

## Report to Partnership Meeting 12<sup>th</sup> September 2025

### RESEARCH AND STRATEGY DELIVERY

#### Fort William Integrated Transport Plan

#### PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members on progress to undertake an Integrated Transport Plan for Fort William in accordance with Recommendation 32 of the second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2).

#### Background

HITRANS chair a Client Delivery Group that is overseeing the development of an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for Fort William. Membership consists of Transport Scotland, HITRANS and The Highland Council who have provided funding to support the commission and have responsibility for the assurance of the outputs. Highlands and Islands Enterprise and Fort William 2040 are also represented on the CDG in an advisory role.

Transport Scotland published STPR2 in December 2022. Recognising the need to address the challenges across different transport modes in Fort William, STPR2 recommended the development of an Integrated Transport Plan (ITP) for the town:

*Recommendation 32: Trunk road and motorway renewal for reliability, resilience and safety, specifically recommends continued and increased investment in the trunk road and motorway network over and above current maintenance levels to keep the network reliable and resilient for road users. Potential measures would include, but are not limited to, carriageway and structure schemes, strengthening of major bridges, removal of accessibility barriers and development of integrated transport plans for Fort William and the A90 Kingsway through Dundee*

#### Fort William Integrated Transport Plan - Scope & Procurement

A report to the HITRANS Partnership meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025 outlined the proposed scope of the study. It will involve a review, proportionate refresh and validation of the evidence-base and findings of work previously undertaken. This will then inform the development of the Integrated Transport Plan: a comprehensive, multi-modal plan that will establish a proposed package of interventions, priorities, direction, responsibilities, funding sources and process for change for the town of Fort William.

Utilising Transport Scotlands LATIS framework HITRANS appointed a partnership between Aecom and Stantec to undertake the 18month study in May 2025. Initial work has involved comprehensive data collection including extensive traffic surveys and junction turning counts undertaken over the last two weeks of August. This will inform the development of an updated transport model that will be used to support the appraisal of different options.

The consultants are currently working with the client delivery group to develop a robust wider evidence as well as undertaking work to review and validate previous work ahead of detailed appraisal that will include detailed public and stakeholder consultation both later this year and early in 2026.

Every effort has been made to ensure that this work aligns with other work streams and projects in and around Fort William that may have a material impact on the ITP such as the new Belford Hospital. Central to this is the Fort William 2040 Steering Group which is an ongoing project to co-ordinate and deliver a shared vision for the future of Fort William and Lochaber.

In addition, a series of Frequently Asked Questions are being developed for the project and these will appear on a project page for the ITP on the HITRANS website and that for FW2040.

## **Recommendation**

Members are asked to:

- i. Note this report;

## **Risk Register**

### RTS Delivery

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work supports RTS Strategic priorities to enhance regional connectivity.

### Policy

Impact - Positive

Comment – This work supports several policies set out in the RTS including; improving journey time reliability and network resilience, promotion of sustainable transport options in Fort William.

### Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – HITRANS has allocated 25% of funding up to a value of £100,000 towards the undertaking of an Integrated Transport Plan for Fort William.

### Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – Improving regional connectivity helps improve the competitiveness of businesses in the West Highlands and improving journey times in Fort William helps local bus operators provide more reliable public transport services.

<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Neil MacRae</b>
<b>Designation:</b>	<b>Partnership Manager, HITRANS</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> September 2025</b>