Appendix D – Response from Aberdeen City Council to the City Region Deal (CRD) Strategic Transport Appraisal (STA) Draft Preliminary Options Appraisal

Your Ref:	NESTRANS2040STA
Our Ref:	ACC/RTS2040STA
Contact:	Alan Simpson
Location:	alansimpson@aberdeencity.gov.uk
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NESTRANS
Archibald Simpson House
27-29 King Street
Aberdeen
AB24 5AA

Dear Sir/ Madam

RESPONSE FROM ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (ACC) TO THE CITY REGIONAL DEAL (CRD) STRATEGIC TRANSPORT APPRAISAL (STA) DRAFT PRELIMINARY OPTIONS APPRAISAL

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on this document. Please find below the comments from ACC. If you have any questions or queries regarding these, please contact Alan Simpson, Senior Planner, Aberdeen City Council.

Firstly, ACC are encouraged to see that the options have been ordered in accordance with the transport hierarchy with the most sustainable modes first.

With regards to the 29 options themselves, ACC's response is included in the table below in accordance with each of the options identified. This includes whether or not ACC supports them, whether ACC agrees with the Recommended Delivery Pathway status and whether ACC agrees with the classification of a "Core" or "Supporting" Option. Where ACC proposes an amendment it has been noted in **bold**.

The same has been done for the additional 7 options that have not been appraised but are recommended for inclusion in the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS).

Two additional suggestions have been made which are included as an additional section at the end of the table.

Fully Appraised Options from Draft Preliminary Options Appraisal	
Option	ACC comment

Aberdeen City Council,
Marischal College,
Broad Street,
Aberdeen. AB10 1AB

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1. Upgrade existing active travel routes	Agree with this inclusion. And agree that, as Roads Authority, ACC has a role to play in developing and implementing these. Agree that this has Core classification as it is needed to enable active travel.
2. Increase provision and quality of active travel routes across the region	Agree with this inclusion. And agree that, as Roads Authority, ACC has a role to play in developing and implementing these. Agree that this has Core classification as it is needed to enable active travel.
3. Implement regional cycle hire scheme	Agree with this inclusion. Welcome the acknowledgement that ACC is already taking this forward for the City and that this would be beneficial for other parts of the region. Agree that this has Supporting Classification as it builds on Options 1 and 2.
4. Softer Measures to encourage active travel	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that ACC has a role to play in promoting active travel and is an active partner in the regional Getabout partnership. Agree that this has Supporting Classification as it builds on Options 1 and 2 and will support 3.
5. Improve bus services and network	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that ACC has a role to play as Roads and Transport Authority and through its membership of the North east of Scotland Bus Alliance. Agree that this has Core classification as the services and network are needed to encourage more people to use the bus.
6. Demand responsive services	Agree with this inclusion. **However, this is not just applicable to rural areas where commercial bus services are not viable as ACC also run demand responsive services for medical and social travel. This is therefore an important aspect for both Councils and a lifeline for vulnerable people. It should therefore be included in the "City Connectivity" category too.** Agree that this has Core classification as these services are needed to help the most vulnerable residents of the City.
7. New railway stations on existing lines	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that rail matters should sit with the Regional Transport Partnership

	(RTP). **However, although any potential new rail stations would require to be considered through the Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG) process and in accordance with rail station investment guidance, the local authority would need to be involved as Roads authority in enabling the connections and may have a role in safeguarding potential station locations in its Local Development Plan. The Local authority should therefore be recognised as a "Recommended delivery pathway".** Agree that this has Core classification as the infrastructure is needed to encourage people to make the switch to public transport.
8. New railway lines and associated stations	Agree that this option should still be kept as a longer term one and that, although rail matters sit with the RTP, ACC is likely to have a role to play as a "recommended delivery pathway" as it may need to protect possible rail paths/ corridors/ station sites once known, as well as support the development of and access to any new rail lines and corresponding stations.
9. Strategic Public Transport Corridor Scheme(s)	Agree that the study aspect of this is to be done by NESTRANS. **However, ACC will still have a role to play in supporting the development and implementation of all infrastructure in the City so should be recognised as a "Recommended delivery pathway".** Agree that this has Core classification as it directly links to objectives for active and sustainable travel.
10. Park & Ride Facilities	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that ACC, as owner and operator of 3 Park and Ride sites, has a role to play. Agree that this has Core classification as the sites are needed to support the services.
11. Improved Transport Hub	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that given the City centre focus of the main

	rail and bus stations and its connections, ACC has a role to play. Agree with supporting classification as it is about making better use of something that is already there and, in the case of the bus and rail station, run by a commercial entity.
12. Improved integrated ticketing	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, given its membership of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance, ACC has a role to play and that this is a supporting activity that needs the services to be in place first so it supports Option 5.
13. Improved marketing /information about public transport services	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that ACC has a role to play in promoting public transport to residents and businesses, especially given its membership of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance and the Getabout partnership. Agree that this is a supporting activity given that the services need to be in place first so it supports Option 5.
14. Access for all across all public transport (including taxi) modes	Agree with this inclusion. ACC as Roads Authority has responsibilities for improving infrastructure to enable access, and is the taxi licencing authority and a member of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance and the Getabout partnership. Agree that this is a supporting activity given that the bus services and taxis need to be in place first so it supports Option 5.
15. A90(N) / A952: Ellon to Peterhead / Fraserburgh	Acknowledge that ACC's role is limited here as these routes fall entirely within Aberdeenshire.
16. A90(S): Aberdeen to Perth	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that ACC has a role to play as, although these routes are trunk roads and fall within Aberdeenshire, ACC still operates Variable Messaging Signs (VMS) which cover subject matter on the A90 and roads that lead to it so, although this is identified as a Core Option, ACC's role is supporting. **Description should also make reference to the A956 from Aberdeen to the south as "Potential next steps" section covers it for this option.**

17. A92: Blackdog to Stonehaven (inc. new River Dee bridge)	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as Roads Authority for this route within the ACC area, that ACC has a role here. Its links, performance, maintenance are ACC's responsibility and it links to other ACC projects such as the Roads Hierarchy and City centre masterplan, as well as River Dee crossing options. **However, given its strategic role in Aberdeen and the nature of the Dee Crossing interventions, it should be considered a Core Option rather than just supporting**. **Description should also make reference to the A956 from Aberdeen to the north as "Potential next steps" section covers it for this option.**
18. A947: Aberdeen to Banff	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as Roads Authority for a part of this route within the ACC area, that ACC has a role here. Its links, performance, maintenance are ACCs responsibility. However, given that major changes to the route itself are not anticipated, it is agreed it should be considered a supporting option.
19. A98: Aberdeenshire / Moray boundary to Fraserburgh	Acknowledge that ACC's role is limited here as these routes fall entirely within Aberdeenshire.
20. A944 / B9119: Aberdeen west to Aberdeenshire boundary with Moray	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that ACC has a role here as Roads Authority for a part of this route. Its links, performance, maintenance are ACCs responsibility. **However, given the nature of existing, emerging and new developments along this corridor with the new football stadium, the development of Countesswells, the expansion of Prime Four business park, the Kingswells Park and Ride site, its strategic function within the City's Roads Hierarchy and the issues at the junction with the A90, this option this should be classed as a Core Option rather than just a supporting one.**
21. A93: Aberdeen to Braemar to Aberdeenshire boundary with Perthshire	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as Roads Authority for a part of this route within the ACC area, that ACC has a role here. Its links, performance,

	maintenance are ACCs responsibility. Agreed it should be a supporting Option given that significant changes to the route itself aren't identified.
22. Long Term Asset Management strategy	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as a Roads Authority, ACC has a role here. **However, ACC would argue that this should be a core option, rather than a supporting one. The safe and open operation of the transport network is key to ensuring a vibrant economy and this must take into account issues relating to climate change and severe weather events, the changing travel needs of people and business now and in the future, and local/ regional/ national and global events such as the current on-going global public health pandemic.**
23. Community road safety measures	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as a Roads Authority, ACC has a role here. Agree also that this is a "Core Option" given the positive impact a safe environment has on individuals and broader society.
24. Low Emission Zones (LEZ) / Zero Emission Zones (ZEZ) (inc. consideration of freight restrictions)	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as a Roads Authority and given that an LEZ is already being developed for the City, ACC has a role here. Also, agree that this is a Core Option given the health benefits, reduced carbon emissions and the broader influence on how people travel.
25. Electric Vehicle and Hydrogen vehicle charging and refuelling strategy and implementation	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as a Roads Authority, ACC has a role here both in terms of policy and strategy and implementation. **However, would argue that this should be a core option, given that it requires laying out the roles of developers and other partners through planning, guidance and policies. Plus, the cost, complexities and scale of the required rollout suggests a Core Option.** **Transport Scotland should be identified as a "Recommended delivery pathway" given their management of the National**

	Chargeplace Scotland network, their grant funding of it and their workstreams around funding low carbon vehicles and hydrogen related infrastructure.
26. Improved network monitoring and data use	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as a Roads Authority and data collector, ACC has a role here. Agree too that this is a Supporting Option as it relates to the management, operation, performance and use of assets and is used to inform business cases for future investment.
27. Congestion Zone charging	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as a Roads Authority, ACC has a role here in exploring this opportunity further. Agree also that this is likely to be a supporting Option as it may support Parking Demand Management, the LEZ, Active Travel and Public Transport measures.
28. Parking Demand Management	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that, as a Roads Authority, ACC has a role here. Agree with this as a core option given its role in managing on street and some off street parking in the city and the role of parking in the planning process.
29. Improve Inter-city rail connections	Agree with this inclusion. Agree that ACC's role here is limited yet supporting role as a "Recommended Delivery Pathway" and that rail matters should sit with the Regional Transport Partnership (RTP).
Additional Options (not appraised) for consideration in the Regional Transport Strategy (RTS 2040)	
Option	ACC Comment
A. Improved Access to Healthcare: where Nestrans will continue to work with NHS Grampian to implement the Health and Transport Action Plan, integrated throughout relevant workstreams;	Agree with the inclusion in the RTS. Appreciate that this is something that NESTRANS and ACC are more likely to influence than control, hence it has not been appraised.
B. Revised Approach to Development Control: where Nestrans has the potential to influence policy through national policy work;	Agree with this inclusion in the RTS. Appreciate that this is something that ACC, as a planning authority, are likely to have responsibility for but that NESTRANS can influence, hence it has not been appraised.,

C. Maintain and expand air routes: where Nestrans will continue to work with regional parties in a lobbying role;	Agree with this inclusion in the RTS. Appreciate that this is something that NESTRANS and ACC are more likely to influence than control, hence it has not been appraised.,
D. Maintain and enhance maritime routes: where Nestrans will continue to work with regional parties in a lobbying role	Agree with this inclusion in the RTS. Appreciate that this is something that NESTRANS and ACC are more likely to influence than control, hence it has not been appraised..
E. Digital connections: where Nestrans will support work through the City Region Deal and economic development partners;	Agree with this inclusion in the RTS. Appreciate that this is something that ACC are likely to have more control over within the City and that NESTRANS are more likely to influence than to than control, hence it has not been appraised..
F. Freight Hubs and facilities: whilst likely to be commercially driven, Nestrans will need to maintain a close monitoring role in liaison with the North East Freight Forum and planning partners and other relevant stakeholders (such as the ports and harbours);	Agree with this inclusion in the RTS. Appreciate that this is something which is difficult to control as it is commercially driven but that both NESTRANS and ACC can influence, hence it has not been appraised. ACC, as a planning authority, will have more control through approval of any planning applications.
G. Infrastructure measures to support the Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan: where Nestrans will continue to consider and input into individual elements as they are worked up in detail	Agree with this inclusion in the RTS. Appreciate that this is something that ACC are likely to have responsibility for and that NESTRANS are more likely to input to than control, hence it has not been appraised.

Other suggestion for additions from ACC

- In the "Fully appraised options" section, ACC would also recommend a 30th Option of Vehicle Sharing. This would encompass both the "liftsharing" aspect of encouraging multiple people to make the trip in the same vehicle rather than all taking separate ones and also the car sharing/ car club aspect of vehicles which can be used by multiple users. It should be a Core Option that would sit under RTS 2040 and LTS/ LA. It would recognise the part that vehicle sharing can have in reducing car trips, the fact that this could be facilitated both through travel planning (working with workplaces), but also the importance of shared vehicles (pool cars and car club vehicles) on reducing demand for private cars. A Core Option determination here is justified by the need to provide infrastructure – vehicles and potentially a car club operator to run a scheme – while it has regional reach. NESTRANS currently operate a regional liftshare scheme which is Getabout branded and both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils feed into this. In terms of shared vehicles, Aberdeen City Council currently have a contract with Co-wheels to provide a car club in

the city and Aberdeenshire Council could consider something similar. We appreciate that "Promotion of shared mobility services including car clubs" was already part of Option 38, which was not taken forward into the final shortlist of 29 options but this option would do more than promotion in that it would continue to facilitate a regional liftshare database and support the expansion of car clubs in the North east of Scotland as well as promoting these services. There is already reference to a bike hire scheme (Option 3) so shared bike mobility is covered but the vehicle side does not seem to be.

- In the "Additional Options (not appraised) for consideration in the Regional Transport Strategy" section, ACC would suggest there is still reference made to the A96 (T) Dualling from Aberdeen to Inverness. It has been acknowledged throughout that Transport Scotland are responsible for this and have committed to its delivery. The non-trunk road section lies entirely within the ACC area and whilst this section is a local and not a regional responsibility, it is still of regional strategic importance. ACC and Nestrans, together with Aberdeenshire Council will continue to input to the on-going design of the A96 (T) Dualling scheme including the Non Motorised Users facilities.

Yours sincerely

Alan Simpson
Senior Planner
Transportation Strategy and Programmes