

Item:
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Report to Partnership Meeting 5 February 2021

RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

Strategic Active Travel Network

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update on Sustrans' proposed Strategic Active Travel Network and 30 Year Delivery Plan.

Background

Transport systems in Scotland have a macro level, strategic network, linking key destinations across the country and regions, and a micro level network of regional and local routes branching off this to enable shorter local journeys.

The macro level of trunk road was developed in the 1950's to facilitate journeys by car; 70 years later there is still no equivalent level of macro level strategic active travel network in Scotland. Similar networks have been successfully developed and delivered in other small countries, and Sustrans believes that it's time that we create a healthy, safe, low-carbon network that enables more people in Scotland to make trips without needing a car.

Sustrans' vision is for a functional strategic network linking town and city centres, transport nodes and other key destinations. It is urban, inter-urban and rural. As such, it must be planned and delivered on streets, major corridors and trunk roads as well as on paths. Short, medium and long journeys can be made by walking, wheeling and cycling – it would be the active travel equivalent of the trunk road network.

Work to Date

In 2018 Sustrans launched its Paths for Everyone vision for the standard of the National Cycle Network, and then began a process of auditing and rationalising the NCN to this standard.

A 30 year Network Plan is being developed, setting out a costed ambition to develop and grow the NCN in Scotland; aligned with the Active Travel Framework (ATF) and NTS2. A delivery pipeline will then be developed to track progress to the Network Plan and establish an up to date picture of all sections of the network, prioritizing delivery against ATF and NTS2 outcomes.

Sustrans' vision is for Active Travel to be seen as one part of Scotland's wider strategic transport network, in the same way as trunk road, rail, ferries, etc.

A first iteration of the Strategic Active Travel Network 30 Year Plan has been submitted as a proposal to STPR2. Costs are estimated at £2.19bn or £73m per annum, and the Plan consists of three parts:

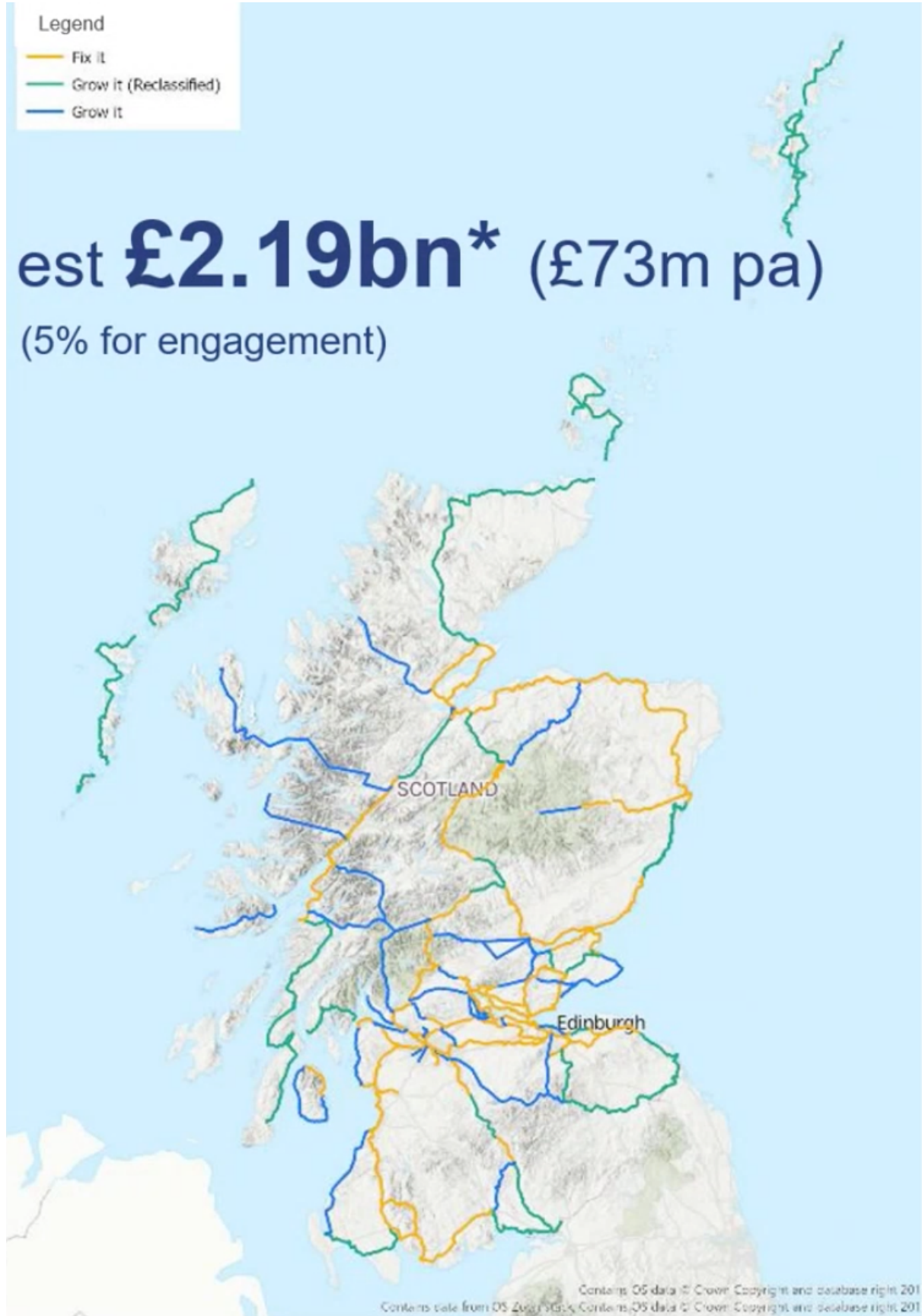
- Fixing the parts of the existing NCN identified as in need of work
- Growing new routes and connections
- Bringing reclassified named routes up to a standard where they could again be included in the National Cycle Network.

Legend

- Fix it
- Grow it (Reclassified)
- Grow it

est **£2.19bn*** (£73m pa)

(5% for engagement)



Stakeholder Engagement

Sustrans intends to use the proposed map above as the basis for collaborative discussions with delivery partners in Local Authorities and RTPs for long-term planning of new projects.

Engagement to date:

An advisory panel has been set up to shape the overall Network Plan and assist delivery. The panel has approved the proposal for the 30 Year Plan concept. The advisory panel includes:

- Society of Chief Officers for Transport in Scotland (SCOTS)
- Regional Transport Partnership representation
- Transport Scotland Bus, Accessibility and Active Travel Directorate
- Transport Scotland Roads Directorate
- Scottish Government Planning and Architecture
- Scottish Government Directorate for Culture, Tourism and Major Events
- Scottish Canals
- Scottish Land Commission
- Mobility and Access Commission for Scotland (MACS)
- NatureScot
- Visit Scotland
- Green Action Trust

Future Engagement:

Two workshops for delivery partners were held in December 2020 and input is being sought on the Delivery Plan during 2021. Sustrans wishes to work with partners regarding the current and proposed routes in the Plan, potential crossovers with local transport plans, development plans, and identification of projects which could be delivered along existing route corridors and those which could potentially extend the network. Individual meetings will be organised in early 2021 with Local Authorities and other Partners.

Challenges

Sustrans recognise that partners are essential to delivery of the 30 Year Plan, and that there are a number of challenges to delivering a Strategic Active Travel Network:

Item	Challenges	Mitigation
Governance	Multiple bodies delivering in the same space National and local co-ordination SCOTS reports that greater national co-ordination needed	Advisory panel Work with all parties to agree governance responsibilities
Funding	Short term funding inhibits long term planning Previously unclear alignment to national policy Maintenance obligations and resources	STPR2 Active Travel Framework Other funding opportunities?
Delivery	Major gaps, both urban and rural Lack of statutory powers & duties makes delivery high risk Dependent on landowners' support 80% of the proposed network has no visible pipeline	NPF4 Legislation? Short / medium term operational agreements?

The presentation delivered at the December workshops can be viewed here until 26th February; access password = network.

Recommendation

Members are asked to note this report.

Risk Register

RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work supports both relevant RTS objectives and those of the Active Travel Framework.

Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – This work supports the development of our Active Travel policies and Regional Active Travel Strategy.

Financial

Impact – neutral

Comment – No funding has yet been identified to deliver the Strategic Active Travel Network.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – A Strategic Active Travel Network would help to eliminate some barriers to travel for all.

Report by: Vikki Trelfer
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Date: 25th January 2021