

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**3 FEBRUARY 2009****NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 2****REPORT BY DIRECTOR**

This report updates the Partnership on developments with the National Planning Framework 2 and seeks approval to submit observations to Scottish Government and Transport Scotland.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Partnership :-
- (i) notes developments on the National Planning Framework 2; and
 - (ii) agrees to submit observations in the terms outlined in the report.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 27 April 2008 the Partnership endorsed a response to a Scottish Government consultation on the National Planning Framework 2 (NPF2) (Report RTP/08/11 refers). At its subsequent meeting on 28 October 2008 the Partnership approved a response to a further consultation on the NPF2 Strategic Environmental Assessment (Report RTP/08/31 refers).
- 2.2 On 12 December 2008 the Proposed NPF2 was laid before the Scottish Parliament. The document is currently being scrutinised through the Parliamentary Committee process. It is anticipated that the finalised NPF2 will be published in Spring 2009. The document laid before Parliament can be viewed at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/12/12093953/0>.
- 2.3 Although there is no provision for further public consultation at this stage of the process, the latest version of NPF2 indicates that enquiries and comments may be submitted to the Scottish Government Planning Directorate.

3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 NPF2 will set out Government's strategy for spatial development to 2030 and identify key strategic development priorities to support the Scottish Government's central purpose of promoting sustainable economic growth. For transport infrastructure, it is intended to support the strategic outcomes set out in the National Transport Strategy and incorporate the findings of the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR).
- 3.2 There is much to commend in the document, in particular the emphasis which is placed on the role of transport in supporting sustainable development and tackling issues related to climate change; the need to promote more sustainable patterns of transport and land use; and the need to strengthen links with the rest of the world. Reducing emissions from transport sources is a key

objective and the importance of achieving modal shift from car-based travel to walking, cycling and public transport is in line with National Transport Strategy and Regional Transport Strategy objectives. Comment on the role that faster cross-border rail links can play in making rail travel more competitive with air travel for journeys to London and other UK cities is also welcomed.

- 3.3 The document reinforces the role of Scotland's Cities and their regions as key drivers of the economy. In this context mention is made of Dundee and the Dundee Waterfront development, and of the need to ensure that continued economic success of the Cities and their regions is supported by investment in new or improved infrastructure, to maintain good connectivity and support the priority of sustainable economic growth. This is strongly supported. There is also acknowledgement of the strong population growth being experienced, and projected to continue, in eastern and central Scotland, including Perth & Kinross, and the need for land-use and transportation planning to reflect this.
- 3.4 There is limited acknowledgement of the role of Stirling City. Whilst mentioned in the context of national re-generation priorities (the Raploch regeneration area) and as a gateway to the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park, it is disappointing that Stirling is not more fully recognised as one Scotland's key growth areas, in terms of economy, population and housing.
- 3.5 The updated NPF2 purports to incorporate the findings of the Strategic Transport Projects (STPR). In responding to the initial NPF2 consultation the Partnership indicated a need for greater clarity on the relationships between NPF2 and the STPR. The outcome of the STPR is addressed in a separate report before the Partnership. Whilst many of the strategic projects identified in the recently published STPR have now been reflected in NPF2, it is considered that a number of important strategic linkages between NPF2 and STPR remain unclear.
- 3.6 Under the heading "Greening the Environment" mention is made of the importance of developing strategic forest resources. Map 4 (Page 25), which illustrates the nation's Strategic Forest Resources and Timber Transport Infrastructure, appears to identify the ports of Dundee, Montrose and Perth harbour as key ports supporting the Scottish Forest Strategy and its contribution to climate change objectives. Map 6 (Page 35) on Freight Transport also confirms the role of Dundee as a "Gateway Port", Montrose as a strategic port, and Perth as a key transport node. Unfortunately recognition of the role and potential development of all three ports, including the need for improved road and rail links to enable more sustainable movement of timber and other imports/exports, is completely absent from the STPR.
- 3.7 The original document listed 9 projects which were identified as key "National Developments":-
 - (i) Replacement Forth Crossing
 - (ii) Edinburgh Airport enhancement
 - (iii) Glasgow Airport enhancement
 - (iv) Grangemouth freight Hub
 - (v) Rosyth International Container Terminal
 - (vi) Scapa Flow Container Transshipment facility

- (vii) Grid reinforcements to support renewable energy developments
- (viii) Glasgow Strategic Drainage Scheme
- (ix) 2014 Commonwealth Games facilities

3.8 The revised document includes a further 3 “National Developments” :-

- (i) Port Development at Loch Ryan
- (ii) New Power Station and transshipment hub at Hunterston
- (iii) New non-nuclear baseload capacity at other existing power station sites

3.9 In responding to the initial NPF2 consultation the Partnership acknowledged that a number of the specified “National Developments” support our region’s economy, including the Replacement Forth Crossing; Edinburgh and Glasgow Airport enhancements; Grangemouth Freight Hub; and Rosyth International Container Terminal. A number of the additional priorities which the Partnership suggested in its previous responses – e.g. addressing A90 through Dundee; extension of rail electrification beyond the Central Belt; removal of key bottlenecks on the strategic road network – are now included / recognised within the STPR.

3.10 Mention is made of the need for the “Dundee Northern Relief Road” in the section on the East Coast Corridor. It should be noted that the STPR includes a commitment to assess the relative merits of the options of a northern by-pass or improvements to the A90 Kingsway, which is in line with the position adopted in the TACTRAN Regional Transport Strategy and the principles of STAG.

3.11 NPF2 acknowledges that the accessibility of Perth and Stirling and the quality of their environment make them attractive locations for development. It also recognises the importance of links between Dundee – Perth and that the Dundee – Perth – Stirling corridor should be seen as a key communications axis in the East Coast Corridor. This is fully supported and seems to support the view that Stirling’s role as a key node on this axis should be properly reflected by inclusion as a strategic node in the STPR. NPF2 also indicates the potential to strengthen the roles of both Perth and Stirling as gateways to the Highlands. These comments are fully supported and are considered to reinforce the view that improving strategic public transport interchanges at Dundee, Perth and Stirling are significant omissions from the STPR.

3.12 It is recommended that the Partnership authorises officers to make a submission to Scottish Government and Transport Scotland in the terms outlined above.

4 CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The report has been prepared in consultation with the TACTRAN Chief Officers Liaison Group.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no resource implications arising directly from this report.

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NOTE

The following background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (and not containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above Report; (list papers concerned)

National Planning Framework for Scotland 2 : Proposed Framework