

Technical note

Project	Tain Transport Master Plan	Date	16 June 2010
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1 *Introduction*

1.1 The Highland Council appointed Halcrow Group Ltd to assist in the preparation of a Transport Master Plan for Tain.

1.2 The purpose of the Tain Transport Master Plan is to set out, in broad terms, a transport hierarchy for the town whilst focussing on suggested actions and improvements. It is envisaged that the Transport Master Plan will serve to inform the development of any future relevant Local Plan or similar Development Plan and also provide a framework for discussions regarding potential developer contributions, in relation to future transportation improvements.

1.3 This note has been prepared to serve as background information to the three draft plans (1 – Walking and Cycling, 2 – Public Transport and 3 – Road Improvements and Traffic Management) that form the draft Tain Transport Master Plan.

2 *Background*

2.1 The Royal Burgh of Tain is located some 35 miles north of Inverness and it lies within the Ross and Cromarty area of the Highlands and is under the jurisdiction of The Highland Council (THC). The A9 Trunk Road used to run through Tain town centre until the mid-1980s, when a bypass was constructed, significantly relieving previous traffic congestion.

2.2 Since that time, Tain has grown in size and the current population is approximately 3,500. It is a significant town for the area and, in terms of retail and other services, has a large geographical catchment area, particularly to the north, which THC estimates serves a total population of some 10,000. Growth of the town is welcome and encouraged by THC, but recent developments have increased instances of traffic congestion occurring in the narrow streets of the town. This congestion is likely to get worse if two or more current major retail development proposals are approved. In addition,

there are further development proposals contained within the Local Plan that could exacerbate problems further, without mitigation measures.

2.3 In order to address this emerging problem, THC is of the opinion that a transport management strategy needs to be developed for Tain, which would set out a master plan for dealing with increasing vehicular traffic, whilst, at the same time, encouraging people to travel by more sustainable modes of transport, where possible.

2.4 THC envisage that the first step in this process is the production of a broad Tain Transport Master Plan (TTMP), which would highlight current land allocations, issues and problems then set out outline solutions, under various categories. The draft TTMP would be subject to consultation to ensure that it is consistent with THC's emerging new Local Transport Strategy, in order to prioritise improvements. Thereafter, it is intended that specific and detailed measures would be developed, being implemented when appropriate funding was made available, probably via developer contributions.

3 Policy Context

3.1 *Local Plan* - Tain is covered by THC's Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan. The Local Plan covers an area of 2,400 sq km, extending from Achnasheen and Beinn Dearg in the west to the Dornoch Firth and Tarbet Ness in the north east. The Beauly Firth and Strathconon set the south limit, whilst the Black Isle, Mid and Easter Ross, together with the Inner Moray Firth, set the east limits.

3.2 The Local Plan area has a population of approximately 44,000, with about 50% living in the five main towns of Alness, Dingwall, Invergordon, Muir of Ord and Tain. The opening of the Kessock Bridge, in 1982, has resulted in a major increase in people, who live in surrounding locations, commuting to Inverness and this includes Tain, thereby making it a more attractive place to live.

3.3 Tain is a historic town, being the first to become a Royal Burgh, in 1066. However, this means that many of its streets, especially within the town centre, are narrow, which often causes congestion problems, due to conflicts between moving traffic and parked vehicles. In addition, there are many streets that have either narrow or no footways, which cause problems for pedestrians and persons with mobility difficulties.

3.4 The car is the dominant mode of transport in the Highlands, given the tendency for people to have to travel significant distances to access services

and facilities, together with limited levels of public transport services that tend to be provided in rural areas. However, whilst car ownership is seen as a necessity for many people in rural areas, over 30% of Highland residents have no access to a car, meaning they have to rely on other modes of travel or friends and family. In addition, fuel costs tend to be higher in rural areas and this is particularly the case in the Highlands area.

- 3.5 Whilst there are employment opportunities within Tain, many workers have to travel from the town to other locations to access work. This includes Inverness, which can be reached in under an hour by car. Inverness is the main economic focus of the area and is where most new employment opportunities are concentrated, thereby increasing commuting levels. Whilst there are public transport services between Tain and Inverness, which commuters can use, especially rail, many people use their cars. Further residential developments in Tain will potentially generate more commuters and, therefore, more sustainable measures need to be implemented.
- 3.6 The Highlands are also a prime location for tourists and Tain is considered to an attractive destination for them. However, the majority of tourists currently travel by car and, whilst they are obviously welcome in terms of helping the local economy, they do contribute to the exacerbation of traffic congestion problems.
- 3.7 *Structure Plan* - The objectives and strategic themes of the THC Structure Plan seek to enhance the attractiveness and economy of the Highlands. Policies for housing development aim to allow some 12,600 new units during the 2007-2017 period, with an aim to steer demand to appropriate locations within existing settlements. Whilst Inverness is the main focus for new housing, other areas are also identified. The Ross and Cromarty East Local Plan has identified a number of potential sites within Tain, for housing developments, with a total of 242 units, although this number is deemed to be a guide and an increase of over 10% for an individual site would be given additional consideration by THC. Development of these sites, together with any other proposals that THC might approve, would result in increased levels of traffic being generated.
- 3.8 In addition to employment, people need to access other services, such as shops, education, healthcare and other facilities. Whilst some people can use a car to get to such services, others, such as young persons, the elderly or those with mobility difficulties, have to rely on other modes of transport. As mentioned previously, public transport services in rural areas tend to be limited

and may focus on potentially profitable commuting services rather than daytime, evenings or weekends. It is the latter periods when people tend to seek to access services other than employment.

4 *Existing Transport Network, Issues and Concerns*

4.1 *Retail Developments* – whilst Tain town centre has a number of small retail and business units, the current main food retail units are the Co-op and Lidl stores, which are both located on Morangie Road at the north end of the town. The location does mean that there is tendency for some residents to drive to the stores.

4.2 In March 2007, THC approved a planning application for a new Asda retail store on Knockbreack Road, at the south end of the town but the application was called in by Scottish Ministers, resulting in Asda withdrawing its original application. However, Asda has recently submitted a new application for the site, which has now been granted planning permission in principle.

4.3 In July 2008, THC granted outline planning consent for a new Tesco retail store within the town centre on Shore Road. However, a Reserved Matters application was subsequently refused and the development was the subject of a Public Local Inquiry (PLI), held in March 2010. This PLI overturned the refusal of the Reserved Matters Application and means that this store now has full planning permission.

4.4 In addition, a further planning application for a new retail store on Morangie Road, which is similar to a previous application submitted in 2006 but withdrawn in 2008 prior to a PLI, has recently been submitted to THC. This has resulted in THC having to consider three potential retail stores for Tain, which would have significant traffic implications for the town.

4.5 For the existing retail stores and any new one(s), it would be desirable to encourage alternative modes of travel, in order to limit car use and reduce congestion.

4.6 *Housing developments* – a number of housing developments have been approved by THC during the last couple of years and the Local Plan allocates significant areas of land for future residential developments. The cumulative effect of all these developments will have a significant impact on Tain's transport network.

4.7 It is also the case that existing housing developments, within Tain, have their own transport issues, in terms of encouraging sustainable modes of travel.

- 4.8 *A9 Trunk Road* – the A9 Bypass lies to the south west of Tain. Since it was constructed, Tain has expanded and been developed up to the Bypass and, recently, on the opposite side of the A9, from Scotsburn Road. Whilst building to the south of the Trunk Road does help the economic development of Tain, it is leading to the generation of further access issues. The A9 Trunk Road is a busy road, with high speed traffic but residents need to cross it, from the south, in order to access facilities in the main area of Tain. Local traffic crossing the Trunk Road can cause potential conflict.
- 4.9 As a result, THC is of the opinion that future developments that increase traffic and access issues in relation to the A9 will merit a review of the existing at-grade A9/Tain junctions, in terms of assessing if there is a need for any potential improvements, in order to address any emerging road safety issues. Obviously any review would need to be in collaboration with Transport Scotland.
- 4.10 *Parking* – parking levels for developments is a significant issue for rural areas. As noted previously, services and facilities within rural areas are likely to have wider catchment areas, than similar services and facilities located within urban areas. Whilst access by sustainable modes of travel can be encouraged, THC is of the opinion that developments in rural areas are likely to require higher parking levels than those for more urban areas. This is also accepted, at a national transport strategy level, with the Scottish Government’s Scottish Planning Policy document (SPP) acknowledging that “*In rural areas, where public transport is scarce, less restrictive (parking) standards may be appropriate.*”.
- 4.11 *Sustainable Transport* – for rural areas, the principal mode of transport is the car and is likely to remain so. However, national, regional and local transport strategies all seek to encourage people to use alternative sustainable modes of travel, where possible. However, to achieve this, they have to be able to access realistic and affordable alternatives and this is an key objective of all Transport Master Plans being developed by THC, including the TTMP
- 4.12 Walking is the most sustainable mode of travel and people should be encouraged to undertake this mode for as many of their short journeys as possible. Walking must be seen as an acceptable mode of travel to access work, retail, services and education facilities, as well as being a leisure activity. Walking is also important to certain groups, such as children and those people without ready access to a car, who account for almost half of the population. But, frequently, there are barriers that stop people from walking.

- 4.13 Land use patterns have often been unsuitable for pedestrians, with the locations of new developments deemed too far away to walk. Whilst land use patterns are now changing, with walking becoming an essential aspect for acceptability, it is vital to promote the need for a major step-change in developers' attitudes to mixed-use developments.
- 4.14 Unpleasant pedestrian environments often put people off from walking, either because they consider the facilities inadequate or they have personal security fears. Poor pedestrian infrastructure and road safety concerns are common barriers to walking and this is often a reason why parents are reluctant to allow children to walk by themselves. However, even minor issues can significantly influence people. For example, the lack of dropped kerb crossings will affect those persons with mobility difficulties and may prevent or restrict some people from walking, whilst a lack of route signage may also be a factor.
- 4.15 People are increasingly recognising the environmental and health benefits that can be obtained from walking. To encourage more walking, it is essential that it is given more priority than was previously the case, with improved pedestrian facilities provided.
- 4.16 Cycling is another sustainable mode of travel that can make a significant impact on the reduction of short car trips. Again, these trips can be for work, accessing services or for leisure purposes. People can readily cover a greater distance than by walking but, whilst the number of cycle trips is increasing nationally, there are some barriers that discourage people from cycling.
- 4.17 Many people recognise that cycling has health and environmental benefits, as well as being significantly cheaper than using a car. However, there are still general cultural and attitude reasons why some people do not consider cycling as a credible mode of travel. Perceived and real danger is a major factor, with some people concerned at being so close to large volumes of fast traffic. Poor infrastructure, in the form of a lack of segregated cycle routes, direct crossing points, signage and acceptable parking, is another reason more people do not cycle. Concerns about the weather, together with a lack of skills and confidence, also discourage people.
- 4.18 For medium and longer trips, the main alternative to the private car is public transport, with taxi, bus and train being the most common types. For many urban areas, public transport provision can be extensive, providing a realistic option for people. However, rural areas tend to suffer from much reduced public transport services, which are often infrequent and expensive. Such a

situation results in people having to rely on the car but also contributes to social exclusion, by sometimes preventing those persons, who do not have a car, from readily accessing employment opportunities or other services.

4.19 In rural areas, it is often the case that there are fewer taxis operating. In addition, the greater travel distances, together with higher fuel prices, mean that fares are noticeably higher than in large towns and urban areas. Bus services tend to be more limited in rural areas, with fewer services, less destinations and higher fares. Private bus operators will focus their services on routes that are commercially attractive, which often tend to be only during weekday peak periods, catering for commuters and concentrating on the main population areas. In order to provide services at other times and to other destinations, it is frequently that case that Local Authorities have to subsidise such bus services and this can be very expensive. In terms of rail, many rural areas are not directly served by trains, requiring people to travel significant distances to access them.

4.20 The above comments demonstrate that rural locations tend to have more transportation issues and problems, in terms of limited travel choices, which impact on residents and visitors alike, than in cities and large urban areas. This means that transport is frequently a critical matter in rural areas and small towns. Tain is located within a rural area and has transport issues and problems that apply to both an urban and rural setting, given its size, layout and large, rural, catchment area.

5 ***Potential Solutions***

5.1 Tain and its surrounding area have a range of transport problems, of varying degrees, but it would be possible to address many of these, if sufficient funds were made available. In order to attempt to address the diverse range of problems and issues, a mix of potential solutions needs to be developed and implemented. As any funding is likely to be limited, possible options should be subject to consultation, so priorities can be agreed with the main stakeholders (residents, businesses, community groups, transport operators, THC and potential funders).

5.2 Possible options will frequently impact on each other, so it is appropriate, therefore, that they are developed as part of a co-ordinated approach. The development of the TTMP should provide such an approach.

5.3 *Walking* – Tain is a relatively compact rural town, with its north-west and south-east ends being only some 2km apart. With housing located between

these points and the town centre in the middle, walking has the potential to be a significant mode of travel for many short journeys within the town. A short walking trip is considered to be up to approximately 800m, which covers most of Tain if a person were walking from its middle to either end of the town or vice versa. If one or both edge-of-town retail stores are granted consent, they could provide developer funding that could be used to maximise walking trips to and from the stores, as well as improving pedestrian facilities within Tain, thereby encouraging more walking.

- 5.4 Potential measures should include new and improved infrastructure, with new routes being provided and existing routes improved, together with better street lighting and enhanced crossing facilities, such as dropped kerbs, refuge islands or controlled crossings. It would be desirable to enhance the existing network of pedestrian routes through the town, linking up particular locations and services, and seeking to make these as attractive as possible. The network should include that part of Tain that is now being developed to the south side of the A9 Trunk Road.
- 5.5 The number of walking trips could be increased by providing better information, through enhanced signage. Consideration should also be given to providing literature, as part of a marketing campaign, maybe associated with the opening of a new development, such as a supermarket. Such a campaign could be linked with a general education campaign, to raise awareness of the benefits of walking. The TTMP includes a number of suggested actions and improvements that could increase walking trips.
- 5.6 It would be desirable to improve those locations where there are no current footways or they are narrow. However, any such improvement is likely to have implications for existing road space, potentially affecting vehicular traffic, and is an example of why the draft TTMP should be consulted upon.
- 5.7 *Cycling* – as Tain is relatively compact, there should be opportunities to increase the number of local short and medium cycling trips. A short cycling trip is considered to be any distance up to approximately 2km, which covers Tain.
- 5.8 Barriers to cycling are likely to be similar to walking and, therefore, any potential measures should include infrastructure improvements. It would be desirable to establish attractive cycle routes and crossing points, which people can recognise and consider safe. The routes can include quiet roads. Whilst it is common to provide shared footpath/cycle paths, especially where demand is limited, it is desirable to provide some form of segregation, even if just lining.

- 5.9 Cycle parking is probably an area that can also be improved, with facilities provided at main development sites and popular service locations. People may not cycle because they are concerned about theft. In addition, bicycles chained to poles, railings and other items are not visually pleasing. At some locations, the provision of secure facilities, such as lockers, for longer term parking may be desirable, for commuters, staff and day visitors.
- 5.10 There may also be potential for increasing commuter and leisure cycle trips, particularly in association with rail travel. People should be encouraged to cycle to the station and either park their bicycles or take them on the train, thereby allowing them to cycle at the other end. This needs agreement with other stakeholders but it is understood that the current train operator is already considering increasing cycle capacity on its carriages.
- 5.11 As per walking, an information strategy can encourage people to cycle, as can education and training. These aspects are included within the TTMP.
- 5.12 *Public transport* – in terms of encouraging people to use their cars less, public transport tends to be the most realistic alternative for the majority of people. However, there are particular issues associated with rural locations, such as the Highlands and rural towns like Tain, as the provision of public transport services tends to be more expensive than in urban areas, whilst also being frequently limited.
- 5.13 Bus services are usually provided on a commercial basis, by private operators. However, it is also the case that some services are subsidised, usually by the Local Authority or, occasionally, by development contributions. Such subsidised services tend to be those ones that are deemed to be necessary to address poor accessibility and social need, but are relatively expensive to provide.
- 5.14 The TTMP reflects THC's current proposals to enhance the existing dial-a-bus service, as well as two existing local services, as high priority measures. However, the large geographical catchment area of Tain makes extensive bus service provision more challenging, with limited budgets.
- 5.15 Bus services tend to cater for medium and long trips, but can also address short trips. For some people, especially those with mobility difficulties, walking a short distance could be difficult for them and the provision of some form of local service may be a better option, hence THC's desire to improve the existing dial-a-bus scheme.

- 5.16 In addition, some people may not be using existing bus services because they consider existing infrastructure, such as bus stops and shelters, inadequate. Also, the routes to bus stops may be un-attractive. Improvements, in terms of accessibility and also public transport infrastructure, may be sufficient to encourage more people to use buses. Information is also another key area that can influence potential passengers and, therefore, improvements should be considered.
- 5.17 Some rural locations are fortunate to be served by trains but, as with buses, services are often infrequent and fares can be high. Tain is served by rail and a number of services provide access to Inverness throughout the day. Local residents can obtain a railcard that gives them discounted fares. There are no secure cycle parking facilities at Tain station and few bicycles can currently be taken on the carriages, which do not encourage people to undertake integrated cycle/train journeys.
- 5.18 Whilst the provision of additional train services is outwith the control of THC, there may be opportunities to provide measures that encourage more people to travel from and to Tain by rail. Improvements to access and parking arrangements are possible physical measures but an information strategy may also be appropriate.
- 5.19 Taxis are generally regarded as a form of public transport but their normal use tends to be more limited in rural areas and they are normally expensive. However, they do play a significant role, in terms of providing a demand responsive transport option, which normal public transport does not.
- 5.20 *Community transport/demand responsive transport* - as a result of limited public transport provision in rural areas, such as Tain and its surrounding area, it is often the case that a higher emphasis has to be placed on the provision of community transport and demand-responsive transport facilities. Community transport vehicles, such as post buses, community minibuses or club vehicles, give an opportunity to provide vehicles that can be utilised for local communities. Community transport is becoming a much more common form of travel, particularly in rural areas, across the whole of the UK. The Community Transport Association (CTA) is a registered charity, operating on a national basis, which seeks to provide leadership, support, learning and advice to help a wide range of organisations deliver effective community transport. In many circumstances, such transport can be the most appropriate solution to improving accessibility within rural communities.

- 5.21 Demand responsive transport (DRT) is a flexible form of public transport that can fill the gap between conventional bus services and private taxis. A normal bus service has to register its service and follow a fixed route to a fixed timetable. For rural areas, this results in the service either serving lots of widely spaced communities, resulting in long routes, low frequency and being poorly used, or more direct services that miss out many small communities, resulting in poor access and social exclusion.
- 5.22 DRT can provide door-to-door services or may also be used to improve access to main line bus and rail networks. DRT vehicles are usually small buses, which are more appropriate for lower passenger numbers and narrow roads. However, taxis, private hire cars and community vehicles are also used as DRT vehicles, in some schemes. DRT vehicles have the potential to serve a wider area with fewer vehicles, than conventional bus services. Operating costs tend to lower, so that any required subsidy is either lower or potentially better value.
- 5.23 DRT schemes are increasing in number and are recognised by the Scottish Government as a realistic alternative to the private car. For this reason, funding from central government is currently available for Local Authorities to take forward such schemes. It is envisaged that these types of schemes will become more common in rural areas and become a significant type of public transport service, in the future.
- 5.24 It is understood that an existing dial-a-bus scheme operates within Tain, but on a limited basis. With new development proposals in Tain, there is significant potential for developer contributions towards enhancing the existing dial-a-bus service, which THC sees as its current priority for public transport improvements within Tain.
- 5.25 *Car* – whilst measures can be implemented that result in people using sustainable modes of travel, it is recognised that the car is likely to remain the main mode of travel for many people in Tain and the surrounding area, for the foreseeable future. Consideration needs to be given, therefore, as to what measures could be implemented that can make car trips more effective. For example, whilst many drivers prefer to have their private space, there might be opportunities to encourage more car sharing, mainly for commuter trips but possibly for other activities, such as shopping or leisure.
- 5.26 For journeys from Tain, consideration should also be given as to how the distances of some car journeys could be reduced. For example, this might be achieved by providing or enhancing park and ride facilities, either formally or

informally, which could integrate with existing bus and rail services that serve Tain.

5.27 *Traffic management* – cars and other vehicles are already causing potential conflict with other road users in Tain, along with instances of congestion at certain times. With a number of significant developments proposed for Tain, in relation to large retail stores, together with new housing, occurrences of such traffic problems are likely to become more frequent. To address these problems, the TTMP needs to consider as how best to manage traffic in Tain.

5.28 A range of traffic management measures are available, which vary in effectiveness and cost. These include:-

- Physical traffic calming, such as build-outs, road humps, raised junctions on existing streets;
- “Soft” traffic calming, such as road markings and signage (new or removal);
- Lower speed limits, on individual roads or across a zone;
- Road closures or extended one-way systems;
- Pedestrianised areas and more accessible footways;
- Route signage;
- Street signage and VMS; and
- Parking controls and management.

5.29 Whilst there may be general agreement that Tain is suffering from conflict between different modes of transport, experience would suggest that many of the above measures are likely to generate significant levels of comments, with a split in support and objection. It would be important, therefore, to consult with the main stakeholders early on before developing any measure(s) in detail, as it would be beneficial to get majority support before implantation.

5.30 *Future development* – as mentioned previously, there are a number of current development proposals that are likely to have significant impacts on Tain, in terms of transport, if they are implemented. In addition, the Local Plan has allocated a number of sites as acceptable for development, mainly housing. If these sites are progressed, then traffic levels are likely to increase.

5.31 However, it is important that Tain's economic viability is, at the very least maintained, and, ideally, encouraged to grow. Such growth is likely to require new development to be implemented. Hence, there needs to be a balance reached between the need for economic growth and the desire to reduce existing traffic problems.

5.32 In terms of any further development, it is important that they maximise opportunities to travel by sustainable modes of transport. Whilst this means providing high quality access for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport and robust Travel Plans, developers should also be contributing towards the costs of wider schemes, such as public transport initiatives, traffic management measures and environmental improvement schemes. Such schemes benefit the wider community, but can also make access to a new development more attractive.

5.33 THC already requires developers to implement schemes that minimise impacts, as well as providing financial contributions to measures external to the site. It is important that future opportunities are maximised, in terms of generating a significant source of funding from development proposals.

6 *Implementation*

6.1 The TTMP sets out, in broad terms, a possible strategy for dealing with transport problems in Tain. The TTMP suggests actions and improvements where it may be possible to influence vehicular trips and encourage people to use more sustainable modes of travel, whilst also seeking to encourage the vitality of Tain.

6.2 It is unlikely that improvements to one single mode of transport or provision of one or two measures would be sufficient to address all transport related issues. It is envisaged, therefore, that a range of measures would be needed, in order to significantly improve Tain's existing transport networks and mitigate against any future traffic problems. However, the larger the number of proposed measures, the more expensive implementation of such a package becomes. Given the likelihood that funding will be a critical issue, in terms of meeting the TTMP objectives, there will be a need for the suggested measures to be prioritised.

6.3 The three individual draft TTMP drawings, which show measures for different types of issues, seek to provide information as clearly as possible. To assist with their understanding, a summary of identified problems and suggested solutions is provided in Appendix A

- 6.4 *Consultation* - in order to assist the process of prioritising proposals, it is envisaged that consultation would be undertaken by THC. At this time, the exact format of the consultation process has still to be determined.
- 6.5 As the TTMP relates to transportation issues, its objectives need to be consistent with THC's Local Transport Strategy (LTS). The current LTS was published in 2000 and is presently under review, with a new, draft LTS currently out for consultation. The draft TTMP therefore considers all modes of transport and it is hoped will form an appendix to the new LTS alongside other similar Master Plans currently being developed by THC.
- 6.6 *Funding* – as implementation of an effective range of measures would probably require significant levels of funding, it is likely that various sources of finance will need to be sought. It is envisaged that the most realistic sources will be THC, HITRANS, Scottish Government and developer contributions.
- 6.7 It should be recognised that in the short-term, THC budgets for such transportation improvements are envisaged to be limited. There is likely to be a strong reliance, therefore, on obtaining funds from developer contributions. Other potential sources of funding, such as EU grants, would also be investigated but these usually require match-funding.
- 7** *Summary*
- 7.1 This Technical Note seeks to provide supporting information in relation to the draft TTMP drawings submitted to THC.
- 7.2 Current major retail proposals in Tain, together with other possible future developments, are anticipated to exacerbate existing traffic problems. To address these problems, THC wants to develop a TTMP, which would set out a broad strategy.
- 7.3 Section 4 has outlined the problems and issues, in transportation terms, which Tain and its surrounding area are facing. These cover a variety of topics and all modes of travel.
- 7.4 Section 5 has outlined the type of potential solutions, which could be applicable to reducing traffic congestion, as well as vehicular trips. Solutions are likely to fall under the general headings of walking, cycling, public transport, community transport/demand responsive transport, car and traffic management.

7.5

Section 6 has suggested that whilst an extensive range of proposals and measures are possible, their implementation will have to be on a priority basis, as funding is likely to be limited. Consultation should be undertaken, to help develop the TTMP, in terms of potential solutions and their priority. Section 6 has also highlighted that various funding sources are likely with potential developer contributions currently seen as the main source.

Appendix A: Tain Transport Master Plan – Problems and Potential Improvements Summary Sheet

Identified Problems	Potential Improvements
<p>Active Travel <i>In addition to two key physical barriers (A9 Trunk Road and Inverness to Thurso railway line), there are a number of issues that are likely to limit the attractiveness of walking and cycling.</i></p> <p>Existing pedestrian network covers a significant area of Tain but there are a number of missing links and instances of sub-standard infrastructure, which restrict its potential.</p> <p>Existing cycle network is focussed on the National Cycle Network Route 1 (NCNR1) and existing streets.</p> <p>Potential lack of Council funding to pay for improvements</p> <p>Potential barriers to walking and cycling also include lack of information or awareness.</p>	<p>Action AT-W1 - Upgrade existing pedestrian network. (For example, some locations require re-surfacing or local widening while some sections would benefit from improved lighting provision. Network should have enhanced directions signage, especially within existing residential areas. A programme of new dropped kerb crossing points should be implemented. A number of new pedestrian crossing points identified but not exhaustive.)</p> <p>Action AT-W2 – Implement or safeguard identified new pedestrian links. (Particularly in association with development proposals and sites.)</p> <p>Action AT-C1 - Assess use of sections of pedestrian network as cycle routes. (Particularly to access new developments, to avoid need to use roads. Upgrade pedestrian network appropriately.)</p> <p>Action AT-C2 – Assess potential re-routing of NCNR1. (Consider use of existing underpass rather than the present crossing of the A9 between Scotsburn and Tain.)</p> <p>Action AT-C3 – Improve cycle parking facilities. (Provide new facilities within Town Centre and at other key destinations. Enhance existing cycle parking facilities at railway station.)</p> <p>Action AT-C4 – Ensure new developments include appropriate internal and external footpaths and cycleways, together with links and improvements to existing networks.</p> <p>Action AT-G1 – Seek developer contributions, where appropriate, towards enhancements of pedestrian and cycle networks.</p> <p>Action AT-G2 - Co-ordinate identified improvements with Draft Candidate Core Paths proposals.</p> <p>Action AT-G3 - Implement information campaign. (Highlighting available facilities and benefits of walking and cycling.)</p> <p>As shown on Tain Transport Master Plan drawing number TTMP/AT/1</p>

<u>Identified Problems</u>	<u>Potential Improvements</u>
<u>Public Transport</u>	
<p>Bus – <i>Tain is presently served by three inter-urban bus services and a number of local bus services, together with a dial-a-bus service. Key issue is improving bus services, which address various needs, such as access to work, as well as other facilities, such as shops, health care and leisure activities.</i></p>	<p>Action PT-B1 – Seek investment to extend existing dial-a-bus scheme and local bus services. (Should serve new developments and future land allocations. Developer contributions should be sought, where appropriate, to help fund such extensions.)</p>
<p>The local bus services currently operate on a limited basis, generally Monday to Friday, with little provision for evenings or weekends. The dial-a-bus service also operates on a limited basis.</p>	<p>Action PT-B2 - New developments to be accessible by public transport. (Through planning process, ensure buses can access the internal layout, where appropriate, with suitable road design. Developments to provide suitable bus stops and shelters.)</p>
<p>Within Tain, waiting facilities at bus stops tend to be of poor quality, generally limited to a bus stop pole and flag only.</p>	<p>Action PT-B3 – Provide new bus stops and upgrade existing ones. (Improve or provide timetable information at all existing bus stops. Consider provision of lighting, bus shelters, road markings, where appropriate. A number of new bus stops are proposed, to reduce walking distances.)</p>
<p>It is noted that the site of the new medical centre is away from the town centre, so less accessible by public transport.</p>	<p>Action PT-B4 – Consider enhancement of dial-a-bus scheme to serve Medical Centre, together with improvements to adjacent pedestrian network.</p>
<p>Rail – <i>Tain is located on the Inverness to Thurso line. The un-manned station offers limited facilities for passengers.</i></p>	<p>Action PT-R1 - Provide signage from rail station to town centre bus stops.</p>
<p>Opportunities for interchange with bus limited.</p>	<p>Action PT-R2 - Provide enhanced cycle parking facilities – covered and secure. (Similar to Action AT-C3.)</p>
<p>Cycle parking facilities are limited.</p>	<p>Action PT-R3 - Provide formal parking in Station Road, allowing some overnight.</p>
<p>Potential for park and ride constrained by size of car park.</p>	<p>Action PT-R4 - Implement information campaign to highlight available train services and fares.</p>
	<p>As shown on Tain Transport Master Plan drawing number TTMP/PT/1</p>

<u>Identified Problems</u>	<u>Potential Improvements</u>
<p><u>Road Network</u></p> <p>A9 Trunk Road – <i>Tain is located on the A9 Trunk Road corridor, which is a multi-modal corridor that provides local and long distance connections along its route. Key issues are the suitability of existing junctions, in terms of increased traffic flows, and access for development to south west of the A9.</i></p> <p>Conflict between through traffic and vehicles turning into and out of Tain at existing priority junctions, which is likely to be exacerbated by new developments within Tain.</p> <p>Road safety issues associated with people crossing the A9, between the two areas of Tain, by vehicle or walking/cycling.</p> <p>Local Road Network – <i>some existing roads have poor footway provision, creating potential conflict</i></p>	<p>RN-TR1 – Assess operation of existing A9/Morangie Road and A9/Knockbreck Road junctions. (Consider need for any improvements to accommodate development traffic. Liaise with Transport Scotland.)</p> <p>RN-TR2 – Assess options for improving existing A9 crossing facilities. (Consider enhanced pedestrian/cycle access and possible local vehicular traffic. Liaise with Transport Scotland.)</p> <p>RN-TR3 – Seek developer contributions, where appropriate, to help fund trunk road improvements. (Consider payments into a central fund, given the likely significant costs.)</p> <p>RN-LR1 – Shore Road improvement. (Suggested carriageway widening and footway provision.)</p> <p>As shown on Tain Transport Master Plan drawing number TTMP/RN/1</p>
<p>Parking – <i>there are a number of formal parking areas within Tain, both on-street and off-street, within the majority being within the vicinity of the town centre.</i></p> <p>Whilst parking is generally concentrated near the town centre, the majority of it is uncontrolled and few spaces are allocated for disabled persons. Most parking areas are located to the south of High Street.</p> <p>Informal on-street parking is permitted, with waiting restrictions generally limited to the town centre, with double yellow lines at junctions. Where there are restrictions, on-street parking tends to be limited to 1-hour but there appears to be a lack of enforcement, causing lack of turn-over.</p> <p>No parking charges apply, giving lack of incentive or deterrent for residents or visitors not to use their cars, especially for short journeys.</p>	<p>RN-P1 - Provide more spaces for use by disabled persons.</p> <p>RN-P2 - Consider provision of formal parking north of High Street.</p> <p>RN-P3 – Review enforcement of on-street parking. (Consider options for more effective control, to assist turn-over and prevent long-stay parking, together with indiscriminate or unsafe parking).</p> <p>RN-P4 - Undertake parking charge review. (Consider options for a possible charging regime.)</p> <p>As shown on Tain Transport Master Plan drawing number TTMP/RN/1</p>

<p>Traffic Management – <i>the town centre is historic, with many narrow streets, sub-standard footways and poor visibility at junctions. On-street parking also impacts on traffic. Outwith the town centre, there are a number of radial routes, which are generally straight, providing links with the A9, as well as access to residential areas, which tend to be culs-de-sac.</i></p> <p>Narrow streets with poor visibility at junctions can lead to road safety issues and conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists.</p> <p>Radial routes with relatively straight alignments encourage high speeds through residential areas.</p> <p>Majority of existing residential areas are housing estates and whilst some are culs-de-sac, others allow through traffic. Layouts do not always encourage low speeds.</p>	<p>RN-TM1 – Implement traffic management measures. (Proposals to reduce conflicts include introduction of a number of one-way roads, closure of lane between Chapel Street and Tower Street to through traffic, new 20mph speed limit on certain roads, with traffic calming measures.)</p> <p>RN-TM2 - Average vehicles speeds of 20-30mph on key radial routes. (Knockbreck Road and Morangie Road could be 30mph whilst other main radial roads could be subject to 20mph speed limits.)</p> <p>RN-TM3 – Seek developer contributions, where appropriate, to help fund road network improvements.</p> <p>RN-TM4 - Consider reduction of speed limits within certain residential areas. (Options could be formal 20mph speed limits or advisory “Twenty’s Plenty” signage.)</p> <p>RN-TM5 - New housing developments designed for low vehicle speeds. (Potentially signed as formal 20mph speed limit zones to comply with Council policy.)</p> <p>As shown on Tain Transport Master Plan drawing number TTMP/RN/1</p>
<p>Town Centre – <i>the historic town centre is the focus for retail and local services and there is a desire to maintain and enhance this role.</i></p> <p>High Street area acts as main traffic route through Tain for local traffic.</p> <p>Some aspects of accessibility within the High Street area are sub-standard for people with mobility difficulties.</p>	<p>RN-TC1 – Implement environmental improvements within town centre. (Consider footway improvements (particularly on streets adjoining the High Street), street furniture, landscaping, etc to enhance High Street role as a retail area, rather than role as a through route for traffic. Consideration should be given to the implementation of a mandatory 20mph speed limit along the High Street area, with associated traffic calming measures.)</p> <p>RN-TC2 – Ensure High Street area is DDA-compliant for pedestrians. (Review area - improvements could include new dropped crossings or side road entry treatments along the High Street area, additional pedestrian crossing in High Street enhancing information signage, reduce street furniture clutter but consider additional seating.)</p> <p>As shown on Tain Transport Master Plan drawing number TTMP/RN/1</p>