

Sub-Regional Transport Plan 2015 SEA Statement



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Non Technical Summary

The Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP) deals with the transport needs of the whole of Northern Ireland with the exception of the Belfast Metropolitan Area and the rail and trunk road networks. In line with the Regional Transportation Strategy, the SRTP proposes separate packages of measures for walking, cycling, public transport, traffic management and highways. The majority of these proposals are set out in local transport blueprints for the urban areas with the remainder covered by detailed guidance for consideration at the local level.

The SRTP is not a conventional 'top-down' regional plan that sets a framework for lower-level programmes. Rather it has been constructed 'bottom-up' from Local Transport Studies. In this way, the SRTP does not influence the lower-level programmes. Whilst the SRTP pays due regard to a number of strategic environmental policy documents, in general, it is appropriate that environmental assessment is focused at a lower more local level.

The Local Transport Studies have assessed environmental effects as an integral part of their methodology and have resulted in a balanced set of transport measures. The Local Transport Studies have assessed both minor and major transport measures using the most up-to-date land-use projections. The studies have concluded that the minor transport measures such as walking, cycling, public transport and traffic management do not result in significant environmental effects.

By contrast significant environmental effects may arise from the major transport measures such as new highway links. The Local Transport Studies have confirmed that the proposed road alignments do not impact on designated environmental areas. However, as these measures involve land-use changes they will be considered further in the appropriate Development Plan. As part of the Development Plan process they will be subjected to Strategic Environmental Assessment, and adopted, rejected or amended accordingly.

The impacts of the minor transport measures across Northern Ireland will be monitored in aggregate through the Travel Survey of Northern Ireland to chart any change in travel choice. The statutory and environmental assessment processes required for the major transport measures will include the necessary monitoring procedures.

Finally it is important to note that SRTP is not a statutory document. Implementation of these measures will be subject to clearing the relevant statutory procedures such as environmental assessment, planning and land acquisition (some of which may require Public Inquiries).

1 Introduction and Background

During the development of the Sub-Regional Transport Plan 2015 (SRTP) a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was undertaken in accordance with the 'Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004'¹. These regulations implement the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC.

SEA Regulations came into operation in Northern Ireland on 22 July 2004 and were carried out parallel to the development of the SRTP.

The purpose of the SEA is to help planners, consultation bodies and the public understand and avoid significant environmental effects of the proposed plan before it is adopted.

The SEA process includes several stages of consultation designed to ensure that the relevant environmental issues are considered during the plan's development. The consultation requirements are outlined below in Table 1.1. The statutory consultation body in Northern Ireland is the Department of the Environment's Environment and Heritage Service (EHS).

Table 1.1 Summary of Consultation Requirements under the SEA Directive²

Steps in the SEA	Consultation Requirements
Determination if a plan or programme requires an SEA	Consult EHS if screening is required. Information is made available to the public.
Decision on scope and level of detail of assessment	Consult EHS
Environmental report and draft plan or programme	Information made available to the public Consult EHS Consult the public
During preparation of plan or programme	Take account of Environmental Report and opinions expressed
Published final plan or programme; statement and measures concerning monitoring	Information made available to EHS Information made available to the public

Sections 15.1b (iii) and 15.3c (iii) of the SEA Regulations require that a 'Statement' be made available to accompany the adopted plan, as soon as reasonably practical after the adoption of a plan or programme. This statement must contain the following information:

¹ Statutory Rules of Northern Ireland 2004 No. 280

² Adapted from ODPM (2005) A practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. Office of the Deputy Prime Minister: London. Reference Number 05 PD 03311

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- (i) how environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
- (ii) how the environmental report has been taken into account;
- (iii) how the opinions expressed in response to the consultation on the draft plan and Environmental Report have been taken into account;
- (iv) the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- (v) the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

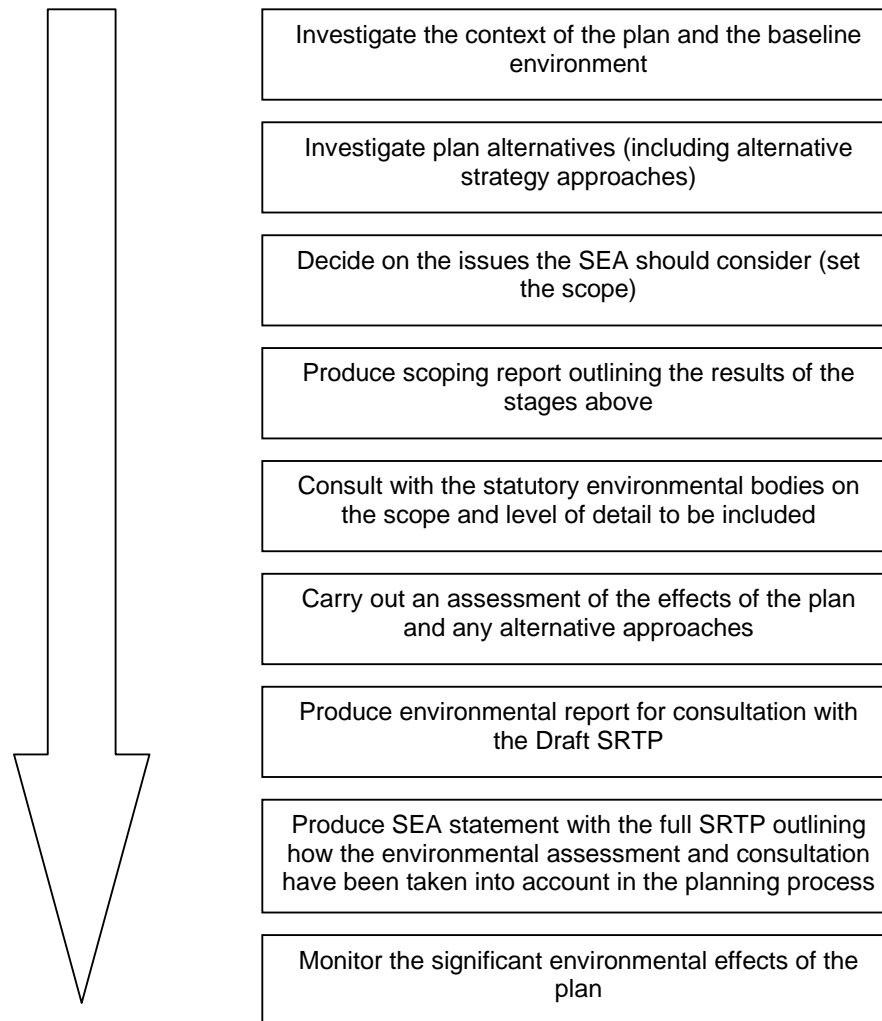
This document is the 'SEA Statement', and provides information on items (i) to (v).

The Environmental Report was published in conjunction with the Draft SRTP in March 2006. Details of where both the Environmental Report and the SEA Statement can be obtained are included in Table 2.1 of this report.

2 How Environmental Considerations Has Been Integrated into the Sub-Regional Transport Plan (SRTP)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been designed to incorporate environmental considerations into the planning and decision making process. SEA is an iterative process, influencing and informing each stage of the SRTP development. The process therefore requires close interaction between project teams working on the SEA and SRTP. The SEA process is outlined in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1 Stages of the Strategic Environmental Assessment



The SEA Regulations require that all consultees be made aware of both the adoption of the SRTP, and the availability of the SRTP and accompanying SEA statement. This information is presented in Table

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2.1, together with information regarding consultation on all documents produced during the SEA/ SRTP process.

SEA is intended to ensure that integration of environmental considerations into the SRTP occurs through means such as:

- working through the SEA process in parallel with the development of the SRTP, allowing the emerging content of the SRTP to be influenced before being finalised;
- members of the SRTP team working on the SEA;
- issuing an SEA scoping paper to the Department of Environment's Environment and Heritage Service with sufficient time for review and responses;
- providing a full assessment of the environmental effects of the Draft SRTP in the Environmental Report; and
- providing adequate time for further consultation on the Draft SRTP and the Environmental Report, thereby further improving the final SRTP.

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Table 2.1 Timing and Responsibility for the SRTP and SEA Reports

Report	Date	Purpose	Availability
Draft SRTP	31/03/06	Consultation on the Draft SRTP	The Draft SRTP was sent to Councils, organisations on the DRD distribution list and interested parties. It was also available from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.drdni.gov.uk • www.roadsni.gov.uk • www.consultationni.gov.uk • or by request
SEA Environmental Report	31/03/06	Highlight to plan makers and consultees the likely effects of Draft SRTP on the environment	The Environmental Report was sent to EHS. It was also available from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.drdni.gov.uk • www.roadsni.gov.uk • www.consultationni.gov.uk • or by request
SRTP Consultation Process Report	11/06/07	Identify and record the part played by consultation in the development of SRTP	The SRTP Consultation Process Report has been sent to Councils, organisations on the DRD distribution list and interested parties. It is also available from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.drdni.gov.uk • or by request
Final SRTP	11/06/07	Present and explain a package of measures for walking, cycling, public transport, traffic management and highways to 2015	The SRTP has been sent to Councils, organisations on the DRD distribution list and interested parties. It is also available from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.drdni.gov.uk • or by request
SEA Statement	11/06/07	Identify and record the part played by environmental considerations in the development of the SRTP	The SEA Statement has been sent to EHS. It is also available from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.drdni.gov.uk • or by request

3 How the Environmental Report Has Been Taken into Account

This chapter describes how the SRTP reflects the findings of the Environmental Report (Section 3.1). It also identifies where the SRTP has been modified from the Draft SRTP, noting that many of the changes cannot be directly attributed to the Environmental Report (3.2). The chapter concludes (Section 3.3) with consideration of how the SEA process has improved the SRTP environmentally.

3.1 Reflecting the Findings of the Environmental Report

The Department for Transport SEA guidance for Transport Plans and Programmes (December 2004) makes clear that many aspects of SEA are already carried out in transport studies undertaken in accordance with the New Approach To Appraisal (NATA). The Local Transport Studies (LTS) undertaken in the Other Urban Areas in support of the SRTP use the NATA approach.

In addition to what has been detailed in the Environmental Report, the impacts of all the SRTP measures have been estimated according to best practice³. This is consistent with the approach taken by the Regional Transportation Strategy.

The impacts are described against five objectives and 21 sub-objectives:

- **Environment** – comprising Noise, Local Air Quality, Greenhouse Gases, Landscape, Townscape, Heritage of Historic Resources, Biodiversity, Water Environment, Physical Fitness and Journey Ambience;
- **Safety** – comprising Accidents and Security;
- **Economy** – comprising Transport Economic Efficiency, Reliability and Wider Economic Impacts;
- **Accessibility** – comprising Option Values, Severance and Access to the Transport System; and
- **Integration** – comprising Transport Interchange, Land Use Policy and Other Government Policies.

The impacts are presented in an Appraisal Summary Table included as Annex A of the SRTP. In short, the SRTP is estimated to provide significant beneficial impacts across all objectives with the exception of the environmental objective.

Within the environmental objective, until detailed scheme planning and

³ Guidance gained from WebTAG, the transport analysis guidance website initiated by the Department for Transport (DfT) to provide detailed guidance on the appraisal of transport projects and wide advice on scoping and carrying out transport studies. Available at www.webtag.org.uk

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design is undertaken, the impacts cannot be fully assessed. However, by way of precaution, the appraisal has noted “potential slight adverse impacts” against the Landscape, Heritage of Historic Resources, Biodiversity and Water Environment sub-objectives. It must be noted that during scheme design such impacts will be considered in detail and mitigation measures developed. In addition all relevant schemes will only be processed subject to satisfactory completion of statutory environmental impact appraisals.

The combination of both the Environmental Report and the NATA appraisal has ensured that the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan have been recognised at an early stage, and ensured that reasonable alternatives will be considered at the detailed implementation stage of each scheme.

3.2 Other Modifications to the SRTP

The SRTP has been modified, in response to consultation comments received on the Draft SRTP. These amendments include:

- **Walking** – Specific additional measures and detailed clarification;
- **Cycling** - Specific additional measures and detailed clarification;
- **Public Transport** - Clarification on proposals and recognition of Rural Community Transport Partnerships;
- **Parking** – Difficulties faced by Blue Badge holders and additional detail on parking strategies;
- **Highways & Traffic Management** – requests for specific additional measures and clarification on allocation of cross cutting measures; and
- **All modes** – Promotion of non-car modes, additional references to the Accessible Transport Strategy and further detail on the implementation of the plan.

Full details are provided in the SRTP Consultation Process Report, published separately.

3.3 How has the SEA Process Improved the SRTP Environmentally?

As acknowledged in Section 3.1 of this report, the SEA process, in conjunction with the NATA appraisal, has ensured that during scheme design potentially negative impacts will be considered in detail and mitigation measures developed. In addition any relevant schemes will be implemented only following the satisfactory completion of statutory environmental impact appraisals.

The SEA process for the SRTP has also served to highlight the importance of ‘tiering’ and the relationship between the Plan and local Development Plans. This is very important to reduce duplication of effort and to ensure that analyses are undertaken at an appropriate level of detail.

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SEAs have been prepared for the following Development Plans:

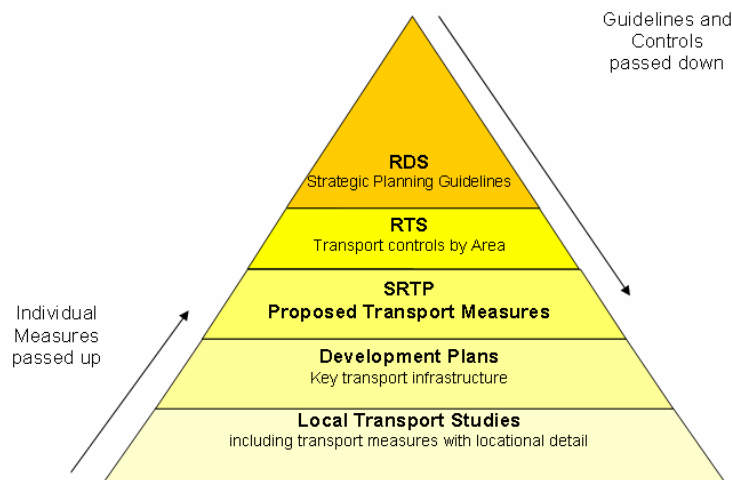
- Draft Banbridge/ Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 – August 2006;
- Draft Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan (BMAP) – December 2004;
- BMAP Plan Amendment No. 1 to Draft Plan – February 2006;
- Draft Northern Area Plan – May 2005;
- Draft Magherafelt Area Plan – Summer 2005; and
- Craigavon Town Centre Boundaries and Retail Designations Plan 2010 – December 2005.

Where a recent local Development Plan has been prepared in advance of the SRTP, then SRTP repeats the transport proposals in the Development Plan (and adds other complementary measures). Where the SRTP is running in advance of the local Development Plan process, SRTP studies have used the most up-to-date land-use projections. However, it is expected that the proposals in the SRTP will be re-assessed as part of the Development Plan, at which time land use requirements will be confirmed. Where the SRTP and the Development Plan process are being prepared together then the contents of each are similar (although the SRTP will contain more detail regarding minor transport measures).

In effect, as explained above, the SRTP does not directly influence the Development Plan. The Area Plan remains the prime local planning document and the subject of independent SEA. As the Development Plans must contain details of any transport measures requiring significant land-take, significant environmental transport impacts will be assessed as part of the Development Plan process.

Uniquely the SRTP sits in the middle tier of the policy hierarchy, see Figure 3.1. The RDS and the RTS pass down strategic guidelines and controls to the SRTP. The Local Transport Studies and Development Plans pass up individual measures and assessments.

Figure 3.1 Strategy and Plans Hierarchy



4 How the Consultations Have Been Taken into Account

The SEA Regulations require the SEA statement to explain how the final SRTP takes into account all opinions expressed through consultation on the Draft SRTP and the Environmental Report.

4.1 The SRTP Consultation Process Report

The SRTP Consultation Process Report identifies and records the part played by consultation in the development of SRTP. The report describes how consultation on SRTP was undertaken, comments on feedback received on the Draft SRTP and indicates how this influenced the shape of the final plan. It also gives quantitative analysis of the responses.

The SRTP Consultation Process Report is published separately and is available at www.drdni.gov.uk.

4.2 The SEA Environmental Report – Consultation Comments

Three consultation responses, referring specifically to the SEA Environmental Report were received. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the comments.

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Table 4.1 Summary of Environmental Report consultation responses

Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
DOE Environment and Heritage Service	We note at the outset that the Draft SRTP recognises the potential impacts upon the built heritage (including archaeological and architectural heritage), but that its unique position means that both the Plan's implementation and mitigation rely on the results of local circumstances and local proposals. This is made particularly clear at paragraph 5.2 of the draft Environmental Report.	Noted. No change to SRTP.
	Measures A, Major Highway Schemes including new links and by-passes has the greatest potential impact upon the build heritage. However, all of the other measures have a potential impact as well. Table 8.1 (in the Environmental Report) therefore needs to be amended to reflect this fact. However, we would recognise that at this time the effects may not be wholly clear, and so there would be a 'Don't Know' response for B-F.	Table 5.1 and Appendix 2 of this report have been amended in light of this comment.

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	All of the measures can have both negative and positive effects. For example, a traffic management scheme may well improve the quality of the urban environment, especially the settings of Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas or Areas of Townscape Character, but also has the potential to harm it depending on how the scheme is designed. Similarly, the land-take for new cycle lanes or pedestrian areas may be small, but depending on location can have a significant archaeological impact. Parking strategies can similarly impact upon the built heritage and urban environment particularly if new car-parking schemes are proposed or built. High-rise car parks have raised particular problems in historic towns across Northern Ireland in recent years.	Noted. No change to SRTP. All major highway schemes will be subject to detailed appraisal before implementation.
	Our main concerns have been dealt with and that the only significant change in environmental impact will be where new roads or links will be constructed and that these will individually be subject to EIA or Public Inquiry and that appropriate SuDS will be used.	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	Page 32 Urban Waste Water Treatment add the following:- a population equivalent of 2,000 or more	Noted. This comment has been retained on file, and will be used to inform future Environmental Reports. No change to SRTP.

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	discharging to fresh waters or estuarine waters. Or a population equivalent or 10,000 or more discharging to coastal waters and it also requires other works to have appropriate treatment.	
	Natural Heritage's comments on such schemes will be reserved for other statutory stages and processes, such as those related to Development Plans and Planning Applications.	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	<i>An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes</i>	
	An adequate outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan have been provided.	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	<i>The relevant aspects of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme</i>	
	This topic has been addressed in section 4 of the Environmental Report.	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	<i>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected</i>	
	We consider that this issue could have been addressed in more detail in the Environmental Report....we consider that reference should have been made to other levels of decision making or associated documentation that have included a description of the environmental characteristics of	Noted. Whilst every effort was made to make clear the relationship between the SRTP and other levels of decision making this point is accepted and has been retained on file to inform future Environmental Reports. No change to SRTP.

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	the area.	
	<i>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance such as those areas designated pursuant to Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and the Habitats Directive</i>	
	This topic has been adequately addressed in the Environmental Report.	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	<i>The environmental objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation</i>	
	This topic has been adequately addressed in the Environmental Report.	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	<i>The likely significant effects on the environment including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects</i>	
	This topic has been adequately addressed in the Environmental Report. We find the detailed summary of effects and other comments within	Noted – No change to SRTP.

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	Appendix 4 to be extremely useful.	
	<i>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme</i>	
	We acknowledge that several different stages have been highlighted between the development of Regional Strategy to the proposing and implementation of transport schemes..... Natural Heritage is of the opinion that these other stages must undertake environmental assessments that are comparable to SEA assessments.	Noted. Other levels of decision making will be subject to statutory obligations and the rigorous assessments, routinely undertaken by Government Departments. No change to SRTP.
	<i>An outline for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical difficulties or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.</i>	
	We note that Local Transport Studies (LTS) carried out an initial assessment that evaluated the impacts of schemes on certain national and international environmental designations. We are unclear about the methodology of the assessment used during the LTS..... We note that environmental designations of local interest were not used to assess environmental impacts of LTS Measures. Natural Heritage is of the opinion that future LTS should consider local	Each Local Transport Study contains an Appraisal Summary Table which summarises the effects of transport proposals for the town. This table is broken down into objectives and sub objectives which include a qualitative assessment for Noise, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gases, Landscape, Townscape, Heritage, Biodiversity, Water Environment, Physical Fitness and Journey Ambience.

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	environmental impacts during assessments.	<p>In addition to this Section 7.3 and Appendix 3 of the Environmental Report states “In the first coarse assessment, designated areas were noted and were used to assess environmental impact. None of the short-list of proposed measures is considered to impact significantly on a designated area”.</p> <p>No change to SRTP.</p>
	<p><i>A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 16</i></p> <p>It is important for the SRTP to monitor the type of environmental assessments that are carried out for these other stages to ensure that adequate assessments are being carried out and that environmental safeguards are being considered and implemented. If monitoring indicates that the environmental assessments undertaken and mitigation measures proposed for these other stages are insufficient then the contents of the SRTP should be revisited.</p>	<p>It was agreed with EHS that SRTP monitoring should not be responsible for ensuring other plan teams fulfil their statutory duties, or that individual schemes are subjected to the rigorous assessments routinely undertaken by the Department.</p> <p>The ‘Monitoring Measures’ section of the SEA Statement has been added to (from what appeared in the Environmental Report) to state how local schemes, and Local Air Quality Management Areas will be monitored. Amendment to Section 6.</p>
	<p><i>A non-technical summary of the information</i></p>	

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	This topic has been adequately addressed in the Environmental Report.	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	Post Adoption Procedures	
	Please take special note of the post adoption procedures as required in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2004).	Noted – No change to SRTP.
	P13 – Table 5.1 – Policies, Plans, Programmes etc. – suggest including ' UK Climate Change Programme 2006 '.	Noted – Comment has been retained on file to inform future Environmental Reports. No change to SRTP.
	P14 – Table 6.1 – Existing Environmental Problems – suggest including as problem ' Emissions of greenhouse gases from road transport '	Noted – This issue has been covered by the Appraisal Summary Table prepared for each Local Transport Study. It is however accepted that appropriate reference could have been made to this in the Environmental Report. The Comment has been retained on file to inform future Environmental Reports. No change to SRTP.
	P16 – Section 8.1 – 'On their own, only the measures directly involving traffic, i.e. 2.3 a) and b) have the potential to cause significant climate change and air pollution due to additional or reduced traffic effects' – this statement slightly unclear – does it refer to adverse effects (since all measures have impacts on climate change and air pollution, some being positive, and some negative).	See Section 5.2 of the SEA Statement which deals with this issue. This section has been reworded (from the version appearing in the Environmental Report).
	P17, Table 8.1 (+Appendix 4 Measure A) and	Table 8.1 (now Table 5.1 of the SEA Statement)

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	Measure B)) – suggest that assessment impacts of measures A) and B) on climate change and air pollution are not neutral (0) but rather uncertain (?) – due to the reasons stated (both positive and negative impacts).	and Appendix 4 (now Appendix 2 of the SEA Statement) Measure A & B, assessing Major Highway Schemes (Measure A) and Traffic Management Schemes (Measure B) have not been amended due to the fact that the SRTP team, in weighing up the positive and negative impacts believe the synergistic effects to be neutral (0) which is believed to be more informative than ‘Don’t know’ (?) . No change to SRTP.
	P36 – Appendix 4 – Measure A) – include ‘Schemes which encourage further car use have the potential to increase greenhouse gas emissions’ – also change (0) to P36 – Appendix 4 – Measure A) – include ‘Schemes which encourage further car use have the potential to increase greenhouse gas emissions’ – also change (0) to (?)	No change made to Appendix 4 (now Appendix 2 of SEA Statement). In weighing up the positive and negative impacts the SRTP Team believe the synergistic effects to be neutral (0) which is believed to be more informative than ‘Don’t know’ (?). No change to SRTP.
	P38 – Appendix 4 – Measure B – as above.	No change made to Appendix 4 (now Appendix 2 of SEA Statement). In weighing up the positive and negative impacts the SRTP Team believe the synergistic effects to be neutral (0) which is believed to be more informative than ‘Don’t know’ (?). No change to SRTP.
Council for Nature Conservation and Countryside	It is to be noted from the environmental report that biodiversity, countryside, water environment to name a few are either reported as negative or at best	Text added to SRTP (Section 8.4) to more explicitly acknowledge the role of initiatives such as ‘Travelwise’, in promoting the use of

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	neutral (in that although the effect is negative it is not seen as significant) and consequently there is an apparent cumulative negative impact on the environment. However by changing practices within some areas of the plan such adverse effects could be neutralised, introduction of softer measures to encourage behavioural change from private car or excessive travel can have a greater positive impact on the environment;	'sustainable' modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.
	Introduction of wildlife corridors and maintenance and management regimes that encourage biodiversity would be welcome;	No change to SRTP. Each proposed scheme will be subject to detailed appraisal prior to implementation. It is at this localised level that scheme amelioration will take place.
	Assessment of carbon budgets for the plans and Actions to reduce carbon emissions; and	Text added to SRTP (Section 11.2) stating that "The Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland ⁴ published in May 2006, outlined specific objectives and targets for sustainable development" and "In developing the SRTP the Department has had regard to the above documents and as far as reasonably practicable, in view of the controls handed down by the RDS and RTS, the principles of sustainable development have been applied".
	The impact on health and targeting social need	Text added to SRTP (Section 11.6). The

⁴ Sustainable Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 'First Steps toward sustainability', Department of Environment, May 2006.

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Respondent	Comment	How comment has been taken into consideration
	could be catered for.	<p>Lifetime Opportunities Strategy – Government’s Anti-Poverty Strategy, which replaces New Targeting Social Need, was launched on 13 November 2006. Section 11.6 of the SRTP outlines how the plan contributes to the Anti-Poverty Strategy.</p> <p>Section 11.7 of the SRTP explains how health impact has been considered in the Plan.</p>
Northern Ireland Environmental Link	<p>The environmental appraisal of the draft SRTP predicts that the effect on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions will be neutral as these emissions are proportional to private vehicle kilometres travelled. It supposes that any gains in fuel efficiency, ‘green’ technology and traffic flow are only likely to offset the 2% annual rise in traffic volumes predicted in the RTS. This indicates that the plan does not adequately address the need to encourage the modal shift which will be necessary if we are to achieve the emissions targets.</p>	<p>Section 1.2 of SRTP is relevant. The Regional Transportation Strategy 2002-2012 (RTS), is being delivered through the preparation and implementation of more detailed Transport Plans, of which SRTP is one.</p> <p>The SRTP has been revised to reflect the fact that a review of the RTS is due to commence in 2007. The review will consider the rate of implementation and the effectiveness of the RTS measures. It will also consider the continuing appropriateness of the RTS objectives and outcomes. It is anticipated that the review will address issues such as this.</p>

5 Justification of the Final SRTP

5.1 Alternatives considered in the Draft SRTP

The Local Transport Studies adopted, in general, a problem-led approach to the identification of transport measures. The problems were commonly identified as:

- localised traffic congestion;
- limited town centre pedestrian facilities; and
- difficulties in management of central parking spaces.

Guided by the Regional Transportation Strategy and PPS13 the Local Transport Studies adopted a balanced approach to the solution of these problems involving walk, cycle, public transport, traffic management and highway proposals. These potential solutions to transport problems were assessed against the NATA objectives of:

- Environment;
- Safety;
- Economy;
- Accessibility; and
- Integration.

This assessment was first undertaken coarsely on a long-list of potential solutions and then in a more detailed manner when confirming the short-list of proposed measures. Potential solutions which were assessed to result in large detrimental impacts against one or more of the objectives were generally rejected. In the first coarse assessment, designated areas (Appendix 1) were noted and were used to assess environmental impact. None of the short-list of proposed measures is considered to impact significantly on a designated area.

In addition it must be noted that none of the measures will be implemented without the completion of the appropriate statutory assessments where appropriate.

5.2 The Final SRTP and its Environmental Effects

An assessment of the list of measures specified in the SRTP for the Other Urban Areas suggests the following key conclusions regarding environmental impacts:

- All measures have the theoretical potential to cause negative biodiversity, countryside and water environment impacts due to direct land-take. However, in practice the only measure that will have significant impacts will be 'major highway schemes including new links and by passes'.

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- On their own, only the measures directly involving traffic have the potential to cause significant climate change and air pollution due to additional or reduced traffic levels. The relevant measures are therefore major highway schemes including links and by-passes and traffic management schemes including major junction realignments.
- Taken together, measures involving 'other' modes (walking, cycling, parking and public transport) may have the theoretical potential to cause environmental impacts due to reduced traffic effects. In practice these will likely be an order of magnitude smaller than the impacts from measures directly involving traffic.

An assessment of the list of measures specified in the Rural Areas and reference to the conclusions drawn for Other Urban Areas suggests the following general conclusion regarding environmental impact:

- The only measure that will have significant impacts will be 'major highway schemes including new links and by-passes' due to direct land-take.

Table 5.1 and the supporting Appendix 2 provide full details of the assessments. It must be noted that implementation of the measures proposed in the SRTP will be subject to clearing the relevant statutory procedures such as environmental assessment, planning and land acquisition (some of which may require public inquiries). Implementation of major schemes will require a detailed design stage when alternative alignments and mitigation measures, if required, would be considered.

Only towns/cities with proposed highway links are likely to be significantly affected. It has been confirmed that these highway links do not impact on designated areas of environmental interest and significant impacts are expected to result from localised changes in traffic levels only. However all of these issues will be investigated in more detail at the Development Plan stage and in any required scheme design appraisal.

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Table 5.1 - Summary Table Showing Assessment of Impacts of the SRTP Measures

SEA TOPIC	A	B	C	D	E	F
1. Biodiversity	X	-	-	-	-	-
2. Countryside	X	-	-	-	-	-
3. Climate Change & Air Pollution	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓
4. Management of the Water Environment	X	-	-	-	-	-
5. Mineral Resources	X	X	X	X	-	X
6. Waste Disposal	X	X	X	X	-	X
7. Energy Efficient Transport Modes	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
8. Built and Archaeological Heritage	X	?	?	?	?	?
9. Urban Environmental Quality	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0
10. Current Needs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11. Unemployment /Poverty	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓
12. Education	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓
13. Crime	-	-	✓	✓	-	✓
14. Housing Conditions	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. Public Health	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓

✓	Positive Effect	-	No Relationship
X	Negative Effect	?	Don't Know
0	Neutral		

Measures:

- A) Major highway schemes including new links and by-passes
- B) Traffic management schemes including junction realignments
- C) Pedestrian network and crossing facilities
- D) Cycling network
- E) Parking strategies
- F) Public transport strategies

6 Monitoring Measures

The SRTP consists of proposals for a number of specific major highway schemes and a wide range of more minor local measures. It should be noted that the impacts of the major schemes will be addressed as part of separate statutory processes whilst the SEA has assumed that the more minor local schemes will not significantly change travel choice.

The proposals for monitoring the local schemes in aggregate therefore focus on the use of the Travel Survey for Northern Ireland to chart any change in travel choice. In addition, where Local Air Quality Management Areas are affected, these will be monitored separately.

Any potential environmental impacts of major schemes within the SRTP will be assessed through either the SEA and Appropriate Assessment processes undertaken for Development Plans, or the Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment processes undertaken at individual scheme level. Therefore it is proposed that monitoring of major schemes will be undertaken as part of those processes.

Appendix 1

Designated Areas Used to Assess Environmental Impact of SRTP Measures

AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ASSI	Area of Special Scientific Interest
MNR	Marine Nature Reserve
NNR	National Nature Reserve
RAMSAR (RSAR)	Wetlands of International Importance
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Area

Appendix 2

Measure A) Major Highway Schemes including New Links and Bypasses				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
ENVIRONMENT	Biodiversity	X	Proposed SRTP major urban highway schemes avoid designated sites of national and international importance but have the potential to affect local biodiversity interests.	The Development Plan process including its SEA shall assess the impact of the SRTP major highway proposals on local issues. Proposals will also require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) prior to commencement.
	Countryside	X	Proposed SRTP major urban highway schemes avoid designated sites of national and international importance but have the potential to affect local countryside interests.	The Development Plan process including its SEA shall assess the impact of the SRTP major highway proposals on local issues. Proposals may also require a landscape assessment prior to commencement.

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Measure A) Major Highway Schemes including New Links and Bypasses				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Climate Change & Air Pollution	0	<p>New highway link roads in urban areas and through passes of rural settlements would result in improved air quality for properties adjacent to routes relieved, and worsened air quality for dispersed properties adjacent to the new road links.</p> <p>Greenhouse gases are, in general, proportional to private vehicle kilometres travelled.</p> <p>On balance, proposed SRTP major highway schemes would generally have a neutral impact on climate change & air pollution.</p>	<p>The Development Plan process including its SEA shall assess the impact of the SRTP major highway proposals on local issues. Proposals will also require an EIA prior to commencement.</p> <p>Where Local Air Quality Management areas are affected these may be monitored.</p>
	Management of the Water Environment	X	<p>Proposed new highway schemes would contribute to an increase in impermeable surfaces and in runoff of pollutants. Proposed bridgeworks would pose the most direct risk to the water environment both during construction and in operation.</p> <p>The proposed schemes have the potential to have an adverse impact upon the water environment.</p>	<p>The Development Plan process including its SEA shall assess the impact of the SRTP major highway proposals on local issues. Proposals will also require an EIA prior to commencement. Water management requirements will be assessed as part of the Planning application process. Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) will be used where appropriate.</p>

Sub-Regional Transport Plan SEA Statement

Measure A) Major Highway Schemes including New Links and Bypasses				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Mineral Resources (Mineral Conservation)	X	The construction of proposed new highway schemes will increase the use of mineral reserves.	Use recycled materials where practicable.
	Waste Disposal	X	The construction of proposed new highway schemes will result in waste material.	Recycle waste material where practicable.
	Energy Efficient Transport Modes	X	Proposed new highway schemes will not promote efficient transport modes and have the potential for encouraging further car use.	Changes in travel patterns by transport modes may be monitored.
	Built and Archaeological Heritage	X	Proposed SRTP major urban highway schemes avoid designated sites of national and international importance but have the potential to affect local built and archaeological heritage interests.	The Development Plan process including its SEA shall assess the impact of the SRTP major highway proposals on local issues.
	Urban Environmental Quality	0	Proposed new highway schemes which remove strategic traffic from the urban areas may provide the opportunity to introduce environmental improvements. New urban highway links may have a detrimental impact on the quality of the urban environment.	

Sub-Regional Transport Plan SEA Statement

Measure A) Major Highway Schemes including New Links and Bypasses				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
QUALITY OF LIFE	Current Needs	✓	Proposed new highway schemes will provide for the needs of the current generation.	
	Unemployment/ Poverty	✓	The construction of proposed new highway schemes will provide substantial employment opportunities. The proposals would contribute to the removal of bottlenecks within settlements and would therefore permit more reliable journey times for business and freight movement.	
	Education	-	Proposed new highway schemes will have no impact on education.	
	Crime	-	Proposed new highway schemes will have no impact on crime.	
	Housing Conditions	-	Proposed new highway schemes will have no impact on housing conditions.	
	Public Health	✓	Bypasses of settlements would result in through traffic diverting onto more strategic routes thus reducing potential for pedestrian casualties within the settlement.	

Key to Effects: Positive (✓) Negative (✗) Neutral relationship (o) No relationship (-) Relationship uncertain (?)

Sub-Regional Transport Plan SEA Statement

Measure B) Traffic Management Schemes including Junction Improvements				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
ENVIRONMENT	Biodiversity	-	In general, proposed traffic management schemes have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on biodiversity.	
	Countryside	-	In general, proposed traffic management schemes have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on the countryside.	
	Climate Change & Air Pollution	0	Proposed traffic management measures and junction improvements, which relieve congestion in urban areas, would result in significantly changed air quality level adjacent to schemes and on any routes relieved. Additional capacity provided by proposals may also lead to induced traffic which would erode benefits to climate change.	Where Local Air Quality Management areas are affected these may be monitored.
	Management of the Water Environment	-	In general, proposed traffic management schemes do not include a significant increase in impermeable surfaces and will have no impact on the water environment.	
	Mineral Resources (Mineral Conservation)	X	The construction of proposed traffic management schemes will increase the use of mineral reserves.	Use recycled materials where practicable.

Sub-Regional Transport Plan SEA Statement

Measure B) Traffic Management Schemes including Junction Improvements				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Waste Disposal	X	The construction of proposed traffic management schemes will result in waste material.	Recycle waste material where practicable.
	Energy Efficient Transport Modes	X	In general, proposed traffic management schemes will not promote efficient transport modes and have the potential for encouraging further car use. Junction improvements which incorporate signalisation would facilitate pedestrian crossing opportunities facilities however the introduction of roundabouts would provide a less safe environment for pedestrians.	Changes in travel patterns by transport modes may be monitored.
	Built and Archaeological Heritage	?	It is accepted that proposed traffic management schemes have the potential to impact on Built Archaeological Heritage. It will not be possible to determine the exact effect until the detailed design stage.	The 'effect' of traffic management schemes on built archaeological heritage has been amended from what appeared in the Environmental Report in response to consultation.
	Urban Environmental Quality	✓	Environmental improvements and reconfiguration of traffic management systems could enhance townscape character.	

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QUALITY OF LIFE	Current Needs	✓	Proposed traffic management schemes will provide for the needs of current generation.	
	Unemployment/ Poverty	✓	The construction of proposed traffic management schemes will provide employment opportunities for employment. The proposals would contribute to the removal of bottlenecks within settlements and therefore would permit more reliable journey times for business and freight movement.	
	Education	-	Proposed traffic management schemes will have no impact on education.	
	Crime	-	Proposed traffic management schemes will have no impact on crime.	
	Housing Conditions	-	Proposed traffic management schemes will have no impact on housing conditions.	
	Public Health	✓	New traffic management measures and junction improvements would reduce congestion frustration and improve traveller care.	

Key to Effects: Positive (✓) Negative (✗) Neutral relationship (o) No relationship (-) Relationship uncertain (?)

Sub-Regional Transport Plan SEA Statement

Measure C) Pedestrian Network and Crossing Facilities				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
ENVIRONMENT	Biodiversity	-	In general, proposed pedestrian schemes have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on biodiversity.	
	Countryside	-	In general, proposed pedestrian schemes have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on the countryside.	
	Climate Change & Air Pollution	✓	Proposed pedestrian schemes will promote walking as an alternative to car travel, with potential to reduce harmful emissions.	Where Local Air Quality Management areas are affected these may be monitored.
	Management of the Water Environment	-	In general, proposed pedestrian schemes do not include a significant increase in impermeable surfaces and will have no impact on the water environment.	
	Mineral Resources (Mineral Conservation)	X	The construction of proposed pedestrian schemes will increase the use of mineral reserves.	Use recycled materials where practicable.
	Waste Disposal	X	The construction of proposed pedestrian schemes will result in waste material.	Recycle waste material where practicable.
	Energy Efficient Transport Modes	✓	Proposed pedestrian schemes will promote walking as alternative to car travel.	Changes in travel patterns by transport modes may be monitored.

Sub-Regional Transport Plan SEA Statement

Measure C) Pedestrian Network and Crossing Facilities				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Built and Archaeological Heritage	?	It is accepted that proposed pedestrian schemes have the potential to impact on Built Archaeological Heritage. It will not be possible to determine the exact effect until the detailed design stage.	The 'effect' of pedestrian schemes on built archaeological heritage has been amended from what appeared in the Environmental report in response to consultation.
	Urban Environmental Quality	✓	Well-designed pedestrian infrastructure may improve townscape character.	
QUALITY OF LIFE	Current Needs	✓	Proposed pedestrian schemes will provide for the needs of current generation.	
	Unemployment/ Poverty	✓	The construction of proposed pedestrian schemes will provide opportunities for employment. The introduction of pedestrian facilities would provide improved access to the transport system, including for persons with disabilities.	
	Education	✓	The proposed pedestrian schemes will contribute to Safer Routes to Schools.	
	Crime	✓	Well designed and used walking routes would improve feeling of security for users.	
	Housing Conditions	-	Proposed pedestrian schemes will have no impact on housing conditions.	

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Measure C) Pedestrian Network and Crossing Facilities				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Public Health	✓	Additional pedestrian facilities, particularly crossing points, may reduce accidents involving pedestrians. Improvements to the pedestrian infrastructure and environment, may lead to increases in the numbers of people walking, and therefore in their level of physical fitness.	

Key to Effects: Positive (✓) Negative (✗) Neutral relationship (o) No relationship (-) Relationship uncertain (?)

Sub-Regional Transport Plan SEA Statement

Measure D) Cycling Network				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
ENVIRONMENT	Biodiversity	-	In general, proposed cycling schemes have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on biodiversity.	
	Countryside	-	In general, proposed cycling schemes have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on the countryside.	
	Climate Change & Air Pollution	✓	Proposed cycling schemes will promote cycling as an alternative to car travel, with potential to reduce harmful emissions.	Where Local Air Quality Management areas are affected these may be monitored.
	Management of the Water Environment	-	In general, proposed cycling schemes do not include a significant increase in impermeable surfaces and will have no impact on the water environment.	
	Mineral Resources (Mineral Conservation)	X	The construction of proposed cycling schemes will increase the use of mineral reserves.	Use recycled materials where practicable.
	Waste Disposal	X	The construction of proposed cycling schemes will result in waste material.	Recycle waste material where practicable.
	Energy Efficient Transport Modes	✓	Proposed cycling schemes will promote cycling as alternative to car travel.	Changes in travel patterns by transport modes may be monitored.

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Measure D) Cycling Network				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Built and Archaeological Heritage	?	It is accepted that proposed cycling network schemes could have a potential impact on Built Archaeological Heritage. It will not be possible to determine the exact effect until the detailed design stage.	The 'effect' of cycling schemes on built archaeological heritage has been amended from what appeared in the Environmental report in response to consultation.
	Urban Environmental Quality	✓	Well-designed urban cycle network may improve townscape character.	
QUALITY OF LIFE	Current Needs	✓	Proposed cycling schemes will provide for the needs of current generation.	
	Unemployment/ Poverty	✓	The construction of proposed cycling schemes would provide opportunities for employment. The introduction of cycling facilities would provide improved access to the transport system.	
	Education	✓	The proposed cycle network will contribute to safer routes to schools.	
	Crime	✓	Well designed and used cycling routes would improve feeling of security for users.	
	Housing Conditions	-	Proposed cycling schemes will have no impact on housing conditions.	

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Measure D) Cycling Network				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Public Health	✓	Additional cycling facilities, particularly crossing points, may reduce accidents involving cyclists. Improvements to the cycling infrastructure and environment, may lead to increases in the numbers of people cycling, and therefore in their level of physical fitness.	

Key to Effects: Positive (✓) Negative (✗) Neutral relationship (o) No relationship (-) Relationship uncertain (?)

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Measure E) Parking Strategies				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
ENVIRONMENT	Biodiversity	-	In general, proposed parking strategies have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on biodiversity.	
	Countryside	-	In general, proposed parking strategies have insignificant land-take and will have no impact on the countryside.	
	Climate Change & Air Pollution	✓	Implementation of proposed parking strategies would improve reliability of journey times to town/city centres by reducing variability of car parking search time and walking time. Congestion associated with circulating traffic would be reduced.	Where Local Air Quality Management areas are affected these may be monitored.
	Management of the Water Environment	-	In general, proposed parking strategies do not include a significant increase in impermeable surfaces and will have no impact on the water environment.	
	Mineral Resources (Mineral Conservation)	-	In general, proposed parking strategies do not include a significant construction element and will have no impact on mineral resources.	

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Measure E) Parking Strategies				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
QUALITY OF LIFE	Waste Disposal	-	In general, proposed parking strategies do not include a significant construction element and will have no impact on waste disposal.	
	Energy Efficient Transport Modes	✓	Improved parking at stations would enhance passenger interchange between car and public transport modes.	Changes in travel patterns by transport modes may be monitored.
	Built and Archaeological Heritage	?	It is accepted that proposed parking strategies have a potential impact on Built Archaeological Heritage. It will not be possible to determine the exact effect until the detailed design stage.	The 'effect' of parking strategies on built archaeological heritage has been amended from what appeared in the Environmental report in response to consultation.
QUALITY OF LIFE	Urban Environmental Quality	✓	Improved transport infrastructure, short-stay parking availability and public transport services may contribute to the development and reinvigoration of designated regeneration areas.	
QUALITY OF LIFE	Current Needs	✓	Proposed parking strategies will provide for the needs of current generation.	
QUALITY OF LIFE	Unemployment/Poverty	-	Proposed parking strategies will have no impact on unemployment and poverty issues.	

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Measure E) Parking Strategies				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Education	-	Proposed parking strategies will have no impact on education.	
	Crime	-	Proposed parking strategies will have no impact on crime.	
	Housing Conditions	-	Proposed parking strategies will have no impact on housing conditions.	
	Public Health	-	Proposed parking strategies will have no impact on public health interests.	

Key to Effects: Positive (✓) Negative (✗) Neutral relationship (o) No relationship (-) Relationship uncertain (?)

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Measure F) Public Transport Strategies				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
ENVIRONMENT	Biodiversity	-	Proposed public transport strategies will have no impact on biodiversity interests.	
	Countryside	-	Proposed public transport strategies will have no impact on countryside interests.	
	Climate Change & Air Pollution	✓	Proposed public transport strategies will promote bus and rail as an alternative to car travel.	Where Local Air Quality Management areas are affected these may be monitored.
	Management of the Water Environment	-	In general, proposed public transport strategies do not include a significant increase in impermeable surfaces and will have no impact on the water environment.	
	Mineral Resources (Mineral Conservation)	X	The proposed expansion of public transport services and the bus replacement programme will require a significant number of new buses. The manufacture and running of these vehicles will require increased resources.	Use recycled materials where practicable.
	Waste Disposal	X	The bus replacement programme will involve the decommissioning of a significant number of older buses.	Recycle waste material where practicable.

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Measure F) Public Transport Strategies				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Energy Efficient Transport Modes	✓	Proposed public transport strategies will promote bus and rail as alternative to car travel.	Changes in travel patterns by transport modes may be monitored.
	Built and Archaeological Heritage	?	It is accepted that proposed public transport strategies have a potential impact on Built Archaeological Heritage. It will not be possible to determine the exact effect until the detailed design stage.	The 'effect' of public transport strategies on built archaeological heritage has been amended from what appeared in the Environmental report in response to consultation.
	Urban Environmental Quality	0	The proposed expansion of urban bus services will increase the numbers of buses in the urban area. However the proposed enhanced services will have the potential of reducing the numbers of cars travelling to the urban area.	
QUALITY OF LIFE	Current Needs	✓	Proposed public transport strategies will provide for the needs of current generation.	
	Unemployment/ Poverty	✓	The proposed public transport strategies will provide additional travel alternatives and will improve accessibility to employment opportunities.	
	Education	✓	The proposed public transport strategies will provide additional travel alternatives and will improve accessibility to education.	

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Measure F) Public Transport Strategies				
THEME	APPRAISAL CRITERIA	EFFECTS	SUMMARY OF EFFECTS	COMMENTS
	Crime	✓	Major refurbishment of bus stations and improvements of stops will improve feeling of security for users.	
	Housing Conditions	-	Proposed public transport strategies will have no impact on housing conditions.	
	Public Health	✓	Improvements to the public transport system, would lead to increases in patronage and consequently increased numbers of people walking and cycling, and therefore in their level of physical fitness.	

Key to Effects: Positive (✓) Negative (✗) Neutral relationship (o) No relationship (-) Relationship uncertain (?)

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