

A947 Multi-Modal Study - STAG-Based Appraisal: Executive Summary

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Quality information

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A947 Multi-Modal Study - STAG-Based Appraisal: Executive Summary

Introduction

AECOM has been commissioned by Aberdeen City Council (ACC) to develop a Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG)-based appraisal of options for improving transport connections (particularly public transport and active travel connections) along the A947 corridor between the Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route (AWPR) Parkhill Junction and the A96/A947 Junction.

The study is being guided by a Project Steering Group led by ACC and supported by Aberdeenshire Council, Nestrans and Sustrans.

The study area is the north-south corridor between the AWPR Parkhill Junction and the A96/A947 Junction to the south of Dyce. The study corridor is four miles (6km) long and includes Stoneywood Road, Victoria Street and Riverview Drive. The study area is shown in [Figure E.1](#).



Figure E.1: Study Area

Study Problems, Issues, Constraints and Opportunities ('PICO's')

The study has identified actual and perceived problems, issues, constraints and opportunities ('PICO's') within the study area. Within STAG, PICO's are described as follows:

- **Problem:** existing and future problems within the transport and land use system;
- **Issues:** uncertainty that the study may not be in a position to resolve, but must work within the context of;
- **Constraints:** representing the bounds within which a study is being undertaken;
- **Opportunity:** changes to improve the transport and land use system to realise opportunities.

Localised PICO's were identified along various sections of the corridor before consideration was given to non-location specific issues and wider issues to be borne in mind as the study progresses.

Study Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs)

Central to the appraisal of options using STAG is that the process should be objective-led rather than solution-led. A number of Transport Planning Objectives (TPOs) have been developed to reflect the identified problems, issues, constraints, and opportunities within the study area. The TPOs reflect the outcomes sought from the study and will play an integral role in the appraisal process when assessing the performance of each option.

The TPOs developed for the A947 Multi-Modal Corridor Study are presented in the table below. For each TPO, an accompanying design-focused objective has been developed to assist a focused option development approach as recommended by design guidance, such as Cycling by Design.

Table E.1: A947 Multi-Modal Corridor Study TPOs

Ref	Transport Planning Objective	Design-Focused Objective
TPO1	Increase the modal share of walking on the A947 corridor for all journey types	Improve the level of service for walking and wheeling on the A947 corridor to complement and enhance the existing strategic active travel network
TPO2	Increase the modal share of cycling on the A947 corridor for all journey types	Improve the level of service for cycling on the A947 corridor to complement and enhance the existing strategic active travel network
TPO3	Increase the modal share of public transport on the A947 corridor for all journey types	Improve the attractiveness of bus services along the A947 corridor
TPO4	Improve east-west connectivity within Dyce to enhance walkability within the local area and promote improved accessibility for local movements	Improve active travel network access to local facilities in Dyce, with enhanced opportunities to access and cross the A947 corridor by walking, wheeling and cycling with an improved level of service
TPO5	Improve accessibility to the key transport hubs of Dyce Rail Station, Aberdeen Airport and Craibstone Park and Ride and key destinations including TECA by non-car modes	Improve the level of service for non-motorised users to the key transport hubs and key destinations in Dyce
TPO6	Ensure the main routes through the Study Area function in accordance with their role in the revised Roads Hierarchy	Improve the distribution of movements by all modes to routes appropriate to their Roads Hierarchy classification, including motorised vehicles travelling through or outwith Dyce.

Study Consultation

The study has taken a multi-pronged approach to consultation. The purpose of the initial stage of engagement, undertaken in Autumn 2021, was to determine the problems, issues, constraints and opportunities along the study corridor. A number of steps were involved in delivering the first stage of the engagement process, as outlined below.

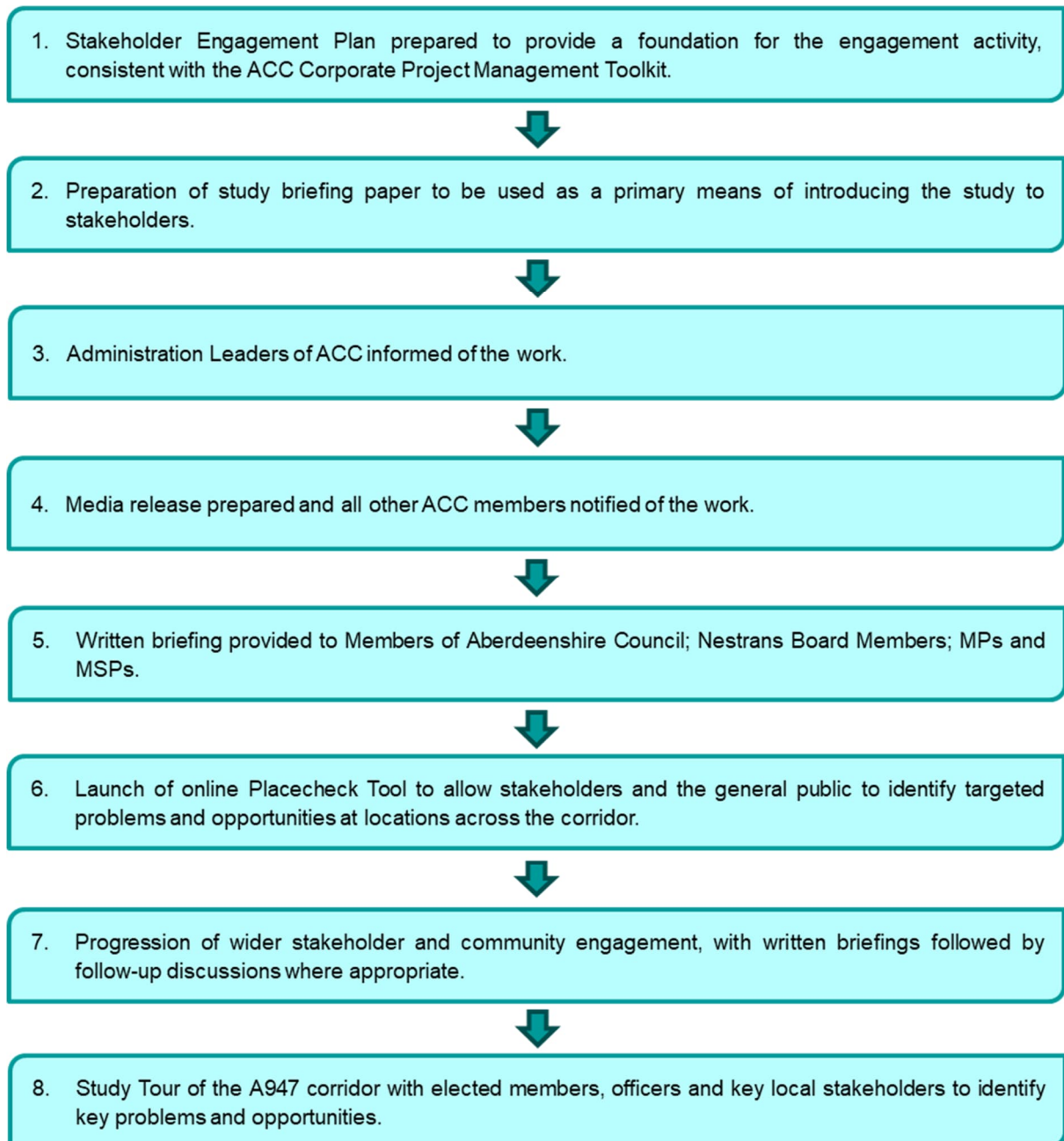


Figure E.2: Part 1 Engagement Activities

The second stage of consultation was undertaken in Summer 2022 and focused on gaining public and stakeholder feedback on the six devised option packages for the corridor. The feedback received has supported the appraisal of each option package in terms of public acceptability. The consultation period at this stage lasted four weeks between 22nd July 2022 and 19th August 2022 and consisted of:

1. An AECOM-hosted Virtual Consultation Room linked through the ACC website. This interactive platform, as shown in **Figure E.3** below, displayed materials related to the study TPOs, problems, issues, constraints and opportunities and option packages showing indicative layouts, benefits, design considerations and precedent images. An online feedback form was also linked through this platform.



Figure E.3: Virtual Consultation Room

2. An in-person drop-in event and online live Q&A sessions (hosted through the Virtual Consultation Room). The drop-in event took place in Dyce Church Hall on Wednesday 27th July between 16:00-20:00 and the online live Q&A sessions took place on Wednesday 10th August and Wednesday 17th August, both from 19:00-20:00.



Figure E.4: Public Drop-In Event at Dyce Church Hall

Several methods were used to promote the second stage of consultation:

- Social media posts from ACC and Nestrans;
- Emails direct to key stakeholders; and
- Emails direct to Community Councils.

Local Elected Members, MSPs and MPs were also contacted to raise awareness of the consultation and support its promotion.

The table below provides a summary of the responses received at this stage of the consultation.

Table E.2: Type of Respondent by Response Mechanism

	Online Questionnaire	Online Q&A	Direct Email	Total	%
General Public	17	1	0	18	95%
Organisations	0	0	0	0	0%
Elected Members	0	0	1	1	5%
Total	17	1	1	19	100%

Detailed findings from the consultation are presented in *Part 2 Consultation Outcomes* ([Appendix E](#) of the study report) and relevant feedback has been incorporated within the Public Acceptability section of the Deliverability Appraisal of each option package in [Chapter 8](#) of the study report.

Option Generation, Sifting and Development & Package Development

Building on the identification of PICOs and establishment of study TPOs, a long list of options was developed based on a number of sources including:

- Consultation with ACC, Aberdeenshire Council and Nestrans officers, stakeholders, Community Council groups and members of the public;
- A review of previous studies to identify historical proposals that remain viable options;
- A review of statutory planning and policy documents; and
- Outputs from the evidence-led process followed by the team undertaking the appraisal.

A multi-criteria approach was then adopted in agreement with the Client Group to sift options based on their high-level performance against TPOs, Deliverability Criteria (including feasibility), Position in the Sustainable Investment Hierarchy (defined by the NTS) and Identified Problems and Opportunities in the study area. Based on the high-level performance of options against these criteria, a number of options were sifted from further consideration at this stage. Following this process, the remaining options were grouped into six packages for the purposes of appraisal as follows:

Table E.3: Option Packages for Appraisal

Package Name	Package Description
Active Travel – Strategic Routes	The Active Travel – Strategic Routes package includes segregated cycling infrastructure along the A947 between the AWPR Junction and Bucksburn Roundabout (A947/A96 Junction). This would provide a safer cycling environment on the main route through Dyce to help encourage cycling for everyday journeys.
Active Travel – Leisure Route	The Active Travel – Leisure Route Package is formed of three active travel options with the aim of creating a quality active travel route along the existing Riverside Path which runs close to the River Don.
Active Travel – Quiet Route Measures	The Quiet Route Measures Package is a package of options aimed at active travel improvements on routes away from the main A947 and Victoria Street routes around Dyce. The focus of this package is to improve active travel provision on routes away from large volumes of traffic and provide quiet routes which may be more suitable for leisure walking and cycling or cyclists who are less confident to travel adjacent to vehicular traffic.

Package Name	Package Description
Public Transport – Priority Interventions	The Public Transport – Priority Interventions Package contains seven options specifically aimed to increase public transport use within the study area. The package contains options to increase connectivity between the study area and transport hubs and key destinations as well as some options to provide bus priority.
Placemaking – Living Streets	The Placemaking – Living Streets package is formed of 12 options from the active travel and other categories. The focus of this package is to enhance the sense of place within the study area by providing a better environment for active travel, providing better access to key locations by non-car modes and reducing the prominence of private cars in certain places within the study area. This package has a particular focus on Victoria Street given its revised position within the new Roads Hierarchy.
Placemaking – Complementary Measures	A series of supporting placemaking measures such as village greens, landmarks and gateway signage within Dyce could help to recognise the area as a community by encouraging a reduction of vehicle speeds, providing areas for residents to socialise and highlighting local areas of significance.

Appraisal Approach

Appraisal was undertaken on each of the above option packages. A high-level appraisal of individual options was carried out and the findings of this exercise are presented in *Individual Option Appraisal* included in **Appendix D** of the study report. A seven-point scale assessment was undertaken to gauge the level of impact against the TPOs and five STAG criteria of Environment, Climate Change, Health, Safety & Wellbeing, Economy and Equality and Accessibility.

Table E.4: STAG Seven-Point Scale

Impact	Description
Major positive impact (+3)	These are positive impacts which, depending on the severity of impact, should be a principal consideration when assessing an option.
Moderate positive impact (+2)	The option is anticipated to have a moderate positive impact which, when taken in isolation may not determine the appraisal of an option but would form a key consideration when considered alongside other factors.
Minor beneficial impact (+1)	The option is anticipated to have a minor positive impact. Minor positive impacts are those which are worth noting but are not likely to contribute materially to determining whether an option is taken forward.
Neutral impact (0)	The option is anticipated to have a neutral impact.
Minor negative impact (-1)	The option is anticipated to have a small negative impact. Small impacts are those which are worth noting but are not likely to contribute materially to determining whether an option is taken forward.
Moderate negative impact (-2)	The option is anticipated to have a moderate negative impact which, when taken in isolation may not determine the appraisal of an option but would form a key consideration when considered alongside other factors.
Major negative impact (-3)	These are negative impacts which, depending on the severity of impact, should be a principal consideration when assessing an option.

An implementability appraisal was also undertaken, covering Feasibility, Affordability and Public Acceptability. The Implementability Criteria were assessed based on the extent of risk (low, medium and high). Affordability takes account of the anticipated cost of the option; whilst high-level cost estimates have been provided as part of the option appraisal, further work will be required to develop costs during further stages of option development. Public Acceptability assessed the likely public response to the option packages, including consideration of the outcomes of consultation.

Appraisal Outcomes: Active Travel – Strategic Routes

Table E.5: Active Travel – Strategic Routes Appraisal Summary

Appraisal Summary: Active Travel – Strategic Routes	
Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This package would provide positive impacts across the majority of the TPOs, particularly in terms of increasing the modal share of cycling on the A947 corridor for all journey types and

Appraisal Summary: Active Travel – Strategic Routes

ensuring the main routes through the study area function in accordance with their role in the revised Roads Hierarchy.

- In terms of the STAG criteria, this package would promote overall moderate positive impacts in terms of Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Economy and Equality and Accessibility. Whilst a detailed environmental assessment – forming part of a subsequent detailed STAG-based appraisal of options – would be necessary to gauge the extent of environmental impacts, it is considered that elements of the package will have both positive and negative impacts on the Environment Criterion. The package would have a minor positive impact in terms of supporting greenhouse gas emissions reductions, but elements of the proposals within the package would be vulnerable to the effects of climate change in respect of increased flood risk.
- The package aligns with the aims of the Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategies, the Nestrans RTS 2040 and NTS2.
- The majority of options within this package have been appraised to have low deliverability risk and are considered to be achievable as part of the study, assisting in the improvement of active travel links throughout the study area. The options classified to create a high risk to the Implementability Criteria were some of the corridor-wide active travel improvements within the package. Assessment of these options highlighted that any improvements over the full length would not be achievable due to physical constraints at various points throughout the route.
- Options were assessed to have a higher risk in terms of affordability due to factors such as acquisition of third-party land, major earthworks and large infrastructure works. Options which were evaluated as low risk involved minimal works such as updating road markings, vegetation management and new kerbing layouts.
- More detailed appraisal will enable further assessment of feasibility and affordability to be undertaken.
- Overall, consultation comments were generally supportive of this option concept with many welcoming the proposals to segregate cyclists and vehicles and make it easier for cyclists to navigate existing bottlenecks such as roundabouts and Victoria Street. Emphasis was placed on 'hard' segregation measures with many noting that advisory cycle lanes would not make them feel any safer or encourage modal change. Negative comments received were generally in relation to the cost of implementing the infrastructure.

Appraisal Outcomes: Active Travel – Leisure Route

Table E.6: Active Travel – Leisure Route Appraisal Summary

Appraisal Summary: Active Travel – Leisure Route

Summary:

- This package would provide positive impacts across some of the TPOs, with minor positive impacts in terms of increasing the modal share of walking and cycling, and on promoting improved accessibility for local movements.
- In terms of the STAG criteria, this package would promote overall moderate positive impacts in terms of Health, Safety and Wellbeing and Equality and Accessibility. Whilst a detailed environmental assessment – forming part of a subsequent detailed STAG-based appraisal of options – would be necessary to gauge the extent of environmental impacts, it is considered that elements of the package will have both positive and negative impacts on the Environment Criterion. The package would have a minor positive impact in terms of supporting greenhouse gas emissions reductions, but elements of the proposals within the package would be vulnerable to the effects of climate change in respect of increased flood risk.
- The package aligns with the aims of the Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategies, the Nestrans RTS 2040 and NTS2.
- Creating an active travel link between the leisure route and nearby housing within Dyce is considered a medium feasibility risk. This is due to the work required and environmental impact caused by formalising existing trails or creating new links along the Riverside Path. The other options within this package focus on upgrades to the surface and lighting of the existing Riverside Path – both are considered feasible.

Appraisal Summary: Active Travel – Leisure Route	
Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The active travel improvements were evaluated to have medium to high risk in terms of affordability. The potential volume and complexity of the work involved to deliver the options within this package resulted in this evaluation. More detailed appraisal will enable further assessment of feasibility and affordability to be undertaken. Overall, there was strong support for this option concept during consultation, with widespread support for improved surfacing of the Riverside Path and support for better leisure routes in the wider area. Some environmental concerns were raised regarding lighting provision on the Riverside Path.

It is recommended that all options under consideration as part of this package are progressed for further assessment.

Appraisal Outcomes: Active Travel – Quiet Route Measures

Table E.7: Active Travel – Quiet Route Measures Appraisal Summary

Appraisal Summary: Active Travel – Quiet Route Measures	
Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This package would provide positive impacts across most of the TPOs, particularly in terms of increasing the modal share of walking and cycling. In terms of the STAG criteria, this package would promote overall moderate positive impacts in terms of Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Economy and Equality and Accessibility. Whilst a detailed environmental assessment – forming part of a subsequent detailed STAG-based appraisal of options – would be necessary to gauge the extent of environmental impacts, it is considered that elements of the package will have both positive and negative impacts on the Environment Criterion. The package would have a minor positive impact in terms of supporting greenhouse gas emissions reductions, but elements of the proposals within the package would be vulnerable to the effects of climate change in respect of increased flood risk. The package aligns with the aims of the Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategies, the Nestrans RTS 2040 and NTS2. Within this package it is anticipated that the majority of the options included would have a low feasibility risk in terms of their overall implementability. The active travel improvements within the package which present a higher risk are achievable, however, they would require substantial infrastructure interventions. Many of the active travel improvements which are proposed have a low risk in terms of affordability as they require little financial burden to implement across the study area. However, some of the broader options would require larger scale improvements across the study area and represent potential financial risk as a result. More detailed appraisal will enable further assessment of feasibility and affordability to be undertaken. Overall, this option concept received strong public support during consultation, with many considering it to be a good alternative to Stoneywood Road for cyclists of all abilities and providing a safer route for children. There was general support for making use of existing infrastructure and this was noted to be more cost effective than installing new infrastructure. Concerns were raised around the impact traffic calming measures could have on commercial vehicles, particularly delivery vehicles.

Appraisal Outcomes: Public Transport – Priority Interventions

Table E.8: Public Transport – Priority Interventions Appraisal Summary

Appraisal Summary: Public Transport – Priority Interventions	
Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With regards the TPOs, this package would provide positive impacts in terms of increasing public transport modal share and improving accessibility to key transport hubs and key destinations. • In terms of the STAG criteria, this package would promote minor positive impacts across the majority of the criteria. Within the Equality and Accessibility Criterion, this package would have a major positive impact on Public Transport Network Coverage. • The package aligns with the aims of the Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategies, the Nestrans RTS 2040, NTS2 and the overarching aims of the North East Bus Alliance. • The feasibility of five of the package components have been assessed as high risk, creating concerns about their implementability. These are considered as high risk due to the requirement for wider stakeholder consultation to be carried out and potentially having to be delivered in partnership with public transport operators. • All of the improvements included in this package have been identified as a medium risk in terms of affordability as part of the implementability criteria. The options outlined involve extensive reviews and improvements of existing public transport throughout various sections of the study area and may present a financial burden in order to deliver each of the options. • More detailed appraisal will enable further assessment of feasibility and affordability to be undertaken. • Consultation highlighted existing poor public transport connections between Dyce and Aberdeen International Airport, TECA and Danestone and some respondents stated they would welcome and directly benefit from better public transport links between Dyce, the airport and TECA. Some respondents felt active travel measures should be prioritised over public transport.

It is recommended that all options under consideration as part of this package are progressed for further assessment.

Appraisal Outcomes: Placemaking – Living Streets

Table E.9: Placemaking – Living Streets Appraisal Summary

Appraisal Summary: Placemaking – Living Streets	
Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This package would provide positive impacts across the majority of the TPOs. In particular, it would provide a major positive impact in terms of ensuring the main routes through the Study Area function in accordance with their role in the revised Roads Hierarchy. • In terms of the STAG criteria, this package would promote moderate positive impacts in terms of Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Economy and Equality and Accessibility. • The package aligns with the aims of the Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategies, the Nestrans RTS 2040, NTS2 and the draft NPF4. • The extent of feasibility risk for options in the Placemaking – Living Streets package range between low and medium. Options have been classified as a medium risk for a number of factors such as cross-sectional width constraints and impacts they would have for different road users. Options classified as having a low risk to overall implementability have minor impacts such as upgrading existing features within the study area. • The affordability risks associated with the options within this package vary between low, medium, and high. The highest risk has been identified as the proposal to implement a shared use path along Victoria Street. Despite being assessed as feasible, the variability of the existing

Appraisal Summary: Placemaking – Living Streets	
	<p>road corridor along Victoria Street presents a number of constraints which may present a financial burden.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More detailed appraisal will enable further assessment of feasibility and affordability to be undertaken. • Overall, this option concept received a mixed response with some welcoming improvements in the centre of Dyce, which could make it more attractive, helping encourage active travel and fostering greater community spirit. However, there were concerns raised about access to properties, impact on cross-Dyce journeys and a lack of clarity on what the option concept would entail.

It is recommended that all options under consideration as part of this package are progressed for further assessment.

Appraisal Outcomes: Placemaking – Complementary Measures

Table E.10: Placemaking – Complementary Measures Appraisal Summary

Appraisal Summary: Placemaking – Complementary Measures	
Summary:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This package would provide positive impacts across the majority of the TPOs. In particular, it would provide a moderate positive impact on increasing the modal share of cycling and improving accessibility to key transport hubs and key destinations by non-car modes. • In terms of the STAG criteria, this package would promote moderate positive impacts in terms of Health, Safety and Wellbeing and Equality and Accessibility. • The package aligns with the aims of the Aberdeenshire and Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategies, the Nestrans RTS 2040, NTS2 and the draft NPF4. • The extent of feasibility risk for the options in the Placemaking – Complementary Measures package is low to medium. The low-risk options involve improvements to existing features within the study area which are considered achievable. The medium-risk options focus on the implementation of new schemes and infrastructure throughout the A947 study area. The risk to delivering these options is higher due to the wider stakeholder engagement required to deliver them. • The extent of affordability risk in this package varies from low to medium. Similar to feasibility, the options with a low affordability risk involve upgrades to existing locations/features within Dyce. Classification of the medium-risk options is due to the introduction of new infrastructure or schemes. • More detailed appraisal will enable further assessment of feasibility and affordability to be undertaken. • There was support for better cycle parking at key trip attractors during consultation. As noted in the Placemaking – Living Streets package appraisal, there was generally strong support for making the centre of Dyce more attractive and easier to access by active travel.

It is recommended that all options under consideration as part of this package are progressed for further assessment.

Identification of 'Quick Wins'

As study options have been developed, and packages assembled, it has become clear that there are several options which, if brought forward for early implementation, could offer ACC 'quick win' opportunities on the corridor that complement the overall aims and objectives of the study. These options are shown in the table below.

Table E.11: 'Quick Win' Opportunities on the Corridor

Active Travel – Strategic Routes	
AT1	Provide protected junction for active travel users at the A947/A90 slip road junction
AT2	Improve visibility for cyclists at the B977/A90 slip road roundabout
AT10	Widen on-road advisory cycle lane on Riverview Drive
AT11	Implement missing sections of on-road advisory cycle lane on Riverview Drive
AT12	Widen on-road advisory cycle lane on Stonewood Road at Stonewood Park junction
AT28	Implement dropped kerbs for cyclists to transfer between the carriageway and pavement at the northbound bus stop on the A947, north of the River Don
Active Travel – Quiet Route Measures	
AT7	Review signals at Forrit Burn Road bus gate to allow cyclists access
AT37	Implement dropped kerbs between Wellheads Drive shared use path and the carriageway
AT38	Review access restrictions on Market Street to allow for cargo bikes and recumbent cycles
AT39	Remove access controls on off-road path between Waterton Road and Ruthriehill Road
Public Transport – Priority Interventions	
AT22	Promote Craibstone Park & Ride as a Park & Pedal facility
Placemaking – Living Streets	
O1	Increase enforcement of stopping restrictions on Victoria Street, specifically adjacent to Tesco
O12	Implement signage to encourage reverse parking at the shops on Victoria Street
Placemaking – Complementary Measures	
AT21	Implement cycle parking at key trip attractors in the study area

While Options AT10, AT11 and AT12 could be delivered as 'quick wins', on-road cycling infrastructure is not shown to influence modal shift and therefore it is considered that segregated cycling infrastructure should be promoted as part of this study. However, these options may provide interim opportunities to improve on-road cycling infrastructure in advance of further consideration of segregation in the study area.

A full assessment of the remaining 'quick win' options has not been undertaken in the context of the appraisal criteria. However, each of these options would provide support for the TPOs, and, taking into consideration the scope of each of these options, it is considered that there are early opportunities for ACC to progress these measures to delivery. These measures can be progressed in isolation of any more detailed option development beyond this appraisal. However, in due course, these measures would themselves complement any packages or options ultimately delivered following more detailed work.

Study Next Steps

In order to fully determine those packages (and options within packages) which have the potential for delivery along the corridor, detailed STAG-based appraisal is required, including more detailed design work, to confirm the package(s) that would move forward into an Outline Business Case (OBC) for delivery.

The work undertaken to date provides the foundation for ACC to take the outcomes of this study forward to further level of study. This will ensure a continued consistency in terms of route corridor appraisal in the city, with the Ellon P&R-Garthdee study now moving to OBC stage, with the A96 corridor to follow. In the case of the latter, there will be a need to ensure a consistent approach is taken to OBC preparation in the context of the A947 corridor, mindful of the interrelationship between these two corridors.

