

Report to Partnership Meeting 22 April 2022

CONSULTATION

Strategic Transport Projects Review 2

Purpose of Report

This report introduces HITRANS submission to the Scottish Government consultation on the draft second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2) for Scotland. The review will inform Scottish Ministers decisions on transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years (2022-2042).

Background and Context

STPR2 is one of the Scottish Governments mechanisms for delivering the vision, priorities and outcomes of the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2). It forms an important element of how the Government will achieve its commitment to 20% reduction in vehicle kilometres by 2030 and Scotland's net zero greenhouse gas emissions target by 2045 as well as other key policy objectives to address inequalities, improve health and wellbeing and contribute to inclusive economic growth.

STPR2 is the culmination of a three year review by Transport Scotland that identifies how and where they see changes to be made to our transport networks that will encourage more of our:

- shorter everyday trips to be made by walking,
- wheeling and cycling; short to medium-length trips to be made by public transport;
- longer trips to be made by public transport and low emission vehicles.

These choices are built on the foundation of the sustainable investment hierarchy from NTS2 that focuses us firstly on:

- reducing the need to travel unsustainably,
- then maintaining and safely operating existing assets,
- then making better use of existing capacity,
- targeted infrastructure improvements.

This review of the strategic transport network's performance will inform transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years (2022-2042)

A copy of the STPR2 summary report can be found at the following link on the Transport Scotland website <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/50897/summary-report-january-2022-stpr2.pdf>. All the supporting technical reports which provide further detail and also the impact assessments can be found at <https://bit.ly/3tVJhnd>.

HITRANS Response

A copy of HITRANS response to the consultation is included as an appendix to this report.

HITRANS response was developed following discussion and input from key partners, Members and Advisors.

While the response welcomes a number of positive recommendations contained within the draft STPR2 report, it also highlights a number of key issues and priorities for the HITRANS area which the draft has failed to address. These include;

- Despite being given a remit to develop a 'Strategy for all of Scotland' by the Cabinet Secretary, STPR2 has restricted its appraisal and proposals to only Scottish Government owned assets. This approach has resulted in the lifeline transport connections of many islands and rural Scotland simply being left 'out of scope'.
- In contrast, proposed interventions such as 20mph zones, place-making, active travel freeways and Demand Responsive Transport improvements are all reliant on local authority infrastructure and resources to deliver and maintain.
- Failure to conclude the NTS2 sponsored review of roles and responsibilities that should have helped shape the STPR2 process.
- The retrospective application of the Islands Communities Impact Assessment would appear to not comply with the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018.
- The need for clear timescales on each of the committed projects on each of the key road arteries connecting the HITRANS area with the rest of Scotland: Highland Mainline Improvements; A9 and A96 dualling; A83 Rest and Be Thankful and A82 Tarbert to Inverarnan.

RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – The policies outlined in these key policy document will underpin the prioritisation of the projects within the RTS Delivery Plan

Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – These policy documents provide a detailed and coordinated framework of policies at a national level

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – No direct impact but the policies and priorities will provide a focus for future Business Plans

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Reducing Inequalities is one of the key priorities of the updated National Transport Strategy .

Recommendation

Members are invited to:

1. Note the Report
2. Approve the drafting of a supporting letter to the Cabinet Secretary and Transport Minister highlighting the key priorities which HITRANS and partners would like to see addressed in the final Strategic Transport Projects Review 2 report..

Report by: Neil MacRae
Designation: Partnership Manager
Date: 13th April 2022