



## National Developments – Response Form

Please use the table below to let us know about projects you think may be suitable for national development status. You can also tell us your views on the existing national developments in National Planning Framework 3, referencing their name and number, and providing reasons as to why they should maintain their status. Please use a separate table for each project or development. **Please fill in a [Respondent Information Form](#) and return it with this form to [scotplan@gov.scot](mailto:scotplan@gov.scot).**

<p>Name of proposed national development</p>	<p>South West Scotland –Strategic Transport Corridor</p>
<p>Brief description of proposed national development</p>	<p>The South West of Scotland Transport Partnership’s (SWestrans) vision is a transport system for the South West of Scotland that delivers the internal and external connectivity required to sustain and enhance the region’s economy and communities whilst minimising the impact of transport on the environment.</p> <p>We are proposing a national development to strengthen the transport infrastructure on the east-to-west strategic corridor across the South West of Scotland, which links the Cairnryan Ferry hub and the A74(M)/West Coast Main Line. A robust east-to-west strategic transport corridor is vital in supporting the role of Cairnryan whilst improving the connections between rural communities across the South West.</p> <p>Transport connectivity within and across the South West of Scotland is critical to the future prosperity of both Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland. NPF3 acknowledges that the region has a key role to play as a gateway to Scotland and provides important connections from Northern Ireland across the region to the rest of Scotland, England and Europe. This importance is likely to grow dependent on the arrangements and impacts of withdrawal from the European Union. National development is needed to ensure that Dumfries and Galloway and Scotland has an east-west corridor that is fit for the future, able to take advantage of wider opportunities that are presented, and makes the port of Cairnryan the most attractive port for the transport of goods to and from Northern Ireland, a vital partner in trade and tourism.</p> <p>The strategic importance of the ports at Cairnryan is clear, with freight traffic travelling from across the UK to access them owing to the relatively shorter sailing time compared to competitor ports. 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, £20 million on the A75 West of Dumfries with approximately £10 million moving on the A77 south of Ayr. Research has also shown however, that journey times to the ports at Cairnryan are</p>

considerably longer for the last 100 miles of their journey relative to Heysham, Liverpool and Holyhead. There are concerns of a potential loss of ferry market share to competitor ports owing to relatively poorer surface access arrangements. The two main ferry operators, P&O and Stena Line, noted that the Loch Ryan crossing route is now beginning to lose market share to the other competing routes serving Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The Freight Transport Association has called for the Government to prioritise infrastructure investment in that area, which it reports handles about 45% of Northern Ireland's trade with the rest of the UK.

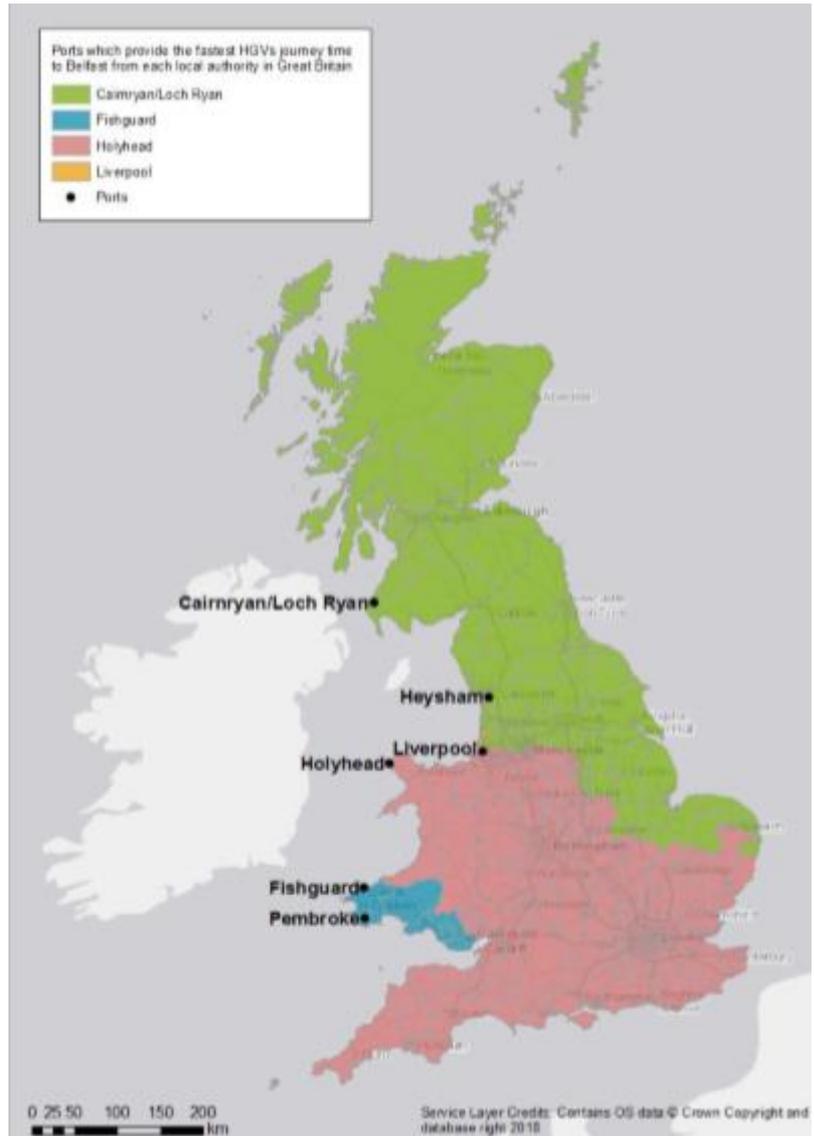


Figure 1. Fastest journey time to Belfast (incl. over land and sea)

The A75 Trunk Road between Gretna and Stranraer is the main east-west link in the south west of Scotland, linking Stranraer and its ferry ports at Cairnryan with the A74(M) at Gretna, close to the Border with England and the M6 Motorway. The route is approximately 155km long and (along with the A751 and the section of the A77 south of the ports at Cairnryan) forms part of European Route 18 (E18) which extends from Craigavon (Northern Ireland) to St Petersburg in Russia. The A75 is primarily single-carriageway standard. Transport Scotland has completed several improvement projects on the route, and these have made a difference, however further considerable development is needed. There are two

settlements, Springholm and Crocketford, which are not bypassed and through which the speed limit on the A75 reduces to 30mph.

Transport Scotland have recently published a study of how South West Scotland is served by the strategic transport network (The South West Scotland Transport Study). It highlights that there are a range of issues about the strategic transport corridors which impact upon network performance and hence how people perceive the network in the South West of Scotland. Each of these issues combine to impact upon journey times, reliability and safety on the road network.

An example of one of these issues is that due to the single-carriageway nature of the A75 and limited alternative routes when an incident or planned route maintenance occurs, the diversionary route is often a poorer quality road which routes through small villages and can significantly increase journey distance and journey time.

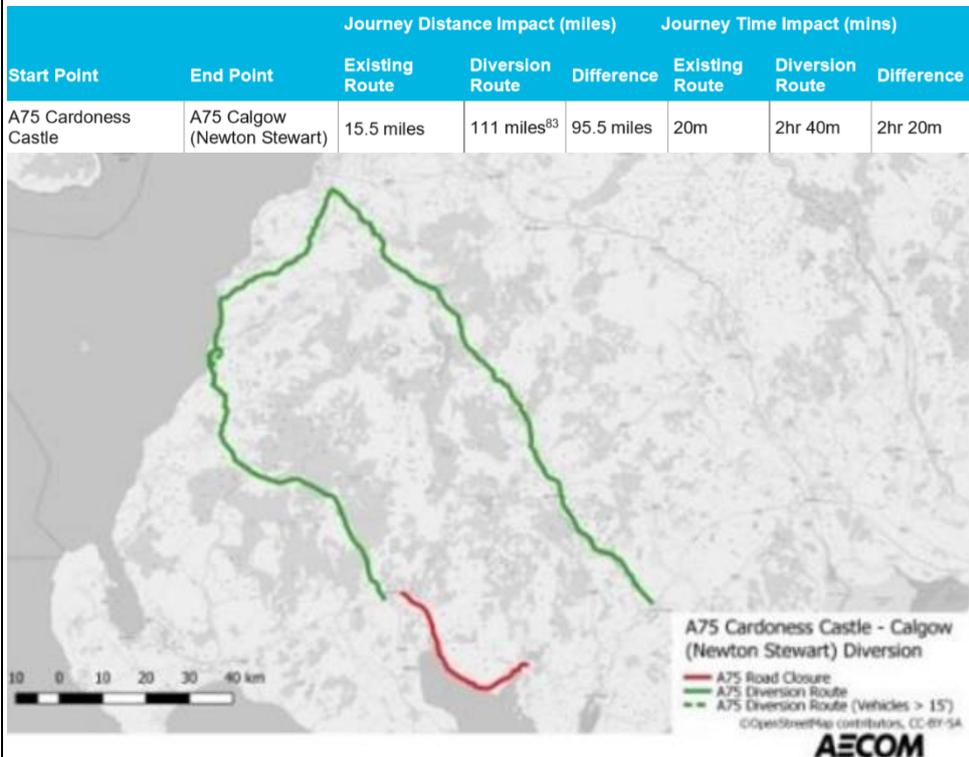


Figure 2. Example of A75 Diversionary Route

It is imperative that whilst transport developments need to contribute to improved economic growth and social inclusion in the region, we must minimise the environmental impact. We face a global climate emergency, and for Scotland to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2045 and Dumfries and Galloway to achieve a regional net zero carbon status by 2025 (Dumfries and Galloway Council agreed a Climate Emergency Declaration in June 2019) then our transport system needs to change.

SWestrans supports the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy and it should be used to assess the suite of transport interventions that could deliver this proposed national development to ensure transport options that focus on reducing inequalities and the need to travel unsustainably are prioritised. The Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity has stated that upgrading the A9 road is not incompatible with climate targets and in moving to a zero-carbon economy, Scotland will always have to have good road infrastructure. Just as the A9 corridor

is critical in supporting the Highlands economy and the economies of Perthshire that are dependent on it, so is the A75 corridor critical to the economy of the South West.

There has been major national investment in strategic corridors recently completed or planned across Scotland. It is important for the future of the South West of Scotland that the appropriate improvement of the A75 and investment in transport connectivity on the east-to-west corridor is planned for.

Upgrading the A75 corridor and a better link between Dumfries and the A74(M) is included in the South West Scotland Regional Transport Strategy and the Dumfries and Galloway Council Plan, 2017 – 2022. It would also deliver on elements of the North Channel Partnership Strategy and Action Plan which has been developed between Dumfries and Galloway Council and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council. Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal recognises that transport connectivity is vital for joining up the communities and maximising the economic potential of the Borderlands region.

Location of proposed national development (information in a GIS format is welcome if available)



Figure 3. Strategic Transport Corridor as shown in NPF3



Figure 4. Dumfries and Galloway Strategic Transport Network



Figure 4. Dumfries and Galloway Spatial Strategy

What part or parts of the development requires planning permission or other consent?

A Strategic Business Case for transport infrastructure projects will be required in line with Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG). Approval from Transport Scotland and appropriate planning permission will be required.

Transport options currently being appraised for this corridor by Transport Scotland as part of the STPR2 process, include:

- A75 Capacity Enhancements on the A75, such as partial dualling, town/village bypasses and improved overtaking opportunities.
- A75 Safety Measures, such as improvements to road geometry, bends and junction improvements to improve safety on the A75.

	<p>Package will also include consideration of safety camera deployments through the Scottish Safety Camera Programme annual site prioritisation exercise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Road Capacity Enhancements between Dumfries and the A74(M), such as partial dualling which would improve overtaking opportunities, and/or bypasses. Package also potentially includes considering the possibility to re-classify the status of the A701 and A709 roads.</li> <li>• Road Safety Measures between Dumfries and the A74(M), such as road geometry, bends, junction improvements and measures to address pinch points.</li> <li>• Road Junction Improvements to the M6 for North to West movements (i.e. coming off the A74(M) north to the A75).</li> <li>• Development of a new rail link between Dumfries and Stranraer</li> <li>• Development of a new rail link between Stranraer and Cairnryan.</li> <li>• Development of a new rail link between the Glasgow South Western Line and the West Coast Main Line.</li> </ul>
<p>When would the development be complete or operational?</p>	<p>Potential transport investment opportunities for the strategic transport corridor require further appraisal, design, and agreement before completion dates are known.</p> <p>The STPR2 is due to be published in early 2021 and will inform strategic transport investment for the next 20 years, from 2022-2042.</p>
<p>Is the development already formally recognised – for example identified in a development plan, has planning permission, in receipt of funding etc.</p>	<p>Within the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) 2008-2032 – Intervention 11 – Targeted programme of measures to improve links to the Loch Ryan port facilities from the [A75] Trans European Network in order to improve journey time reliability.</p> <p>The 'South West Scotland Transport Study: Initial Appraisal' (2020) identifies a number of multi-modal transport options relating to the Cairnryan – Gretna transport corridor and Dumfries to A74(M) routes. These are to be further appraised as part of the STPR2 process.</p> <p>A number of STAG reports on transport interventions on this corridor have been submitted to Transport Scotland by SWestrans, including Dumfries to A74(M) Motorway Links; Sustainable Transport Options for the areas of Dunragit and Eastriggs; and Dumfries Southern Bypass.</p>
<p>Contribution of proposed national development to the national development criteria (maximum 500 words):</p> <p><b>Climate change:</b></p> <p>The projects will all be required to address climate change as an imperative and will be appraised against environmental impacts. We need to plan and design our transport system in a way that sustainable transport takes precedence ahead of private car use. This is a challenge in South West Scotland, which has a low population spread over a large geographic area. This low population density can make provision of viable public transport services more challenging and lead to higher levels of car dependency. The</p>	

Sustainable Travel Hierarchy should be used to ensure that sustainable, robust and reliant public transport and active travel should take priority where possible.

**People:**

Improved transport links will help to support the quality of life through:

- reduced travel times
- increased level of connectivity
- more reliable public transport
- opportunities for local residents to access key services
- increased attractiveness of the area to in-migrants, and the prospect for encouraging investment in the area to realise opportunities, such as tourism.

By addressing current transport issues, we can impact on the local demographic profile and levels of prosperity in the area. Improved connections to major and regional centres would widen the opportunities available to current or prospective residents, leading to more sustainable demographic mix, a less socially isolated population and potentially improved health outcomes.

**Inclusive Growth:**

The A75, A701 & A709 form a key cross-regional artery of Dumfries and Galloway's local economy. Long average road journey times impact on local people's ability to effectively access jobs, education and social activities. This can also impact on population retention in the area – particularly in younger age groups; and the attractiveness of the area for potential in-migrants and tourists. These factors contribute to the ageing demographic profile in the area. Appropriate upgrades and/or investment in more radical modal-shifting transport infrastructure will reduce the constraint of peripherality have a positive social and economic effect.

Improvements to critical long distance corridors transport links will assist:

- fair and affordable access to reach the jobs where they can be most productive, boosting business growth and household incomes
- confidence about how long a journey will take, and that it will be a simple and comfortable experience
- in getting visitors/tourists to the region from other parts of Scotland, England, Ireland and beyond
- more people to do business in and from Dumfries and Galloway by providing sustainable connections to key business centres
- creation of new transport services, nodes and development opportunities for Dumfries and Galloway

**Place:**

Each of the trunk roads in the area, as well as the A709 linking Dumfries to Lockerbie, route directly through town and village centres. As well as causing driver frustration at the lower speed, the traffic through these communities causes local disruption in the form of noise, vibration, air quality and safety impacts. Addressing these will improve the attractiveness of our places and the wellbeing of those who live there.

Transport corridors connect places, by providing high quality designed infrastructure and creating accessible pedestrian and active travel friendly environment where appropriate, the experience of citizens and visitors will be enhanced.