

TRANSform Scotland

the campaign for sustainable transport

Scottish Executive Central Scotland Transport Corridor Studies

Response to the Funding Sources Report and the Final Reports on the Corridor Plans

13 June 2002

1. Summary

TRANSform Scotland welcomes in the Final Reports from the Central Scotland Transport Corridor Studies (CSTCS)¹ the shift in emphasis from unsustainable levels of road-building towards demand management projects and improving the quality and range of public transport.

However, **significant funding gaps remain** in order to achieve the transport improvements needed in the Central Belt – in terms of both capital projects (see Section 2, below) and revenue support for transport (see Section 3). This funding gap can best be closed (see Section 4) by the early introduction of road user charging and by the deletion or scaling of road schemes that conflict with the Scottish Executive's policy objective of stabilising road traffic levels.²

The **A8 Corridor Plan** is broadly acceptable in its current form, given the caveats we set out in Section 7.2.

The **A80 Corridor Plan** is unacceptable (see Section 7.3). It makes provision for substantial increases in road capacity that will generate additional volumes of traffic in Central Scotland and worsen existing bottlenecks. This is counter to the Scottish Executive's policy objective to stabilise traffic levels and improve both reliability and social inclusion.

The analysis of the impact of the proposed M74 Northern Extension in the **M74 Corridor Plan** further demonstrates the folly of this project (see Section 7.4). The Final Report for the M74 Corridor Plan clearly indicates that congestion and environmental conditions in Glasgow will be worsened by the construction of this project. TRANSform Scotland maintains its position that the Scottish Executive's decision to pre-judge the outcome of the Corridor Study by failing to consider alternatives to building elevated motorways makes a mockery of the multi-modal appraisal approach.

¹ As presented to, but not approved by, the CSTCS Steering Group at its meeting on 11/06/02.

² The Scottish Executive transport delivery report *Delivering Improvements* (April 2002) has as a progress indicator the stabilisation of road traffic levels at 2001 levels by 2021. This progress indicator is welcome; however TRANSform Scotland regards this target as too weak if Scotland's transport sector is to make an equitable contribution to the UK Climate Change Strategy.

2. Funding gap for capital projects within the CSTCS area

The Funding Sources Report suggests that some £200m a year from Scottish Executive sources may be available for rail improvements and trunk road enhancements in the seven years from 2003-04 to 2009-10. In addition, some £20m a year may be available from Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) sources (though both of these figures could conceivably improve after government spending reviews due later this year). This would make available some £1.54 billion for infrastructure enhancement over this period for the whole of Scotland.³

TRANSform Scotland calculates the projected capital cost of likely new infrastructure projects in the CSTCS area to be £1,304m – made up of £737m for road schemes & £566m for rail schemes (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Capital cost of infrastructure projects in CSTCS area: 2003-10⁴

Road Schemes	Cost	Rail Schemes	Cost
M80	£190m	Airdrie-Bathgate-Edinburgh	£105m
M8	£105m	Garngad-Cumbernauld-Falkirk	£82m
M74 Northern Extension *	£250m	Glasgow Airport	£73m
Western M8/M77 adjustments *	£30m	St Enoch Bridge/St Johns link	£36m
M77 and Glasgow Southern Orbital Road *	£100m	Larkhall-Milngavie *	£30m
A78 Three Towns Bypass *	£32m	Rutherglen-Whifflet electrification	£15m
Minor adjustments on other roads *	£30m	Shotts Line *	£30m
		Ayr/Kilmarnock improvements	£15m
		Small schemes, park & ride *	£30m
		Glasgow area light rail *	£150m
TOTAL	£737m	TOTAL	£566m

3. Funding gap for revenue support for transport services within the CSTCS area

TRANSform Scotland considers that extra funding for revenue support for transport services in Central Scotland is needed. This will be required to cover (i) fares reform (lowering and restructuring most fares to no more than the marginal costs of car use), (ii) public transport service improvements essential to meet the objectives of encouraging social inclusion and modal shifts from cars, and (iii) increased recurrent spending on traffic calming, enforcement and regulation.

³ This excludes maintenance expenditure covered under separate budgets.

⁴ Capital cost figures marked "*" are TRANSform Scotland estimates. All other figures are from the CSTCS.

At the Scottish level, *TRANSform* Scotland estimates the extra funding requirement to average £40m a year between 2003 and 2010, or £280m in total.

However, revenue support is not given adequate consideration in the Funding Sources Report. *TRANSform* Scotland considers that additional costs in the CSTCS area, including fare reform and service improvement, would be not less than £30m a year, or £210m in total (see Table 4.1).

4. Total funding gap for transport within the CSTCS area

Table 4.1 Notional Capital Costs & Revenue Support Costs: 2003-10

	All Scotland	CSTCS area	Balance for rest of Scotland
Capital Costs	£1,540m	£1,304m	£236m
Revenue Support	£280m	£210m	£70m

Such an imbalance in spending between the CSTCS area and the rest of Scotland would be unacceptable, a point recognised at 5.6.1 of the Funding Sources Report but not directly addressed.

5. Closing the funding gap

A better balance could be achieved by a number of funding options – see Table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1 Funding options for transport delivery in the CSTCS area

Funding option	<i>TRANSform</i> Scotland comment
1. Savings in existing levels of road and rail maintenance.	Unlikely. Spending has been at low levels with adverse implications for safety and the environment.
2. Savings or restructuring in existing revenue support.	Unlikely. (1) Payments towards the costs of concessionary travel have just been increased, (2) Traffic calming and enforcement spending has been at low levels, (3) as the Report notes, there may be some opportunities for better targeting of bus support, (4) changes in rail service operation – e.g. shifts to light rail on local routes – could facilitate some cuts in the operational support required for rail.
3. Contributions from private developers e.g. as part of planning permissions.	Not expected to have a large overall impact although BAA would be expected to contribute towards airport rail links plus other contributions at selected sites.
4. Contributions from parking charges and parking related fines.	Limited positive impact: present Scottish legislation does not permit workplace or retail parking levies.

5. Shifts from other areas of Scottish Executive spending.	Unlikely given present priorities for health, education and free care for the elderly.
6. Other private sector inputs e.g. provision of risk capital within franchising and other contractual agreements.	Yet the ScotRail franchise will remain one supported by large public sector payments.
7. Development of Public / Private Partnerships (PPPs) – including the Special Purpose [Financing] Vehicles (SPVs) proposed by the SRA.	These only suit larger projects and give rise to considerable procurement and management problems – they postpone immediate capital payment from public funds but create ongoing requirements for substantial public sector annual payments over a project’s life (often 30 years).
8. Expanded use of public bonds and trusts to facilitate major schemes.	Reduces borrowing costs compared to PPPs but also creates dangers relating to cost control over a project’s life – not favoured under current Treasury policy.
9. Scaling down, delaying or deleting projects.	TRANSform Scotland sees scope for scaling down M80 costs (e.g. deleting the Muirhead Bypass), delaying and scaling down road works on the M74 corridor and replacing the A78 Three Towns Bypass with lesser works at Stevenston.
10. Road user charging (or earmarked taxation) for transport purposes.	<p>This appears to be the only source of significant extra income within the next five years while also having the benefit of providing a more effective lever for restraining traffic at peak periods.</p> <p>Combining a modest urban fuel surcharge across Central Scotland with road user charging around Glasgow and Edinburgh could be producing an extra, and earmarked, income of £80m a year within five years.</p> <p>Such income would permit a more substantial reform of fares and an expansion of capital spending on a sustainable transport strategy improving reliability and cutting greenhouse gas emissions and other pollution.</p>

6. Concluding comments on funding issues

The CSTCS Reports still leave a substantial funding gap while failing to recommend early action to improve reliability, modal shift or social inclusion. These defects can be overcome through early introduction of earmarked road user charging across Central Scotland (with more sophisticated reforms after 2010) and scaling down, delaying or deleting some of the road projects that clearly conflict with Scottish Executive policies to stabilise road traffic levels.

7. The CSTCS Corridor Plans to 2005 and 2010

7.1 General comments

The Plans should include a commitment to **a phased programme of fares reform, rail rolling stock expansion and road user charging over the period to 2007**. More sophisticated charging should follow after 2010 but arrangements to ensure extra rolling stock and to accelerate bus improvements need to be made now.

The Study is also flawed by the continued use of high valuations for time savings arising from the provision of extra road capacity. These provide a strong inducement for additional and longer trips and also for development on corridors with improved road access. Giving the Executive's commitment to sustainable development, it is inappropriate to use high valuations for time savings in such circumstances. Instead, there should be valuations of improved reliability within limited and managed changes in road capacity.

7.2 A8 Corridor

The 2005 and 2010 Plans are broadly acceptable **provided that road user charging is in place by 2007**.

2005 Plan

More provision should be made for interim bus improvements e.g. Bathgate-Airdrie bus links, expanded bus networks utilising M8, and bus links (including Demand Responsive Transport) to selected rail stations and express bus interchanges.

Greater priority should be given to improving rail reliability and capacity between Edinburgh and Glasgow and providing alternatives to car use from Lanarkshire to Edinburgh and Livingston to Glasgow. This can be achieved by:

- Providing a half-hourly service from Edinburgh to Glasgow Central via the Shotts Line on similar timings to the present route from Edinburgh-Falkirk-Glasgow Queen Street;
- Including good connections or through services to Ayrshire or Glasgow Airport;
- Opening Edinburgh Park station (on the present Falkirk and Bathgate line) by 2003.

To release capacity at Glasgow Central High Level, the aim should be to complete electrification of the Rutherglen-Whifflet and Shotts lines by 2005. Whifflet trains should be diverted to the Argyle Line (Central Low Level) with some extended beyond Whifflet to Carfin/Ravenscraig and as stopping services on the Shotts Line.

2010 Plan

It is agreed that the earliest feasible date for Airdrie-Bathgate rail reopening with quarter-hourly frequencies through to Edinburgh is likely to be 2006/07. This improvement should be completed before the upgrade to motorway of the A8 between 2006 and 2008.

7.3 A80 Corridor

The favoured 2010 Plan for this corridor recommends a 3/4-lane upgrade to motorway of the present A80 north-east from the M73 Mollinsburn plus a 2-lane motorway bypass for Muirhead. **These proposals are considered excessive, encouraging an undesirable rise in road traffic levels and greenhouse gas emissions, and will worsen existing bottlenecks on the route.** The high cost of this project (£190m) would further skew Scottish Executive budget commitments towards an unsustainable road-building programme.

TRANSform Scotland would support an alternative providing a 3-lane motorway between the M73 and Low Wood and a 2-lane motorway on the further stretch to Hags plus lesser improvements on the existing A80 and local roads to the west *in conjunction with phased introduction of road user charging.*

2005 Plan

TRANSform Scotland would support completion of grade separation at Auchenkilns plus an additional lane to the M73 junction by 2005/06 as part of a package including bus priorities and interim rail improvements. The latter should include:

- Expanded park & ride plus bus feeders and improved walk/cycle access to Croy and other stations and bus stops.
- Additional capacity from Croy (by provision of longer trains within the capacity of Queen Street High Level platforms and by the diversion of some existing through passengers to improved services between Glasgow Central and Edinburgh).

However, TRANSform Scotland doubts the feasibility of having the Garngad Chord open by 2005 and would prefer final decisions on a Castlecary station (geared to park and ride but on the Cumbernauld line) to be postponed until observation of the results of extending all of the present half-hourly Glasgow Queen Street High Level-Cumbernauld services through to Falkirk Grahamston (or Grangemouth) with extra halts at Gartcosh and Bonnybridge and EITHER a new halt at Abronhill OR a relocation of Cumbernauld station some 500 yards to the north with improved interchange facilities and car parking.

2010 Plan

TRANSform Scotland agrees that this should include the Garngad Chord and electrification through Cumbernauld to Falkirk Grahamston (or Grangemouth) with a quarter-hourly service giving direct access to the Queen Street Low Level Line. Platform space at Queen Street High Level created by the diversion of the existing Cumbernauld services could be used to provide some extra services to Croy or a new service to Kirkintilloch also calling at Bishopbriggs and Lenzie. Service patterns are likely to be influenced by future views on optimum service patterns across the St. Enoch Bridge to south and west Glasgow. Care is required to ensure that freight movement on the important route through Cumbernauld (giving access to Grangemouth, Fife (via Alloa) and the north) is not inhibited by passenger services. This may also require additional tracks at the capacity constraint point between Bonnybridge and the junction for Falkirk Grahamston.

Mention should be made of prospects for Falkirk line rail services operating onwards to Edinburgh via a new link passing through Edinburgh Airport.

7.4 M74 Corridor and Western M8/M77

The Report on the M74 Corridor is unsatisfactory. Unlike the other Corridor Reports, the M74 Report fails to assess the total costs and benefits of corridor changes including the £250m M74 Northern Extension.

Assessment of the impacts⁵ of the proposed M74 Northern Extension demonstrates that its construction would:

- **Have no significant impact on traffic levels on the Kingston Bridge;**
- **Increase traffic levels on Glasgow South Side radial roads;**
- **Markedly increase traffic levels entering Glasgow on the M74;**
- **Add to existing problems of congestion on the M8 and M77 west and south from Shields Road.**

The report concludes that Glasgow in 2010 with the M74 scheme built "shows a network which is more congested (even with the additional capacity provided by the M74) than in 2000."⁶

In these circumstances, it is evident that the £250m urban M74 project should be subject to fundamental review as to the project's compatibility with Scottish Executive policies on road traffic stabilisation, social inclusion, environmental responsibility and best value.

This requires a decision by the Scottish Executive since the consultants were directed to take the M74 as given and concentrate on means of alleviating problems arising from its completion. This has resulted in **very flimsy proposals for interim improvements** on the urban M74 and western M8/M77 corridor to 2005 yet has also produced test results that road user charging could have a significant impact on cutting traffic volumes close to central Glasgow and further investigation of the need for pricing after 2010 to reduce problems of rising traffic.

Since an urban M74 would not be completed until 2008 and would aggravate many existing problems, there is an urgent need for scarce resources to be diverted towards alternative and higher priority proposals giving better results than the £250m cost of the urban M74 – the biggest single project within the CSTCS area yet the one least subject to rigorous evaluation.

TRANSform Scotland considers that such alternatives should include:

- The introduction of road user charging in Greater Glasgow by 2007.
- HOV lanes on the western M8 by 2005 plus priority junction / traffic flow works to improve the reliability of east-west movement.
- Fares reform and additional support for local bus improvements.
- Improved facilities for walking and cycling.
- Completion of the Larkhall & Whifflet / Carfin / Ravenscraig rail improvements by 2005.
- Provision by 2005 of a Glasgow Airport link also of value for local users – e.g. a line from central Glasgow via the planned Finnieston Bridge

⁵ CSTCS Final Report on M74 Corridor, pp. 35-48 and Figures 5.5-5.17.

⁶ *ibid*: 5.6.3.

(serving SECC and Pacific Quay) and quadrupled track west from Ibrox with an airport spur from Paisley St. James.

- Provision of the St. Johns Curve / St. Enoch Bridge / Strathbungo Link to permit direct rail services from Queen Street Low Level to East Kilbride and the Barrhead line by 2005 (easing rail congestion at Central High Level, improving interchange at Queen Street and reducing pressure on South side radial roads).
- The later additions of:
 - Regional and ScotRail Express services from Glasgow Airport and the south-west using the Shields Road / St. Enoch Bridge rail link to provide direct services to east & north Scotland.
 - An expanded light rail network in the wedge from central Glasgow to Paisley / Glasgow Airport / Renfrew / Clydebank.

Appendix A: SENSITIVITY TESTS

The only comment offered on this Report is that it should be supplemented by:

- Validation tests comparing model results run for the 1995-2000 period with actual results
- Assessments of the possible impacts of road user charging on movement and modal share on alternative assumptions for application before and after 2010 and including secondary assessments of further impacts on road traffic levels (both peak and off-peak) arising from the use of funds arising.

Appendix B: WIDER ECONOMIC AND LAND USE IMPACTS

This is a difficult topic to model due to the importance of policy priorities and public attitudes. As a base, there is a need to outline what might happen anyway in relation to the scale and location of economic growth across the Central Belt.

The finding that M8 and M80 corridor improvements will encourage an eastwards shift in demand seems out of alignment with issues arising from the Cities Review and urban regeneration priorities. Though some further eastwards shift is likely even in the absence of any major transport infrastructure changes, there is a need to give greater weight to the policy priority to reduce economic overheating in the Edinburgh area by encouraging greater development in Glasgow and other parts of West Central Scotland as well as in Fife and Dundee. If increase in commuting towards the Edinburgh region takes place, this should be by public transport or shared car.

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