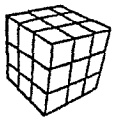
Travel Choices for **Scotland**

Strategic Roads Review



SCHEME DECISIONS

The Scottish Executive Development Department

14th **November 1999**

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THE STRATEGIC ROADS REVIEW – SCHEME DECISIONS

Introduction

The main report on the Strategic Roads Review[1] set out the Scottish Executive's views on the role of trunk roads in the Executive's integrated transport strategy. It noted that a main objective was to safeguard the condition of the existing network by ending the historic under-investment in essential repair and maintenance. It explained that there was considerable scope for making better use of the existing network, through improved management and the use of new technology. It argued that modest, relatively low cost improvements, targeted on congestion or accident blackspots, could yield very substantial returns. It emphasised the priority the Executive attached to safety on the trunk road network and recognised the linkages between good transport infrastructure and the country's economic prosperity. It re-affirmed the Executive's commitment to sustainable transport policies and described how this was reflected in the approaches taken to traffic management, road maintenance and road design and construction.

The report also acknowledged that there was a role for major trunk road improvements within the Executive's integrated transport strategy. However, these have to be consistent with the 5 criteria of economy, safety, environmental impact, accessibility and integration. Chapter 7 of the report and its annexes described the appraisal framework which has been developed to apply these 5 criteria. It listed and described the 17 major schemes (for 3 of which there were 2 options) which were scrutinised using the framework. And it gave the results of applying the framework to each of the schemes and options.

Scheme decisions

This short supplementary report sets out and explains the decisions which the Executive has taken in relation to each of these schemes and options. The schemes and options have been allocated to a number of categories. These are described briefly below. Full explanations of the decisions on each scheme/option are given in the attached annex.

Five schemes will proceed to construction over the next 3 years. These are:

M77 Fenwick – Malletsheugh;
A1 Haddington - Dunbar (Expressway option);
A78 Ardrossan - Saltcoats Bypass;
A830 Arisaig – Kinsadel; and
A96 Fochabers - Mosstodloch Bypass.

In the first of these, procurement will involve the use of private finance, provided that this can be shown to offer good value for money. The others will be procured conventionally.

Two schemes (involving 3 options) will be analysed further in multi-modal corridor studies which will allow road investment to be considered alongside other transport improvements. These are:

M8 Baillieston - Newhouse (On- and Off-Line options); and
M80 Stepps - Haggs (On-line Route).

Two non-trunk road schemes promoted by local authorities will be referred back to the

[1] **Travel Choices for Scotland – The Strategic Roads Review, Scottish Executive, 1999**

respective local authorities for further consideration (in conjunction with neighbouring authorities and other interests) and, if deemed appropriate, development. These are:

M74 Northern Extension; and
A8000 Forth Road Bridge - M8/M9 Spur.

Consultants are being appointed to take forward preparatory work for one scheme. Decisions on the timetable for implementing the scheme and on its funding will be taken once this work is completed. This scheme is:

A876 Kincardine Bridge.

Three schemes are to be held in abeyance and considered alongside other emerging priorities for a future trunk road programme which will be appraised using a multi modal approach. These are:

A68 Dalkeith Northern Bypass;
A90 Balmedie – Tipperty; and
A985 Rosyth Bypass.

Six schemes or options are not to be progressed. In all but one of these cases, alternative, more appropriate solutions will be pursued. The sixth (the M8/M6 Fastlink) will not be taken forward. These schemes/options are:

A9 Helmsdale - Ord of Caithness;
A92 Preston – Balfarg;
A96 Keith Bypass;
M80 Stepps - Haggs (Kelvin Valley Route option);
A1 Haddington - Dunbar (Draft Order option); and
M8/M6 Fastlink.

SCHEMES WHICH WILL PROCEED TO CONSTRUCTION OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS

M77 Malletsheugh - Fenwick

This scheme will extend the M77 Ayr Road route (which runs from the M8 in central Glasgow to Newton Mearns) for a distance of 15.2 km to the dual carriageway Kilmarnock Bypass just south of Fenwick. The road will be built as a dual 2 lane motorway and will generally be parallel to the existing A77. This will be retained and reallocated to provide road space for local access, cyclists and pedestrians. The new road has an estimated capital cost of £60m. Construction could begin in 2002 with completion by 2005.

Traffic flows on the existing A77 are high and the northern section, where the route joins the existing M77, has been reduced to a single lane in each direction causing significant congestion during peak hours. The road has a high accident rate with a high proportion of serious and fatal accidents.

The appraisal shows very substantial safety benefits. The monetary calculation of safety benefits suggests that this factor alone exceeds the construction costs over a 30 year period. The new road will also generate substantial economic benefits through journey time savings. Construction of the new motorway will also allow a safe connection between the route and the proposed Glasgow Southern Orbital (GSO). This is being promoted by East Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire Councils as a Private Finance Initiative scheme. The combination of these 2 road schemes will provide a faster route to and from Ayrshire and south Lanarkshire, the east of Scotland and the M74/M6 to the south.

Traffic modelling suggests that the new motorway would carry a significant volume of cars on commuting trips. The Executive wishes to encourage a higher proportion of commuters to make such journeys by public transport. In the time available in the run up to construction, the Executive will consider the scope for complementary measures to promote public transport usage along the corridor. The scheme will be constructed using Public Private Partnership, provided that the value for money of this procurement method can be demonstrated.

A1 Haddington - Dunbar

This scheme will extend the existing dual carriageway A1 (which runs from Edinburgh to Haddington) by a further 13.8 km to Dunbar. The road will be built to near motorway standards. The new road will run parallel to and immediately south of the existing route. This will be retained as a collector/distributor for local access including improved facilities for cyclists and walkers. The new road has an estimated capital cost of £32m. Subject to satisfactory progress on the completion of the necessary statutory procedures, construction could begin in 2001.

The existing road is single two-lane carriageway. Operational problems include the formation of queues of vehicles (platooning) due to the high proportion of HGVs on the route (22% or approximately twice the national average) which is exacerbated by the alignment of stretches of the route. The accident rate and severity ratio over the section to be improved has fallen in recent years as a result of the safety measures implemented. Provision of 'near motorway' dual carriageway standards can be expected to reduce the accident and severity rate further.

Corrigendum: The first line in the second column of this page ie "savings and accident reduction benefits and" should be read as the second line of the first column.

The appraisal shows substantial journey time generally performs well on the integration and accessibility criteria. The environmental appraisal shows benefits in terms of noise and local air quality and generally modest negative impacts on the other environmental indicators. Two options have been considered in the review – the "Draft Order" scheme, which has already been the subject of a public local inquiry, and an "Expressway" option which removes the intermediate junctions at East Linton and Monksmuir. The Expressway option has marginally lower costs and slightly lower journey time benefits. However, it would also have less detrimental environmental impacts than the Draft Order option. The Expressway option has been selected.

A78 Bypass of Ardrossan, Saltcoats and Stevenston

The proposed bypass will be a dual carriageway with two lanes in each direction and will run for 6.4 km. There will be roundabouts at each end and at two intermediate junctions. The effect will be to extend the existing dual carriageway from Irvine northwards around the three towns. The estimated capital cost of the scheme is £26m. Subject to satisfactory completion of the statutory procedures, construction should begin in 2002.

The existing A78 is a single carriageway road that splits residential areas from the town centres resulting in accidents, noise, pollution, visual intrusion and community severance. The proposed bypass will remove these problems and improve access to development sites.

The appraisal shows that the scheme will generate particularly high journey time savings and very high accident reduction benefits. The scheme scores positively on integration and accessibility. On the environmental appraisal, savings and accident reduction benefits and there are very substantial noise and local air quality benefits, with slight or moderate negative effects on ecology, visual impact, agricultural land and landscape character.

A830 Arisaig - Kinsadel

The scheme will involve the construction of 7 km of new two-lane carriageway on the A830 Fort William to Mallaig road. It will follow a new line leaving the existing road just south of Arisaig and rejoining it at the Morar Bypass at Kinsadel, south of the Morar Bridge. Side road junctions will be provided at Back of Keppoch and Kinsadel. The existing road will be retained as an alternative coastal route. The estimated capital cost of the scheme is £10m. Construction should begin in 2000-01.

The A830 forms the principal access to the west of Loch Linnhe. It provides the only road access to Arisaig, Morar and Mallaig which has ferry connections to Barra, South Uist and Skye. The existing road between Arisaig and Kinsadel is predominantly single track with passing places at intervals, one of the last remaining sections of such road on the trunk road network. Its alignment is extremely poor with limited visibility.

The appraisal shows very large average journey time savings (although the relatively light traffic on the route means that these are not reflected in large monetary benefits) and modest accident reduction benefits. There are positive integration and accessibility ratings. On environmental factors, there are positive impacts on noise and air quality and generally slightly negative impacts on landscape.

A96 Fochabers – Mosstodloch

The scheme involves a wide single carriageway bypass of the settlements of Fochabers and Mosstodloch and will involve 5 km of new road. Side road connections using roundabouts are proposed to Rothes Road, Mosstodloch and Baxters, Fochabers/Spey Bay and the A98. A remote cycleway/footpath for use by non motorised users would be provided linking Fochabers and Mosstodloch, with an underpass adjacent to Baxters. The scheme has an estimated capital cost of £12m. Subject to satisfactory progress on the completion of the necessary statutory procedures, construction should begin in 2003.

The A96 trunk road from Aberdeen to Inverness forms the main street of Fochabers which is badly affected by congestion, noise and fumes. There is also a problem with numerous minor accidents. West of Fochabers, the route passes through Mosstodloch where there is a greater problem with severe accidents due to the speed of traffic through the village.

The appraisal shows very substantial journey time savings and accident reduction benefits and positive assessments on integration, noise and local and global air quality. The ratings on other environmental factors and on accessibility are more mixed. In particular, there is the likelihood of an adverse impact on the designed landscape of Gordon Castle which would be severed from the settlement of Fochabers. However, other possible lines for a bypass have been thoroughly explored and the selected line offers the best available solution.

SCHEMES TO BE CONSIDERED IN MULTI MODAL CORRIDOR STUDIES

M8 Baillieston - Newhouse

The M8/A8 runs from the outskirts of Edinburgh through Glasgow and on towards Port Glasgow. The 10.5 km section between Newhouse in Lanarkshire and Baillieston on the eastern outskirts of Glasgow is the only remaining stretch of the route which has not been upgraded to motorway. Two options for an upgrading of this section were considered in the review.

The first would partly involve a widening of the existing A8 and partly an off-line route, based on a minimum motorway of two lanes in each direction. This would be widened between junctions to 3 lanes in each direction to accommodate traffic joining and leaving the motorway, except between Eurocentral and Chapelhall where link roads parallel to the motorway would be needed. The off-line section would be required to avoid the existing complex junction at Shawhead. A bridge crossing the motorway would be provided for part of the millennium cycle route. This option has an estimated cost of £108 million,

The second option would be wholly an on-line widening of the A8 to a minimum motorway of two lanes in each direction. On this option, the complex junction at Shawhead would be replaced by a substantial grade separated, signal controlled roundabout but otherwise the approach would be similar to the off-line option. The estimated cost of this option is £100 million.

The appraisal indicates that both options would provide very significant economic and

substantial accident reduction benefits, with those from the off-line option greater than the on-line approach. Both options would offer generally positive integration benefits. There are differences between the options in terms of the environmental and accessibility impacts, with the off-line option performing more strongly in terms of noise, local air quality and accessibility but less strongly across some of the other environmental factors.

This scheme would be very expensive (a minimum of £100m) and is unaffordable in the short- to medium- term. Traffic modelling suggests that the new section of motorway would carry a significant volume of cars on commuting trips. The Executive wishes to encourage a higher proportion of commuters to make such journeys by public transport. As noted earlier, the A8 scheme has not yet been scrutinised, alongside other possible transport solutions, using a multi modal approach to appraisal. The Executive has concluded that it would be inconsistent with its integrated transport strategy to approve such a major new road scheme before carrying out this type of appraisal. Considerable effort has already gone into the development of multi modal appraisal techniques. These will now be applied in a corridor study which will examine the A8 upgrading alongside other potential solutions. Following that study, a decision will be taken on what form of road upgrading is appropriate and the Executive stresses that neither of the existing options has been ruled out. The Executive will announce further details of the study shortly. Ministers would wish relevant local authorities, public transport operators, the business community and other bodies with an interest to be fully involved in the study.

M80 Stepps - Haggs

The existing A80, between Stepps and Haggs, connects the M80 from Glasgow and the M73 from the south to the M80 to Stirling and the north and the M876 to Kincardine Bridge and Fife. The existing road is a two lane dual carriageway all purpose road, with over 70,000 vehicles a day on its busiest section. Two options for an upgrading of this section were considered in the review.

The first would involve a dual two lane motorway extending the M80 Stepps Bypass to rejoin the existing A80 at an interchange near Mollinsburn. Thereafter, the motorway would be built on the line of the existing A80, partially to dual 4 lane and partially to dual 3 lane motorway standards. The motorway would tie into the existing M80 at The Haggs. This option has an estimated capital cost of £130m.

The second option would involve, first, a new dual 2 lane motorway connecting the M80 Stepps Bypass with the extended M73 motorway at Sauchenhall Interchange. It would continue on a new line, at three-lane standard, crossing, for example, an area of raised bogs, generally degraded by landfill, woodland, the line of the Antonine Wall and the Kelvin Valley. The route would then run along the foothills of the Kilsyth Hills and across an area of former mining and industrial activity before joining the existing M80 at an interchange just north of The Haggs. The existing A80 would be detrunked, but because of substantial residual traffic would be retained as a dual carriageway. This option has an estimated capital cost of £153m.

The appraisal indicates that both options would provide large economic and substantial accident reduction benefits, with those from the off-line option greater than the on-line approach. Both options would offer generally positive

integration and accessibility benefits. In terms of the environmental appraisal, the off-line option performs more strongly on local air quality and visual impact but less strongly across some of the other environmental factors, including global air quality, water, ecology, agriculture and landscape character. In addition, the off-line option would have a very serious detrimental impact on the Antonine Wall. For these environmental reasons, the Executive has decided that no further consideration will be given to the off-line Kelvin Valley option for the upgrading of the A80.

The on-line scheme would, however, be very expensive (£130m) and is unaffordable in the short- to medium- term. It would also involve a very substantial increase in road capacity. Traffic modelling suggests that the new section of motorway would carry a significant volume of cars on commuting trips. The Executive wishes to encourage a higher proportion of commuters to make such journeys by public transport. As with the A8 upgrading, the Executive has concluded that the A80 upgrading should now be considered alongside other potential transport solutions in a multi modal corridor study. Following that study, a decision will be taken on what form of road upgrading is appropriate and the Executive stresses that the on-line option has not been ruled out. The Executive will announce further details of the study shortly. Ministers would wish relevant local authorities, public transport operators, the business community and other bodies with an interest to be fully involved in the study.

SCHEMES TO BE REFERRED TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

M74 Northern Extension

The current M74 terminates at Fullarton Road in South Lanarkshire, close to its boundary with the City of Glasgow. The proposal to extend the motorway to join the M8 south of the Kingston Bridge was first developed by Strathclyde Regional Council and has been taken forward by Glasgow City and South Lanarkshire Councils. The proposed road would run for 8 km and would be a mixture of dual 3 and dual 4 lane motorway. The estimated capital cost is £180m.

The strategic route through Glasgow to the west coast and central and eastern Scotland is the M8. This is heavily congested, particularly at peak commuting hours, where it runs alongside the north and west flanks of the City Centre. The proposed motorway would provide an alternative route across Glasgow. In addition, it would relieve local roads in southern Glasgow and improve access for development sites and employment sites in inner south Glasgow.

The appraisal shows very substantial economic and accident reduction benefits. The integration and accessibility aspects have been assessed as positive and significant. The environmental appraisal, however, produced a mixed assessment with beneficial global air quality effects but negative impacts on several of the other sub-criteria, including a particularly large detrimental effect on listed buildings along the route.

The location of the scheme, cutting into the heart of a highly populated conurbation, means that a major part of its function would be to

serve local, as opposed to strategic, traffic. The 'commuter factor' calculated for this review, which measures the ratio of peak to off-peak traffic flows, suggests that there would be very substantial volumes of car commuting on the route. Taking these 2 factors into account, the Scottish Executive has concluded that the case for the M74 Northern Extension has to be considered further by the 2 local authorities promoting the scheme in consultation with other authorities in the wider area, such as North Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire and Inverclyde, which would be affected by it.. This consideration should be set in the context of the relevant authorities' Local Transport Strategies and should review alternative transport solutions in the area. These strategies should have as one of their main objectives a reduction in the use of cars for commuting purposes. The local authorities should also consider fully the design of the scheme, in particular the impact on the surrounding area. If the case for the new road can be demonstrated in terms of tackling congestion on the surrounding road network, the authorities will be able to consider whether they would wish to use the proposed road user charging powers to fund construction of the route. Alternatively, existing legislation, in the form of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991, could provide for the road to be funded through tolls. The Scottish Executive proposes to discuss the options available with the relevant authorities shortly.

A8000 Forth Road Bridge - M8/M9 spur

The existing A8000, a local road, provides a link from the Forth Road Bridge to the central Scotland motorway network and the Edinburgh City Bypass. It currently carries around 29,000 vehicles per day of which 10% are Heavy Goods Vehicles and 95% through traffic. There is significant queuing in the morning and evening peaks. The proposed scheme would involve an off-line, dual 2 lane motorway extension of the existing spur of the M9. The new road would run for 2.8 km and the scheme has an estimated capital cost of £15m.

The appraisal shows extremely large journey time savings benefits, large accident reduction benefits and positive assessments on integration and accessibility. On the environmental aspects, there would be noise and local air quality benefits but detrimental effects on global air quality, visual impacts, agriculture and landscape character.

As noted above, the existing A8000 is a local road and it links into the Forth Road Bridge which is owned and managed by the Forth Road Bridge Joint Board (made up of nominees of the City of Edinburgh, Fife, West Lothian and Midlothian Councils). The Scottish Executive will ask the City of Edinburgh Council, working closely with the Forth Road Bridge Joint Board and Fife and West Lothian Councils, to develop proposals to take the scheme forward. The Scottish Executive proposes to discuss joint management and operation of the Forth and Kincardine crossings and the road links to them with local authorities on both sides of the estuary and with the Joint Board.

SCHEME TO BE PROGRESSED THROUGH DESIGN STAGE BEFORE A FINAL DECISION IS TAKEN ON TIMING AND PRIORITY

A876 Kincardine Bridge

The existing bridge at Kincardine is 60 years old and the southern approach viaduct has been propped for 6 years due to concerns over its carrying capacity. In addition to its function in relation to local traffic, the bridge is important as it is the diversion route for high-sided goods vehicles from the Forth Road Bridge during bad weather. Traffic flows on the bridge exceed the capacity of the roundabout on the north approach to the bridge in Kincardine resulting in congestion and associated environmental damage in the village due to queuing vehicles. The local ecology at Kincardine is very sensitive. The Forth Estuary at Kincardine is a bird feeding ground of international importance. There is a Site of Special Scientific Interest adjoining the existing bridge on the south bank of the Forth and all the mud flats and inter-tidal areas on both sides of the Forth at Kincardine are a prospective Special Protection Area in accordance with the European Directive protecting the habitat of wild birds.

A preferred line for a new crossing, upstream of the existing bridge as far from the sensitive bird feeding grounds as practicable, was announced in November 1998. The new single carriageway bridge would be used in conjunction with the existing bridge which would be refurbished. A short eastern bypass of Kincardine, to take traffic from the existing bridge away from the village, would also be constructed. The scheme has an estimated capital cost of £60m.

Consultants have now been appointed to take forward the development of these proposals. This will involve 2 streams of work. The first will include an engineering analysis of the existing bridge, design of remedial works and design of the new structure (including aesthetic aspects). This consultant will also be asked to carry out ecological surveys, design mitigation measures, conduct landscape analysis, prepare road and navigation orders, consult landowners and objectors and progress the scheme through a Public Local Inquiry. The second stream of work will include transport surveys and modelling, consideration of the potential to increase the use of public transport and transport economics related to the scheme, again with an input to a Public Local Inquiry.

The appraisal showed reasonable journey time savings and accident reduction benefits and generally positive integration and accessibility ratings. On environmental factors, the scheme would offer noise and air quality benefits but rated negatively on most of the other elements including water, visual impacts and landscape character.

A more informed decision on the urgency of the scheme and hence of the priority to be placed on it will be possible once the commissioned preparatory work is completed.

SCHEMES WHICH WILL BE HELD IN ABEYANCE

Three of the schemes considered in the review appeared, on the basis of the appraisal, to be reasonably worthwhile projects but to have a less strong claim for early attention than the projects mentioned above which will now proceed to construction. The Executive has concluded that these schemes should be held in abeyance so that they can be considered,

alongside other emerging priorities, for inclusion in a future trunk road programme. It is envisaged that future appraisals will be conducted using a multi modal approach which will allow potential trunk road schemes to be considered alongside other potential transport improvements in the area. These 3 schemes are described below.

A68 Dalkeith Bypass

The existing A68 passes through the centre of Dalkeith where there is significant congestion causing delays, noise and air quality problems and severance. The proposed scheme would run for a distance of 4.8 km on a new line from the Edinburgh City Bypass between Old Craighall and Sheriffhall to the existing A68 at Fordel Mains, south of Dalkeith. It would be constructed as a dual two-lane carriageway with 1.0m hard strips and the estimated capital cost is £22m.

The appraisal shows that the scheme offers significant journey time savings and some accident reduction benefits. It rates well in terms of accessibility and integration. There would be noise and local air quality benefits but there are generally negative ratings on the other environmental factors, including global air quality, water, ecology, visual impacts, heritage and landscape character.

A90 Balmedie – Tipperty

This section of the A90 is, with the exception of the section through the Aberdeen urban area, the only single carriageway between Dundee and Ellon. The road offers limited overtaking opportunities and the accident rate is slightly above the appropriate national average. The proposed scheme is a 9 km off-line dual 2 lane carriageway with grade separated junctions. The existing road would be retained as a collector/distributor road. The scheme has a capital cost of £18m.

The appraisal shows that the scheme offers significant journey time savings and accident reduction benefits. It also rates positively, but not strongly so, on the integration and accessibility criteria. With the exception of local air quality, all of the environmental impacts are either negative or neutral with a fairly large negative impact on agricultural land.

A985 Rosyth Bypass

High traffic flows on the existing A985 through Rosyth result in a poor accident record, community severance and air quality/noise problems. The junction capacity acts as a constraint on local economic development. The proposed scheme would run from the end of the existing A823(M) motorway spur from the M90 at Pitreavie to Limekilns Road. This section would run to 3.3 km and would be built to 2 lane dual carriageway all purpose standard. A further 0.6 km, built to 2 lane single carriageway all purpose standard, would tie the road back into the existing A985. The scheme has a capital cost of £17m.

The appraisal shows substantial journey time savings benefits and moderate accident reduction benefits. The scheme rates positively on integration and accessibility. It offers noise and local air quality environmental benefits but is assessed negatively on a range of other environmental matters, including ecology, visual impacts, agriculture and landscape character.

REMAINING SCHEMES/OPTIONS

In the cases of 5 of the remaining 6 schemes or options, the Scottish Executive has concluded that there are alternative measures which represent more appropriate responses to the identified transport problems and these will be pursued. However, the last of the remaining schemes (the M8/M6 Fastlink) will not be progressed further. Details of the Executive's thinking on each of these 6 schemes are set out below.

A9 Helmsdale - Ord of Caithness

This scheme would have involved the construction of 4.3km of high quality 2 lane single carriageway road. The improvement would have negotiated a series of deep valleys on a new straighter alignment involving a series of substantial new structures. Accordingly, the cost at £11.4m ex VAT was high in relation to the annual daily traffic flows of less than 2000 vehicles.

The primary concern along the existing road is that the existing bridges over the heads of the valleys are narrow and the carriageways crossing the bridges are on tight bends with the result that large vehicles have difficulty manoeuvring across the bridges. The existing structures are also old and their condition needs to be regularly reviewed. The bridge at Ord has already been recognised as weak and a contract is underway to provide a replacement structure. The design of this involves a minor realignment and widening to ensure that large vehicles will be able to pass each other when passing over the structure. Where maintenance is required on other sections of the road, consideration will also be given to locally improving the geometry of the route to obviate difficulties that the existing road presents to large vehicles, and the congestion which this generates.

A92 Preston - Balfarg

This scheme would have involved the construction of 3.8 km of high quality dual 2 lane carriageways with grade separated junctions. The existing road, situated in the north western quadrant of the Glenrothes conurbation, is currently single carriageway with the dual carriageway A92 East Fife Regional Road and Thornton Bypass to the south and a short length of dualling to the north. The scheme was considered as part of a new direct trunk road between Fife and the Tay Road Bridge and Dundee. The Executive considers that the standard of the proposed road is excessive but it recognises road safety problems on the existing road. In deciding not to progress the inherited scheme, the Executive will examine again practical local options to improve road safety and the efficiency of the route.

A96 Keith Bypass

The 4.5 km of proposed single carriageway road with climbing lanes would have bypassed the existing A96 trunk road which runs through the towns of Keith and Fife Keith. A96 through traffic adds about 4500 vehicles per day to the traffic within the town but broadly congestion is not a problem. The new road would have had to transverse some difficult countryside to the south of the communities involving the construction of two significant structures. Accordingly the cost, at £10.5m is high.

The Executive does not consider that the benefits of the bypass are sufficient to justify the

financial and environmental costs. However, it does recognise the difficulties experienced by members of the community wishing to cross the road and accordingly will look to promote a traffic calming regime to reduce excessive vehicle speeds and provide priority to pedestrians.

M80 Stepps - Haggs (Kelvin Valley option)

As noted earlier, no further consideration will be given to the off-line Kelvin Valley option for this scheme. The alternative on-line option is preferable.

A1 Haddington - Dunbar (Draft Order option)

As noted earlier, no further consideration will be given to the 'Draft Order' option for this scheme. The 'Expressway' option is preferable and will proceed to construction

M8/M6 Fastlink

This road, recommended by the Routes South of Edinburgh review in 1990, would represent a considerable enhancement of the central Scotland motorway/dual carriageway network, providing a new 37 km long link between the M8 at Whitburn and the A74(M) at Douglas. The estimated cost of this scheme, at almost £90m, is substantial and the environmental impact of creating a new high quality road through the hitherto rural countryside of West Lothian and south Lanark is considerable.

The route would service the Forth Valley, Edinburgh and the Forth Bridgehead to north east of Scotland. However it would compete with other trunk road links including the A702 to the east and the M74/M80 to the west.

Given the limited resources available for new trunk road schemes and the stronger performance of the other motorway schemes in the appraisal, there is no valid case for keeping open the option of constructing this road.