5.2 Gaps Identified

Table 5-1 presents the gaps that have been identified, along with the proposed method by which to update these to inform the further assessment stages of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements.

Table 5-1 Gaps identified and update methodology prior to further assessment stages

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
Traffic Data	The SWSTS presents AADT Data for 2017, traffic volume associated with ferry usage for 2017, and Specialised Goods Vehicle Counts, and vehicle composition data taken from a 12hr Roadside interview undertaken in 2017. The previous data was collected pre-COVID pandemic which had a notable impact on traffic flows across Scotland. Therefore, the previous data may not be representative of current conditions.	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) information from available count sites has already been collected (from Transport Scotland National Traffic Data System) to provide information regarding the background context presented in this Strategic Assessment and will be considered as part of the assessment of schemes moving forward. Traffic flow data for 2025 will be required for the operational and economic assessment. Traffic surveys areas will therefore be procured. Surveys will request classified counts to establish the vehicle composition, including proportion of Heavy goods vehicles (HGVs). At this stage, there is no compelling rationale to	In progress - Traffic surveys commissioned to collect first set of data in June 2025. To be followed by a second data collection programme in September 2025.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
		undertake further Specialised Goods Vehicle Counts. Should there be a significant change in the volume of HGVs identified in the 2025 traffic surveys in comparison to the previous 2017 counts, then this will be reconsidered.	
Accident Data	The SWSTS and STPR2 present accident data analysis for the five-year period from 2012-2016, noting a higher propensity for KSI accidents in the area. The previous assessment dates are now almost a decade old and has been updated to assess current trends in accidents on the A75 Trunk Road.	Accident Data for 2012 to 2024 for the A75 Trunk Road has been provided by Transport Scotland. This will be used to update the accident analysis and seek to reaffirm or otherwise the accident related problems identified in the SWSTS. The updated accident analysis will include a review of the overall accident rate and comparison to national rates, the accident severity and comparison to national rates alongside the location and pattern of accidents.	Data Provided by Transport Scotland.
Journey Time Data	Journey Time data used in the SWSTS was obtained from	Journey time information for 2024 has been collected using	Data Collected.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
	INRIX for 2017 and indicates the average journey times and speeds on the A75 Trunk Road, compared to other strategic routes across Scotland as well as similar routes to and from selected ports in England and Wales. The previous data was collected pre-COVID pandemic which had a notable impact on traffic behaviour across Scotland. Therefore, the previous data may be not representative of current journey time conditions.	INRIX Roadway Analytics to inform the next development stages.	
Traffic Modelling of Proposed Scheme	Previous modelling work in support of STPR2 considered "With Policy" and "Without Policy" scenarios (see Note 1 at end of table), however specific modelling relative to the proposed scheme has not been undertaken. Modelling undertaken as part of the A77/A75 Transport	Traffic modelling is to be undertaken in support of the assessment of the proposed scheme. The scope of the modelling work is to be confirmed but will need to have consideration for alternative policy scenarios in order to present the possible range of benefits under	To be considered in upcoming assessment work.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
	Improvement Study only considered the "Without Policy" Scenario within Transport Model for Scotland.	different future scenarios relating to the achievement or otherwise of key policy targets.	
Cost benefit analysis	Any previous reported monetised benefits cannot apply directly to this project as they are beyond consideration of the proposed scheme scope and assessment corridor. The modelling of the proposed scheme options will allow for an increased level of detail to be considered in support of DMRB Stage 2 and Outline Business Case work, compared to previous assessment stages.	Linked to the traffic modelling described above, economic assessment is to be undertaken in support of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements to provide full detail of relevant benefits and costs. As such, the Net Present Value of Benefits (PVB) and Benefit-Cost Ratio of all route options will be able to be calculated and presented as part of the DMRB Stage 2 assessment and in the Outline Business Case.	To be considered in upcoming assessment work.
Socio-economic context	Socio-economic context was provided In the SWSTS including populations, economic activity, travel to work, housing prices and skills sets. The data is largely drawn from 2011 Census information	Census Data for 2022 will be collected and analysed. As a minimum, the following datasets are anticipated to be utilised as part of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements: population	In progress.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
	as well as information from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) and the Office for National Statistics Nomis database for 2016. Data from more up to date sources including 2022 Census information is available, and therefore data will be updated in order to capture the latest information on socio-economic trends, relevant to the proposed scheme.	levels, car ownership, travel to work information. BRES datasets will also be reviewed to consider economic activity and employment statistics. Data from the Scottish Index for Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) will be further analysed.	
No. and location of electric vehicle (EV) charging points (public)	The SWSTS utilised ChargePlace Scotland data to note the existing provision of public EV charging locations across the South West Scotland region. The previous data was collected in 2018, and it was noted that the provision of EV charging points could have changed in the time period to	ChargePlace Scotland data has been reviewed to confirm the current provision of public EV charging infrastructure. It has been identified that further work relating to EV provision will align with STPR2 Recommendation 28 "Zero Emission Vehicles and Infrastructure" and this would be the most appropriate	Data Collected.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
	2025, therefore the data has been updated.	mechanism by which to progress this option at a national level.	
Diversionary routes and road closure data	The SWSTS undertook a review of the diversionary routes for closures on the A75 Trunk Road albeit for selected closure locations. Information regarding the frequency of road closures was not presented. The data has been updated in order to understand the frequency and nature of incidents on the A75 within the proposed scheme assessment corridor in order to calculate lost time due to incidents. support assessment of journey time variability impacts.	Data on the type and frequency of incidents resulting in diversions and details of the recommended diversion routes themselves has been requested from Transport Scotland and Amey, as the trunk road operator for the South West unit.	Data collected.
Provision of HGV Rest Areas	The SWSTS reported that there are limited formal HGV parking opportunities or rest areas.	The number of laybys on the A75 has been considered for assessment in the background context for this scheme,	Data Collected.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
		however no formal rest areas were identified. It has been identified that further work relating to EV provision will align with STPR2 Recommendation 36 "Strategy for improving rest and welfare facilities for hauliers" and that this would be the most appropriate mechanism by which to progress this option at a national level.	
Active travel provision and usage	The SWSTS presents information for active travel facilities in the region from a variety of sources as presented in Table 4-2 including detail of mapping and plans from Sustrans and Dumfries and Galloway Council. The previous data was collected in 2018 and it was noted that active travel networks could have changed in the time period to 2025,	A review of existing active travel provision has been considered for assessing the background context for the proposed scheme. This will also be used, if relevant, in any further assessment work undertaken. There is limited data reported on active travel demand in the area. Traffic surveys procured as part of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements	In progress - Traffic surveys, including WCH, commissioned to collect first set of data in June 2025. To be followed by a second data collection programme in September 2025.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
	therefore the data has been updated. Data on active travel demand will be essential to supporting the traffic modelling and assessment work going forward.	have included the provision of walking/wheeling, cycling and horse riding (WCH) surveys to ascertain the level of active travel at various points on routes throughout the study area, including within the two villages and on local core paths.	
Public transport network	The SWSTS presented information on various public transport modes and their frequencies as of 2018, which at that point in time indicated a lack of overall public transport connectivity for rural areas in particular. The previous data was collected in 2018 and it was noted that public transport services could have changed in the time period to 2025, therefore the data has been updated.	Public transport information has been collated and will be updated as required, drawing on information and data already gathered and presented in the Background Context section of this Strategic Assessment. Podaris or TRACC may then be utilised to provide further analysis on accessibility by public transport to key services.	Data collected.

Gap	Previous Evidence	Methodology	Status
Public Transport Integration	The SWSTS demonstrated through specific case studies that there is a lack of integration between public transport services, including between different bus services, bus and rail and bus and ferries. The previous data was collected in 2018, and it was noted that public transport services could have changed in the time period to 2025, therefore the data has been updated.	The current bus and ferry timetable information has been collected for this Strategic Assessment and will allow analysis of service integration to be updated. The A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements will not be considering integration of bus and rail due to the lack of rail facilities (no line or station) in the study area.	Data collected.
Other Statutory Assessments	Qualitative assessment has been provided in STPR2 Recommendation 40 Appraisal Summary Table to provide scoring against these statutory assessment criteria.	The need for further statutory assessments (e.g. Equalities Impact Assessment, Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment, Island Communities Impact Assessment and Fairer Scotland Duty Assessment) will be determined as the proposed scheme progresses.	To be considered at DMRB Stage 2.

Note 1: This refers to scenarios developed for STPR2. The" With Policy" scenario captures policy ambitions leading to lower levels of motorised traffic demand, whereas the "Without Policy" scenario has no policy ambitions and reflects higher levels of motorised traffic demand.

5.3 Conclusion

This section has identified the analysis and data updates that are likely to be required to inform the next stages of assessment for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements. The data and subsequent assessment will be utilised to reaffirm the problems and opportunities relative to the A75 Trunk Road that have been identified in the previous studies and inform the scheme assessment workstreams.

Due to the strategic focus of STPR2 and its geographic scope covering the whole of Scotland, the transport appraisal for STPR2 was of a higher-level nature and undertaken at a regional level and for a range of multi-modal interventions that themselves comprised multiple (grouped) options. This is evident in a number of the STPR2 recommendations including Recommendation 40 – "Access to Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan". Recommendation 40 itself comprises a number of options including, but not limited to, improving junctions, enhancing overtaking opportunities with WS2+1 or climbing lanes at appropriate locations where slow-moving traffic leads to risky overtaking manoeuvres, and widening or realigning carriageways to alleviate 'pinch points' such as narrow structures or at stretches of older standard single carriageway. The recommendation goes on to identify the A75 realignment around Springholm and Crocketford as one example of a location of an improvement scheme.

As such although the strategic case for Recommendation 40 has been established through STPR2, it did not explicitly appraise individual options that are covered by Recommendation 40 in greater detail. As a result, whilst no gaps have been identified that are considered to be of major concern, it is recommended that consideration is given to undertaking a DMRB Stage 1 Scheme Assessment for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements. This would be specific to the proposed scheme and would fulfil the additional DMRB Stage 1 assessment requirements to bridge the progression from the strategic case (STPR2) through to the more detailed requirements of a DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment.

6. Environment Review

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) have been undertaken and published for both the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) and the SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy (RTS), both of which considered the A75. As discussed in the Relevant Policies, Strategies and Previous Studies section of this report, the A75 was considered as part of Recommendation 40 of STPR2, and theme four and eight of SWestrans RTS.

The findings of both SEAs were of an appropriate level expected for assessing the likely impacts of a strategy or plan on the environment at the strategic stage. Additional information is required to support Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage1 assessment than was necessary to be identified for the SEAs and therefore supporting the need for Stage 1 Assessment. Undertaking this environmental assessment has enabled the more comprehensive and specific information on the environmental features and constraints within and adjacent to the A75 corridor to be established, and that are important to inform and shape the DMRB Stage 1 process from an environmental and sustainability perspective.

From an environmental assessment perspective, no gaps have been identified in the strategic-level appraisal work that was undertaken.

7. Objective Mapping and Refinement

7.1 Introduction

This section presents details of the objectives developed for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements scheme including the refinement of the initial draft objectives and their alignment with the overarching objectives of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2). The refinements to the initial draft scheme objectives are outlined, focussing on the proposed changes to provide additional clarity and follow SMART principles as far as possible i.e. that objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.

The refined objectives have been 'mapped' to check their alignment with the South West Scotland Regional Sub-Objectives that were developed under STPR2, and hence with the overarching national level STPR2 objectives. The overarching set of Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) established as part of STPR2 are closely aligned with the four priorities and 12 outcomes contained within the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2).

7.2 South West Scotland Transport Study and Strategic Transport Projects Review 2

The South West Scotland Transport Study - Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (SWSTS) identified a number of problems and opportunities that were then used to inform the identification of key transport themes, and in turn the development of regional TPOs that would seek to address these key problems and opportunities in the region. STPR2 formed a set of national objectives aligned to the priorities and outcomes contained within the NTS2. These overarching national-level objectives are supported by a series of regional sub-objectives, tailored to the unique problems and opportunities identified within each STPR2 region. In the case of the South West Scotland regional sub-objectives TPOs were developed to address the problems and opportunities identified within the SWSTS.

Under STPR2 these regional sub-objectives were taken through a mapping exercise to ensure that they aligned with the SWSTS objectives, and that no gaps were present. This mapping exercise confirmed that all of the SWSTS objectives map to at least one of the STPR2 overarching objectives and sub-objectives. This provides confidence that the TPOs identified within STPR2 for the South West of Scotland are aligned to those identified in the SWSTS. Further information on these objectives, and the mapping exercise, can be found within the South West Scotland Option Sifting Update Report.

A similar process has been undertaken to confirm the alignment of the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements objectives to the overarching STPR2 national-level objectives and the regional objectives for South West Scotland.

7.3 Draft Scheme Objectives

The initial draft objectives for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements, as set out in the original services brief, are as follows:

- Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by the A75 Trunk Road in Springholm and Crocketford and enhance placemaking opportunities.

- Improve the resilience and reliability of the A75 for freight and other road users traveling to the ports at Cairnryan.
- Improve road safety on the A75 Gretna to Stranraer strategic corridor, through increased overtaking opportunities of slower moving vehicles.
- Increase land-use and transport opportunities to capitalise on the built and natural environment of South West Scotland for the benefits of those living in the region.

These objectives were subject to a refinement process and review following SMART principles as far as possible and were mapped to confirm their alignment with the broader national objectives and regional sub-objectives set out in STPR2. The next section summarises the objective refinement process and concludes with the mapping of alignment between the refined objectives and the STPR2 objectives.

7.4 Objective Refinement

This section outlines the refinement process that has been undertaken for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements and summarises the rationale for the changes that have been made.

Each of the initial draft objectives was mapped to check how well it would align with the STPR2 TPOs. The draft objectives were then refined to give additional clarity and 'SMARTened' where possible to provide better alignment with the overarching STPR2 national objectives and the South West Scotland regional objectives. Note that at this stage capturing the timed element in the refined objectives is linked to the uncertainty surrounding the timeframes for the next stage of development and future construction programme for the proposed scheme.

Each of the refined objectives are shown in Table 7-1 to Table 7-4 alongside the wording to provide context, and a summary of the rationale for the refinements provided.

Table 7-1 A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Objective One Update

Original Objective One	Refined Objective
Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by the A75 Trunk Road in Springholm and Crocketford and enhance placemaking opportunities.	Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by strategic traffic using the A75 trunk road within Springholm and Crocketford, by achieving a reduction in traffic of at least 50% and enhance placemaking opportunities from year of opening.

The term 'strategic traffic', highlighting the strategic nature of traffic along the A75 Trunk Road, has been added to provide further detail to the objective, ensuring that it is more specific to the relevant problem highlighted in the Strategic Review – Problems and Opportunities section of this report. Further to this, it marks a key distinction between

strategic, long distance, and local traffic - which will likely continue to travel to and within the villages. It is anticipated that the proposed scheme will enable a significant reduction in strategic traffic that currently uses the existing A75 through the villages, although the level of traffic reduction will be dependent on more detailed design elements that will not be established until route options have been identified. Therefore, a target of at least 50% reduction has been set. The time-bound element of 'from year of opening' has been added to inform future evaluation, due to the likely immediate realisation of these outcomes.

Table 7-2 A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Objective Two Update

Original Objective Two	Refined Objective
Improve the resilience and reliability of the A75 for freight and other road users traveling to the ports at Cairnryan.	Improve the resilience and reliability of the A75 trunk road, including for freight travelling to and from the ports at Cairnryan, by reducing time lost due to slower moving vehicles and incidents locally to increase the average speed and reduce the variation in average speed from year of opening.

This objective has been refined to reflect the fact that resilience and reliability of the A75 are factors that affect predominantly, but not only, strategic traffic. This is due to the fact that the improvements to the A75 are likely to result in wider, regional and national, economic impacts through better connections between British and Northern Irish markets. Changes to wording were also introduced to ensure the consideration of traffic travelling in both directions. In terms of a target, it is anticipated that the proposed scheme can achieve a reduction of lost time both due to incidents and slower moving vehicles. This will be assessed by examining changes to the overall average speed of vehicles and the variation in average speed as a result of the proposed scheme compared to the current situation between the Allanton Roundabout and Drummore Roundabout at either end of the assessment corridor. These changes are expected to be realised immediately upon opening of the proposed scheme and timed element from year of opening has been included to reflect this.

Table 7-3 A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Objective Three Update

Original Objective Three	Refined Objective
Improve road safety on the A75 Gretna to Stranraer strategic corridor, through increased overtaking opportunities of slower moving vehicles.	Reduce local accident rates and severity through reducing KSIs by 65% in line with Road Safety Framework targets, and contribute to improving safety on the A75 trunk road within five years of opening.

The geographic reference of this objective has been refined, noting that the proposed scheme is specific to a short section of the A75 and not the whole route. Therefore, reductions in

accident rates are likely to be localised to the area in question whilst more general improvements to safety, through platoon reductions or decreased driver frustration for example, are expected across the wider A75 corridor, albeit at a smaller scale. Thus, the objective has been refined to reflect the more localised nature of the safety improvements expected. The text on overtaking opportunities has been removed as it represented an option rather than relating to an objective that seeks to express an outcome. A target of reducing KSIs by 65% has been identified on the basis that this is in line with the national targets set out by the Road Safety Framework, over the selected time period. The time period over which this objective should be assessed has been determined to be five years as this is the period over which accident data is analysed and compared to national rates.

Table 7-4 A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Objective Four Update

Original Objective Four	Refined Objective(s)
Increase land-use and transport opportunities to capitalise on the built and natural environment of Southwest Scotland for the benefits of those living in the region.	Contribute towards sustainable economic growth locally and for the region by creating potential for local land-use opportunities to increase planning applications over the longer term.
Increase land-use and transport opportunities to capitalise on the built and natural environment of Southwest Scotland for the benefits of those living in the region.	Increase sustainable travel choices and increase the local sustainable transport mode share by 50%, within a year of opening.

The original draft objective has been separated into two distinct objectives in order to allow greater specificity regarding outcomes and targets for assessment.

The first refined objective includes an increased focus on changes to the local and regional economy. Land-use has been identified as a key opportunity to promote sustainable economic growth, separate to opportunities for transport improvements, and has therefore been included as its own objective. It is anticipated that this be measured by an increase in the number of planning applications within the area as an indicator of the positive contribution on local land use opportunities.

The second refined objective seeks to capitalise on the potential multimodal transport opportunities arising from the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements. This objective provides focus on opportunities specific to transport, and the potential multi-modal benefits to sustainable transport that are likely to materialise following any scheme that is taken forward around Springholm and Crocketford. It is anticipated that an increase in sustainable transport mode share would be achieved by the proposed scheme through for example the anticipated severance reduction in the villages allowing for more local trips to be taken by sustainable modes. The target has therefore been set to achieve a 50% increase in the sustainable transport mode share for local journeys. Within one year from opening has been

determined as the timed element for this objective to allow for the potential increase in sustainable transport mode share to be realised.

7.5 Objective Mapping to STPR2

This section outlines the process undertaken to map the refined proposed scheme objectives to the STPR2 regional sub-objectives developed for the South West Scotland region and hence to the STPR2 national-level objectives.

STPR2 forms a set of national objectives that closely align with the four priorities and 12 outcomes contained within the National Transport Strategy 2.

The National Transport Planning Objectives defined in STPR2, are:

- TPO-1: A sustainable strategic transport system that contributes significantly to the Scottish Government's net zero emissions target.
- TPO-2: An inclusive strategic transport system that improves the affordability and accessibility of public transport.
- TPO-3: A cohesive strategic transport system that enhances communities as places, supporting health and wellbeing.
- TPO-4: An integrated strategic transport system that contributes towards sustainable inclusive growth in Scotland.
- TPO-5: A reliable and resilient strategic transport system that is safe and secure for users.

These national objectives are underpinned by a series of sub-objectives that were developed for each STPR2 region. For the South West of Scotland region, the regional sub-objectives were developed to align to the STPR2 national-level TPOs and to address the problems and opportunities identified in the SWSTS.

Each of the proposed scheme objectives was reviewed and its alignment with the regional sub-objectives and national STPR2 objectives assessed. The results of the mapping exercise with the regional sub-objectives can be seen in Table 7-5. The results of the mapping exercise with the STPR2 national objectives can be seen in Table 7-6.

Table 7-5 A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Objectives Alignment with STPR2 South West Scotland Regional Sub-Objectives

STPR2 National TPO	STPR2 South West Scotland Regional Sub-Objectives	A75 First Objective Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by strategic traffic using the A75 trunk road within Springholm and Crocketford, by achieving a reduction in traffic by at least 50%, and enhance placemaking opportunities from year of opening.	A75 Second Objective Improve the resilience and reliability of the A75 trunk road, including for freight travelling to and from the ports at Cairnryan, by reducing time lost due to slower moving vehicles and incidents locally to increase the average speed and reduce the variation in average speed from year of opening.	A75 Third Objective Reduce local accident rates and severity through reducing KSIs by 65% in line with Road Safety Framework targets, and contribute to improving safety on the A75 trunk road within five years of opening.	A75 Fourth Objective Contribute towards sustainable economic growth locally and for the region by creating potential for local land-use opportunities to increase planning applications over the longer term.	A75 Fifth Objective Increase sustainable travel choices and increase the local sustainable transport mode share by 50%, within a year of opening.
1	Reduce the consumption of fossil fuels from the strategic transport system in South West Scotland and enable a shift to more sustainable modes of transport.	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned
1	Increase the mode share of active travel particularly for shorter everyday journeys in the main population centres and between settlements in the South West region	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned
1	Increase the mode share of public transport within the region and to key centres in other regions including Glasgow, Ayr, Edinburgh, Kilmarnock and Carlisle, by providing viable alternatives to single occupancy car use and improving journey quality across the network	Aligned	Partially Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned
1	Reduce emissions generated by the strategic transport system, with a focus on the strategic road network and congested areas in and around Dumfries	Partially Aligned	Partially Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Partially Aligned
2	Increase public transport mode share in South West Scotland by improving integration opportunities between bus and rail and for active travel on public transport.	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable	Not Applicable
2	Improve mobility and inclusion, recognising the specific needs of remote communities in South West Scotland and disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.	Aligned	Partially Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned

2	Reduce transport poverty by increasing travel choice, with particular focus on areas out with the main centres and in communities in South West Scotland with high levels of deprivation	Partially Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Partially Aligned
2	Reduce the reliance on the private car for access to key centres for healthcare, employment, education and cultural sites by improving public transport and active travel connectivity in the region.	Partially Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned
3	Reduce the adverse impacts of the strategic transport system on communities by embedding the place principle in changes to the strategic transport system	Aligned	Partially Aligned	Partially Aligned	Partially Aligned	Partially Aligned
3	Increase the mode share of active travel, particularly for shorter everyday journeys I the main population centres and for visitors travelling within the South West region.	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned
3	Reduce demand for unsustainable travel arising from nationally significant growth areas, taking cognisance of NPF4	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Partially Aligned	Partially Aligned
4	Increase sustainable access between labour, markets and key centres for employment, education and training across the region	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Partially Aligned	Partially Aligned
4	Increase competitiveness of key domestic and international markets by reducing transport costs, journey times and improving journey time reliability for commercial transport routes including links to Glasgow, Edinburgh, Kilmarnock, Carlisle, international airports, the M74 corridor and ports at Cairnryan	Not Aligned	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned
4	Increase resilience of access to key domestic and international markets to encourage people to live work and study, visit and invest in South West Scotland.	Not Aligned	Aligned	Aligned	Aligned	Not Aligned
4	Increase mode share of freight by sustainable modes in South West Scotland	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned

5	Increase resilience of strategic transport system across South West Scotland to reduce the impacts of disruption, with a particular focus on access to ports at Cairnryan and M74 and the Glasgow South Western line	Not Aligned	Aligned	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned
5	Reduce accident rates and the severity of accidents on the trunk road network in Southwest Scotland	Partially Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned	Not Aligned	Partially Aligned
5	Improve resilience in the region through climate change adaptation within the management and maintenance of trunk road and rail infrastructure	Partially Aligned	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned
5	Improved perceived and actual security of the strategic transport system across South West Scotland	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned

The alignment of the refined objectives for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements against the STPR2 regional sub-objectives also informed the mapping of the refined objectives to the STPR2 national-level TPOs. The alignment of each refined objective to the STPR2 regional sub-objectives was consolidated to derive its overall alignment to the STPR2 national-level TPOs. Based on the number of sub-objectives the A75 refined objectives were aligned to, and the relative 'strength' of the alignment, the refined objectives were then consolidated to derive an overall aligned, partially aligned or not aligned rating against each STPR2 national-level TPO.

For example, as can be seen in Table 7-5, the first A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements refined objective "*Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by strategic traffic using the A75 Trunk Road within Springholm and Crocketford, and enhance placemaking opportunities from the year of opening"* shows full alignment to three, and partial alignment to one, of the four regional sub-objectives that relate to the national-level TPO-1. Therefore, this refined objective was considered to fully align with STPR2 TPO-1:" A *sustainable strategic transport system that contributes significantly to the Scottish Government's net zero emissions target"* (Table 7-6). In contrast this refined objective does not map to any of the regional sub-objectives that relate to the national-level TPO-4 and as a result does not align overall to the national-level TPO-4: *"An integrated strategic transport system that contributes towards sustainable inclusive growth in Scotland"* (Table 7-6).

Table 7-6 A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements Objectives and Mapping to STPR2 National Transport Planning Objectives

STPR2 National Transport Planning Objectives		A75 First Objective Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by strategic traffic using the A75 trunk road within Springholm and Crocketford, by achieving a reduction in traffic by at least 50%, and enhance placemaking opportunities from year of opening.	A75 Second Objective Improve the resilience and reliability of the A75 trunk road, including for freight travelling to and from the ports at Cairnryan, by reducing time lost due to slower moving vehicles and incidents locally to increase the average speed and reduce the variation in average speed from year of opening.	A75 Third Objective Reduce local accident rates and severity through reducing KSIs by 65% in line with Road Safety Framework targets, and contribute to improving safety on the A75 trunk road within five years of opening.	A75 Fourth Objective Contribute towards sustainable economic growth locally and for the region by creating potential for local land-use opportunities to increase planning applications over the longer term.	A75 Fifth Objective Increase sustainable travel choices and increase the local sustainable transport mode share by 50%, within a year of opening.
TPO-1	A sustainable strategic transport system that contributes significantly to the Scottish Government's net zero emissions target.	Aligned	Partially aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned
TPO-2	An inclusive strategic transport system that improves the affordability and accessibility of public transport.	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Aligned
TPO-3	A cohesive strategic transport system that enhances communities as places, supporting health and wellbeing.	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned	Partially aligned	Aligned
TPO-4	An integrated strategic transport system that contributes towards sustainable inclusive growth in Scotland.	Not Aligned	Aligned	Aligned	Aligned	Not Aligned
TPO-5	A reliable and resilient strategic transport system that is safe and secure for users.	Partially aligned	Aligned	Aligned	Not Aligned	Not Aligned

7.6 Conclusion

Following the refinement process, and the subsequent assessment of alignment with the STPR2 objectives, the refined A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements objectives are as follows:

- Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by strategic traffic using the A75 trunk road within Springholm and Crocketford, by achieving a reduction in traffic by at least 50%, and enhance placemaking opportunities from year of opening
- Improve the resilience and reliability of the A75 trunk road, including for freight travelling to and from the ports at Cairnryan, by reducing time lost due to slower moving vehicles and incidents locally to increase the average speed and reduce the variation in average speed from year of opening
- Reduce local accident rates and severity through reducing KSIs by 65% in line with Road Safety Framework targets, and contribute to improving safety on the A75 trunk road within five years of opening
- Contribute towards sustainable economic growth locally and for the region by creating potential for local land-use opportunities to increase planning applications over the longer term
- Increase sustainable travel choices and increase the local sustainable transport mode share by 50%, within a year of opening.

This exercise to refine and map the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements objectives has demonstrated they are well aligned with the objectives from STPR2 and are relevant to the previously identified problems and opportunities for the region. However, the gap identification has highlighted data and information that needs to be updated to ensure the problems and opportunities previously identified are still relevant.

8. Summary and Next Steps

8.1 Strategic Assessment Overview

The need for realignment of the A75 at Springholm and Crocketford was originally noted in the A75 Gretna to Stranraer – Route Action Plan – Firm Strategy Report, published in October 1999 and has since been considered or recommended in some way through both the first Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) and the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2), which included the South West Scotland Transport Study - Initial Appraisal: Case for Change (SWSTS) as one of the advance studies for STPR2. STPR2 presented the Strategic Case for improved access to Stranraer and the ports at Cairnryan through Recommendation 40, which included reference to the A75 realignment around Springholm and Crocketford as an example of a location for an improvement scheme.

In March 2024, Scottish Ministers were formally granted funding from the Union Connectivity Development Fund to progress Recommendation 40 from STPR2, specifically to progress the realignment of the A75 around Springholm and Crocketford.

In November 2024, Transport Scotland commissioned Jacobs to progress design and assessment work in relation to the realignment of the A75 around Springholm and Crocketford. The requirement is to complete a Strategic Assessment and depending on its findings potentially undertake a Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) Stage 1 Scheme Assessment, as well as a DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment and a draft Outline Business Case (OBC). The Strategic Assessment includes a review of previous studies and assessments undertaken in relation to the A75 Trunk Road, a 'gap' analysis and a report on the findings.

8.2 Review of Previous Studies, Strategic Review and Gap Identification

The Strategic Assessment for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements has included a review of the relevant policies and strategies at a national, regional and local level to summarise the current policy context to inform the assessment and how it should progress to align with aims and objectives at all levels. This includes the National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) and Scotland's Road Safety Framework to 2030 at a national level, the SWestrans Regional Transport Strategy at a regional level and Dumfries and Galloway's Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2) and Active Travel Strategy at a local level. The assessment summarises the previous studies that have been carried out on the A75 Trunk Road from the Route Action Plans originally produced in 1999, through to Recommendation 40 of STPR2 and the Union Connectivity Review.

The review has captured further details of the content, data and analyses that have been conducted as part of the previous studies and that are of direct relevance to ongoing work for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements. This has focussed on the analyses and outcomes of the SWSTS and STPR2, the previous strategic and economic assessment work completed in relation to the A75 as well as the Union Connectivity Review. The evidence-base used in the development of the SWSTS Case for Change and the STPR2 appraisal was

examined to inform the identification of gaps to address in the next stages of assessment and to reaffirm that the problems and opportunities relevant to the A75 Trunk Road remain valid.

The gap identification exercise has been undertaken to ascertain datasets and information that will either require to be updated as part of the next stages of assessment for the proposed scheme, or was not originally included as part of the previous assessments and will need to be added as new information to support the ongoing process. The new data and information that relates to the assessment requirements for the DMRB scheme assessment process and the development of the OBC largely relate to traffic modelling, economic assessment and environmental assessment requirements, ensuring environment and climate change impacts are captured and external factors such as Brexit are considered. As part of the gap analysis, the source of updated or new data has been identified including whether this is reliant on third parties to provide. This process has already begun for a number of datasets and has been used to inform the context section of the Strategic Assessment.

At this stage although no gaps have been identified that are of major concern, it is recommended that consideration is given to undertaking a DMRB Stage 1 Scheme Assessment for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements. This would be specific to the proposed scheme and would fulfil the additional DMRB Stage 1 assessment requirements to bridge the progression from the strategic case (STPR2) through to the more detailed requirements of a DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment.

8.3 Scheme Objectives

The Strategic Assessment presents the refined objectives for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements. The refinements to the initial draft scheme objectives originally included in the commission brief for the proposed scheme are outlined, focussing on the proposed changes to provide additional clarity and follow 'SMART' principles as far as possible.

The refined A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements objectives are as follows:

- Reduce the environmental impacts and severance caused by strategic traffic using the A75 trunk road within Springholm and Crocketford, by achieving a reduction in traffic of at least 50%, and enhance placemaking opportunities from year of opening.
- Improve the resilience and reliability of the A75 trunk road, including for freight travelling to and from the ports at Cairnryan, by reducing time lost due to slower moving vehicles and incidents locally to increase the average speed and reduce the variation in average speed from year of opening.
- Reduce local accident rates and severity through reducing KSIs by 65% in line with Road Safety Framework targets, and contribute to improving safety on the A75 trunk road within five years of opening.
- Contribute towards sustainable economic growth locally and for the region by creating potential for local land-use opportunities to increase planning applications over the longer term.

- Increase sustainable travel choices and increase the local sustainable transport mode share by 50%, within a year of opening.

The alignment of the refined objectives to the South West Scotland regional sub-objectives developed as part of the STPR2, and hence to the overarching national-level STPR2 objectives has been determined through a 'mapping' exercise. This exercise overall has demonstrated the comprehensive alignment between the refined objectives for the proposed scheme with the STPR2 objectives. This maintains consistency with the previously identified problems and opportunities for the region.

8.4 Next Steps

The Strategic Assessment has identified various gaps from the review of the previous studies and has confirmed that the refined objectives developed for the A75 Springholm and Crocketford Improvements are aligned with the STPR2 national-level objectives and regional sub-objectives. These refined objectives will inform the transport related assessment for the proposed scheme to meet the requirements of the DMRB scheme assessment process and the development of the OBC.

From the work completed in the document review and gap identification of the Strategic Assessment, work is being progressed to collate information and data to address the gaps. The problems and opportunities identified in previous assessments will then be reaffirmed or potentially amended if more recent data indicates this may be appropriate.

As noted previously, it is recommended that consideration is given to undertaking a DMRB Stage 1 Scheme Assessment for the proposed scheme to fulfil the additional assessment requirements to bridge the progression from the strategic case (STPR2) through to the more detailed requirements of a DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment.

From the environment perspective, the findings of the SEAs that were undertaken both for STPR2 and the SWestrans RTS were of an appropriate level expected at the strategic stage and no gaps were identified in the work that was undertaken. However, similar to the transport-related elements, additional information over and above the level that was necessary for the SEAs would be required to support a scheme assessment. This therefore reaffirms the need for a DMRB Stage 1 Scheme Assessment to be completed to bridge the progression from the strategic STPR2 through to the more detailed requirements of a DMRB Stage 2 Scheme Assessment. Undertaking an Environmental Appraisal will enable the more comprehensive and specific information on the environmental features and constraints within and adjacent to the A75 corridor to be established, and that are important to inform and shape the DMRB Stage 1 Scheme Assessment process.

Further work will also be required to progress the five cases that together will form the OBC, these being the Strategic Case, the Economic Case, the Financial Case, the Commercial Case and the Management Case. As noted in the Strategic Review – Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 section of this report, the STPR2 established the Strategic Business Case (SBC) for Recommendation 40 'Access to Stranraer and ports at Cairnryan' that includes the A75

realignment around Springholm and Crocketford as an example location of an improvement scheme. The OBC, through the Strategic Case component, will re-visit the SBC in more detail, will identify a preferred option, will summarise how it will meet the objectives and how the realisation of the benefits are to be measured. Work to complete the other four cases will be undertaken in parallel with the DMRB assessment stages.

9. Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
AADT	Average Annual Daily Traffic
AST	Appraisal Summary Tables
ATC	Automatic Traffic Counter
BRES	Business Register and Employment Survey
CCPu	Climate Change Plan Update
DMRB	Design Manual for Roads and Bridges
EALI	Economic Activity and Location Impacts
EV	Electric vehicle
HGV	Heavy Goods Vehicle
IIP	Infrastructure Investment Plan
iRSS	Indicative Regional Spatial Strategy
LDP2	Local Development Plan 2
MvKM	Million Vehicle Kilometres
NCN	National Cycle Network
NPF4	National Planning framework 4
NSET	National Strategy for Economic Transformation
NTS2	Second National Transport Strategy
OAs	[Scotland's Census] Output Areas
OBC	Outline Business Case
PIA	Personal Injury Accidents
PVB	Present Value of Benefits
RSI	Roadside interviews

Abbreviation	Definition
RTS	Regional Transport Strategy
SBC	Strategic Business Case
SEAs	Strategic Environmental Assessments
SFBB	Superfast Broadband
SGVC	Specialised Goods Vehicle Counts
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound
STAG	Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance
STPR	Strategic Transport Projects Review
STPR2	second Strategic Transport Projects Review
STRIPE	Scottish Trunk Road Infrastructure Project Evaluation
SWSTS	South West Scotland Transport Study
TEE	Transport Economic Efficiency
TMfS	Transport Model for Scotland
TPO	Transport Planning Objectives
UCR	Union Connectivity Review
UFBB	Ultrafast Broadband
WCH	Walking, Cycling and Horse-riding
WEI	Wider Economic Impacts
WS2+1	Wide Single 2+1 Carriageway