

SEStran Consultation Responses

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The report provides the Members of the Board with an update on the consultations SEStran has responded to or is currently working on.

2. Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 – Proposed Plan of September 2018

- 2.1 In September 2018, SEStran received the Proposed Plan of the Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 (LDP2). The LDP2 sets out a broad vision and strategy for the area for the 20-year period from 2020 to 2040. The Proposed Plan was published by Falkirk Council to inform LDP2 and was open for representations from 28 September until 23 November 2018.¹

- 2.2 In early November 2018, SEStran submitted a representation on behalf of the region (see Appendix 1.). SEStran concluded that, in general, the Proposed Plan is consistent with SEStran's Regional Transport Strategy objectives and policies. SEStran recommended that specific commitments to incorporating public transport and active travel into planning and new developments are included in the Proposed Plan. Moreover, such transport interventions could extend to neighbouring local authority areas, and therefore reinforce the need for a regional or cross-boundary approach.

- 2.3 The Proposed Plan provided a detailed, yet comprehensive overview of development planning in the Falkirk area. SEStran's comments were supportive in nature, and it is hoped that the suggestions will add to the contents of the LDP2.

3. Scottish Law Commission – Automated Vehicle Consultation

- 3.1 In November 2018, the Scottish Law Commission announced a public consultation reviewing the UK's regulatory framework for the safe deployment of automated vehicles.² This launches a three-month public consultation until February 2019 on key areas of safety assurance and legal liability in the context of driving automation. This is a joint project between the Scottish Law Commission and the Law Commission of England and Wales. SEStran is currently working on a consultation response and welcomes any comments from Members of the Board.

4 Proposed December 2019 TransPennine Express timetable

- 4.1 In December 2018 SEStran contributed to the stakeholder consultation document to support Transport for the North and partners in Scotland in

¹ <http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/planning-building/planning-policy/local-development-plan/plan-two/>.

² <https://www.scotlawcom.gov.uk/law-reform/consultations/>;
https://www.scotlawcom.gov.uk/files/8315/4166/7851/Joint_Consultation_Paper_on_Automated_Vehicles_D_P_No_166.PDF.

understanding the proposed timings of trains and frequency of services planned for December 2019

- 4.2** In December 2019 TPE plan to extend existing services between Liverpool Lime Street and Newcastle to Edinburgh Waverley calling at Morpeth, providing a direct rail service from the east of Scotland to stations over the Pennines and Liverpool.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1** It is recommended that the Members of the Board take note of the contents of the report. Members of the Board are asked to submit any comments on the Scottish Law Commission – Automated Vehicle Consultation to SEStran by the end of December 2018.

Julie Vinders
Project Officer
23rd November 2018

Appendix 1. - SEStran Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 Proposed Plan – Representation

Julie Vinders
Submitted to Falkirk Council on 14 November 2018

Falkirk Local Development Plan 2 – Proposed Plan of September 2018 Representation by SEStran – November 2018

SEStran welcomes the opportunity to respond to Falkirk's Proposed Plan and is grateful to see that some of SEStran's earlier recommendations to the Working Draft from February 2018 have been implemented.

Falkirk's central location plays an important role in accessibility across Scotland's central belt and the SEStran region. Strategic investment in infrastructure is key in supporting growth and addressing existing capacity issues on the region's transport network. Building on our previous response to Falkirk's Proposed Plan Working Draft, SEStran provides the following comments on the Vision, Spatial Strategy and Policy sections of the document:

Vision:

2.02: SEStran agrees with the tripartite vision for thriving communities, a growing economy in a sustainable place. However, with regard to section 2.02, for example, more could be said regarding overall access and social inclusion. For a society to thrive, it is essential to recognise that this should encompass all groups in society and benefits should be evenly distributed. The four key outcomes of Transport

Scotland's 'Accessible Travel Framework' should be considered and cited within the Policies section to reinforce this vision.³ In addition, SEStran recommends that further consideration is given to the wider regional impacts of planning and development, and Falkirk's role as part of the wider economy in the Central belt of Scotland. Reference could be made to the SEStran Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) outcomes, including SEStran's four key objectives: economy, accessibility, environment, and health & safety.⁴

LDP2 Objectives: Thriving Communities: SEStran supports the vision of thriving communities and in particular the objective to provide infrastructure to meet the needs of an increasing population and further improve the area's connectivity. However, there is no mention of active travel and its positive impact on health. It should be explicitly recognised that active travel can contribute to Falkirk's vision that 'our population will be healthier'.

Spatial Strategy

3.01-3.07: It is noted that 'investment will be focused on creating good places'. SEStran recommends that any placemaking improvements made to infrastructure should be used to encourage the uptake of walking and cycling. This should also be clearly linked to the 'Green and Blue Network' and 'Transport Corridors'.

3.12-3.18: SEStran notes that no mention is made as to how sustainable transport interventions will be used to mitigate the increased volumes of traffic. New housing developments provide a unique opportunity to promote sustainable transport modes over the traditional use of the private car. New development plans should incorporate sustainable transport options (public transport, walking and cycling), in order to avoid private car use from becoming the established mode of transport. In addition, this section should acknowledge that the Council will ensure that developments will be accessible, inclusive and affordable (by public transport) to those without access to a private car.

3.19-3.22: Access to employment and tourism opportunities must be met with considerations made towards public transport and active travel. More consideration could be given to encouraging sustainable modes and reducing single occupancy car journeys. In addition, more consideration could be given to the position of Falkirk in the wider region and its role in attracting tourism and facilitating travel to work.

3.23-3.25: It is welcomed that there will be a focus on movement within town centres through the support of the 'town centre first' principle. It must be emphasised that making these town centres attractive for those walking and cycling will encourage more people to spend time in these centres, both as consumers and visitors. This reflects a similar reference made under JE07 'Towns and Local Centres' (p. 48) in the policy section with regard to improving accessibility and promoting them to a diverse range of users.

³ <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/20113/j448711.pdf>.

⁴ http://sestran.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/SEStran_Regional_Transport_Strategy_Refresh_2015_as_published.pdf.

3.26-3.32: Although there are only 3 public transport and 3 active travel projects highlighted in the section compared to the 11 road improvement proposals, SEStran welcomes the proposed improvements to the network. Specifically, the priority given to public transport and improvements at Falkirk Bus station is welcomed. This section could focus more on improving access to bus and rail stations in the surrounding area.

Policies

4.57: SEStran supports the requirement of Travel Assessments for development proposals, as this is a recognition that transport and planning are linked and should not be viewed in isolation.

4.58: “It is essential that active travel options are available for new development and that development contributes to the network of routes where opportunities arise.” SEStran strongly supports this statement. “New routes should be appropriately designed and specified. Proposals should accord with the detailed guidance on active travel routes within SG05 ‘Green Infrastructure and New Development’.” In addition, new developments should be appropriately designed and specified to accommodate for and promote active travel from the development to key areas.

4.59: SEStran supports this statement. In addition to providing appropriate pedestrian routes to new or existing bus stops, it is important to promote cycling as an active travel mode alongside walking. Indeed, travel plans should focus on integrating different modes of transport, including public transport and active travel, and connecting these with new development areas, to appropriately incentivise the use of these modes of travel over car use.

4.61: SEStran welcomes the statement that new car parking should incorporate electric vehicle charging points. In addition, we propose that new car parking should accommodate for shared mobility modes, such as electric car-sharing and car clubs. Moreover, building infrastructure for more sustainable modes of travel, including public transport and active travel modes, should be prioritised over new car parking.

Summary

The Proposed Plan is generally consistent with SEStran’s Regional Transport Strategy objectives and policies. SEStran would like to emphasise that the design of new road links and capacity enhancements should always include consideration of priority for public transport and improvements in walking and cycling routes. For that reason, SEStran recommends that specific commitments to incorporating public transport and active travel into planning and new developments are included in the Proposed Plan. Moreover, such transport interventions could extend to neighbouring local authority areas, and therefore reinforce the need for a regional or cross-boundary approach.

The Proposed Plan provides a detailed, yet comprehensive overview of development planning in the Falkirk area. These comments are intended to be supportive, and it is hoped that the suggestions can add to the contents of the Plan. SEStran would be happy to further discuss these suggestions.

Best regards,

Julie Vinders
Project Officer
SEStran