ARUP

Transport for the North - Strategic Transport Plan 2

Integrated Sustainability Appraisal 2

Non-Technical Summary

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Contents

1.   Introduction

1.1   Purpose of this summary

This Report summarises the Integrated Sustainability Appraisal (ISA2), which identifies the likely sustainability impacts of implementing the Strategic Transport Plan 2 (STP2). STP2 has been produced by Transport for the North (TfN). The ISA2 has been independently produced by Ove Arup and Partners (Arup).

1.2   What is the role of TfN?

TfN became England's first statutory sub-national transport body in April 2018. As a partnership, TfN brings the North's 21 local transport authorities and Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) business leaders together with Network Rail, Highways England, and HS2 Ltd, while working closely with central government. STP2 sets out, on behalf of the North of England, the strategic ambitions and priorities for transport in the North. Figure 1 shows TfN's geography and the local transport authorities for the North.

1.3   The Strategic Transport Plan 2

Following public consultation, the first Strategic Transport Plan (STP1) was adopted in 2019. Since the publication of STP1, TfN has continued to evolve its evidence base. Therefore, TfN now want to develop a second strategic transport plan. To support and shape STP2, TfN proposed three Strategic Ambitions. These are:

- Transforming Economic Performance

- Rapid Decarbonisation of Surface Transport

- Enhancing Social Inclusion and Health

STP2 has been created around four 'building blocks' to ensure that its evidence base is robustly and comprehensively set out. These are:

- The Case - Setting out the case for change, summarising the evidence headlines and setting the scene for the STP, including the principles of the 'Sustainability Stool'.

- The Vision - Setting out TfN's overarching vision for transport in the North of England, supported by three strategic ambitions.

- TfN's Strategy for the North's Transport System - TfN's overarching strategy and priorities for rail, the road network, freight and international connectivity, and local connectivity.

- Action and Impact Framework - Setting out the role and responsibilities of TfN, its action plan and how it will measure its impact.

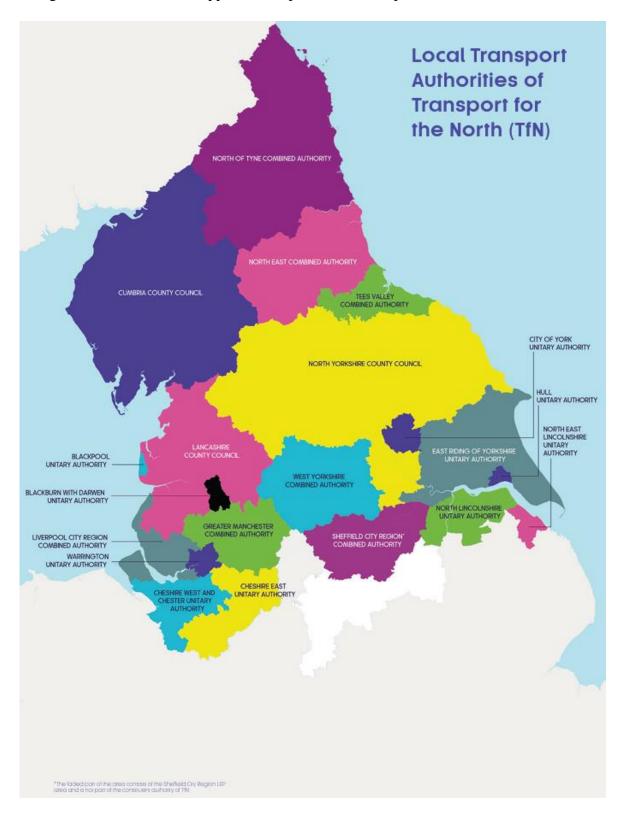Following consultation and TfN approval, the plan is to be adopted in December 2023.

Figure 1: TfN Geography (to be updated, for final publication, to reflect local authority boundaries for Westmoreland and Furness Council and Cumberland Council)

2. ISA2 Methodology

2.1 Purpose of the ISA2

The ISA2 is the second iteration of the ISA. Building on the previous body of work, the ISA2 supports the development of the STP2. The ISA2 aim is to promote sustainable development, health and equality, social, environment and economic considerations within the STP2. The ISA2 and STP2 have progressed together, allowing ISA2 recommendations to be included as the STP2 develops.

The ISA2 meets the requirements of:

- Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/ 1633, "2004 Regulations" as amended).

- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (as required by section 19 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

- Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) (as required by section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, as amended).

- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) (as outlined by national government policy).

Further information in relation to the requirements of the above can be found in the ISA2 Main Report. In addition, a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been completed, as required under Regulation 48 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (SI 1994/ 2716, "1994 Regulations", as amended). The relevant scoping and assessment can be found within the HRA Stage 1 and Stage 2 Report.

2.2 Reporting and consultation as part of the ISA2

Consultation is a key part of the IA process. Consultation completed to date has been on the ISA2 Scoping Report. The Scoping Report was shared with statutory consultation authorities and other relevant stakeholders in 2022. Following the consultation, all feedback was considered and the Scoping Report was updated based on consultation responses.

Consultation responses received as part of this STP2 consultation will be considered and actioned. All documents relating to the ISA2 have been published as part of the STP2 consultation.

2.3 ISA2 Stages

The ISA2 process follows the standard Integrated Assessment (IA) stages. This Non-Technical Summary and ISA2 Report is currently within Stage D of the IA process.

Table 1: IA Stages

Stages	Overview
Stage A	This scoping stage is to set the context for the assessment with: a review of relevant plans, programmes and strategies; collection, analysis and summarisation of current and future baseline data; identification of key issues and opportunities for the North; refinement of ISA objectives; preparation of the scoping report and consultation with statutory bodies and relevant organisations.
Stage B	This assessment stage is to consider the proposed policy options and assess their effects, using the framework developed in stage A including assessing the vision and objectives of the Plan and reasonable alternatives, identifying mitigation measures, explaining why the preferred policy options were taken and to propose monitoring measures for the policies.
Stage C	This reporting stage involved preparing the IA report which explains Stage B.
Stage D	This consultation stage involves consulting of the proposed Plan (STP2) and associated IA, with feedback from the consultation considered and appropriately actioned.
Stage E	The Post-Adoption stage will involve the creation of the Post Adoption Statement following the adoption of the Plan.

2.4 ISA2 Assessment Methodology

The ISA2 has a framework of objectives covering sustainable development, health and equality, social, environment and economic considerations. The STP2 has been assessed against these ISA2 objectives with consideration given to existing and future baselines, issues and trends relevant to each objective. This is to understand the extent to which the STP2 objectives, policies and reasonable alternatives are likely to contribute towards the achievement of the ISA2 objectives.

Within the ISA2, we have acknowledged where there is uncertainty within the plan when being scored against the ISA2 objectives. Where proposed mitigation to strengthen the plan is outside of TfN's control, we have not felt it appropriate or proportionate for the plan to be amended. Therefore, whilst TfN would not have direct responsibility over these areas, we have highlighted

this to support collaborative working between TfN and delivery authorities to minimise environmental and social impacts, as explained in the Action and Impact Framework within the STP2.

2.4.1   Objectives Assessment

The objectives assessment is done to ensure, where appropriate, sustainability is embedded in the objectives and ambitions of the plan. We have checked the three strategic STP2 ambitions against the ISA2 Framework to see where they were compatible or where there was a conflict. This has been done using the key shown in Table 2. This was done for each draft STP2 plan.

Table 2: STP2 ISA2 Objectives Key

✓	Broadly Compatible
X	Potential Conflict
?	Dependent upon nature of implementation measures
NR	Not relevant

2.4.2   Policy Assessment

The plan's policies were assessed within each draft of the STP2. The policies were scored on a nine-point scoring system, shown in Table 3**Error! Reference source not found.**, to assess the significance of potential effects of the STP2. This system included colour and symbols from 'largely beneficial' to 'strong adverse'. The scoring system also considered scale, duration, permanence, certainty, primary or secondary, direct or indirect, cumulative and synergistic potential effects.

Table 3: Assessment Tables Key

Terms		Effects					Assessment	
		Mag	Scale	Dur	T/P	Cert	Scale	Category
Mag	Magnitude	✓✓	Local	ST-MT	Temp	Low	+++	Large beneficial
Scale	Geographic Extent	✓	Loc-Reg	ST-LT	Perm	Med	++	Moderate beneficial
Dur	Duration	-	Reg-Nat	MT-LT		High	+	Slight beneficial
T/P	Temporary/Permanent	?		ST			0	Neutral
Cert	Certainty	X		MT			-	Slight adverse
ST	Short Term	XX		LT			--	Moderate adverse
MT	Medium Term						---	Strong adverse
LT	Long Term						?	Uncertain
Sm	Summary Assessment						+/-	Combination

As part of the assessment, mitigation and enhancement has been suggested. Mitigation includes recommendations to reduce any significant negative effects. Enhancement includes recommendations to improve positive effects further.

2.4.3   Reasonable Alternatives Assessment

Reasonable alternatives need to be considered as part of the ISA2. Alternative scenarios, developed by TfN, were assessed on the same scoring system as the plan policies to understand the significance of potential effects of each of the alternatives on the plan area. Mitigation and enhancements measures were also given to strengthen the scenarios as part of this process. It is important to note that scenarios may not be developed to the same level of detail as policies within the STP2 consultation plan.

3.   ISA2 Framework

The ISA2 Framework includes 16 objectives covering sustainable development, health and equality, social, environment and economic considerations. These objectives are bespoke for the STP2. The objectives are shown in table 4. Each objective also has assessment criteria which help guide the assessment team to decide if the STP2 policies meet the objective. There are also sub-objectives for the EqIA and HIA as part of the ISA2. These are shown in tables 5 and 6.

Table 4: The ISA2 Framework

No.	ISA2 Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic(s)
1	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from surface transport in the North	Will the STP2… • Encourage a reduction in private car vehicle mileage? • Encourage a greater proportion of passenger and freight movement by lower carbon modes? • Support more sustainable travel choices through enhanced public transport availability, convenience, accessibility and affordability? • Promote a wider choice of passenger travel through quality integrated facilities and services, walking and cycling improvements, demand management, network management, travel planning and intelligent transport systems? • Encourage greater carbon efficiency in the movement of goods and people? • Encourage use of innovative new low and zero carbon transport technologies? • Encourage use of the transport estate for low carbon energy generation? • Support the minimisation of dependence upon the private car? • Consider the specific transport needs of rural communities? • Encourage the prioritisation of Climate Change mitigation and adaptation?	Climate Change and Energy Transport

No.	ISA2 Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic(s)
2	Minimise embedded emissions from the development of new transport infrastructure and the maintenance of existing infrastructure	Will the STP2… • Support a reduction in embedded and construction carbon within the North's infrastructure investment programmes? • Encourage the use of the transport estate for low carbon energy generation and investable offsetting schemes for hard to abate sectors (e.g. aviation)? • Encourage the use of innovative low carbon construction materials and techniques?	Climate Change and Energy Transport
3	Protect and enhance the biodiversity, geodiversity and the green infrastructure network	Will the STP2… • Avoid direct or indirect significant adverse effects on designated habitats and protected species, including through transport related vibration, air and noise pollution? • Promote good design, in relation to major transport infrastructure, to maximise ecological connectivity and to secure an overall Biodiversity Net Gain, Environmental Net Gain and Natural Capital enhancement for the North? • Encourage the protection and creation of nature-based carbon sinks within and alongside the transport estate? • Support the development of Local Nature Recovery Strategies?	Biodiversity
4	Conserve and enhance internationally designated environment sites *HRA Macro-Objective*	Will the STP2… • Affect international sites designated for nature conservation identified as part of the HRA screening process (including positive and negative effects)?	Biodiversity

No.	ISA2 Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic(s)
5	Protect and enhance local air quality	Will the STP2… • Support the minimisation of emissions of air pollutants and enhancement of air quality particularly in areas with low air quality (e.g. AQMAs) and where this pollution disproportionately affects vulnerable populations? • Support an improvement in air quality through reduced traffic levels and congestion, and enabling modal shift away from private car use?	Air Quality
6	Increase resilience of the transport network to extreme weather events and a changing climate	Will the STP2… • Increase the understanding of our transport system's vulnerability to climate change effects? • Promote an increase in the resilience of the transport network to extreme weather events and a changing climate through nature-based solutions? • Encourage adaptive management and design to respond to uncertainties in climatic effects and scheme requirements	Climate Change and Energy Transport
7	Protect and enhance the blue infrastructure network including inland and coastal water environments	Will the STP2… • Support the protection of the quality of inland and coastal surface water and groundwater resources? • Support the use of Nature-based solutions to protect aquatic habitats?	Water Resources, Flooding and Water Quality
8	Protect and conserve soil and remediate and avoid land contamination	Will the STP2… • Encourage construction on previously developed land / minimise use of greenfield? • Support the prevention of disturbance, harm, contamination, or permanent loss (irreversible) of the most highly productive agricultural soils? • Support the remediation of contamination land?	Land Use, Soils and Agriculture

No.	ISA2 Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic(s)
		• Encourage the protection of peatlands?	
9	Support the conservation and enhancement of the quality and distinctiveness of historic assets, industrial and cultural heritage and their settings	Will the STP2… • Support the conservation, protection and enhancement of the region's cultural and designated / non-designated historic assets (e.g. locally important buildings, archaeological remains, World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and structures, registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas), their integrity and their settings? • Support the improvement of access to historic / culturally important sites by sustainable transport modes? • Support the appropriate management elements of the transport infrastructure which are designated heritage assets?	Cultural Heritage
10	Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes	Will the STP2… • Encourage design, construction, repair and maintenance of transport infrastructure (and associated green / blue infrastructure) that respects and enhances the landscape character and townscapes of the north of England?	Landscape and Townscape
11	Promote the prudent use of natural resources, minimise the production of waste and support the re-use and recycling of materials	Will the STP2… • Help to enable new / upgraded infrastructure to be resource efficient (materials, energy, water, sustainable procurement etc) in construction and operation? • Promote sustainable waste management practices? • Encourage the use of recycled or secondary materials?	Natural Resources and Waste

No.	ISA2 Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic(s)
		• Promote the use of local suppliers and locally produced materials in construction? • Support a reduction in fuel use by encouraging the use of more sustainable modes of transport?	
12	Enhance long term economic prosperity and promote a clean and green economic transformation	Will the STP2… • Support delivery of better and more sustainable connections (passengers and freight) between the North's cities, with other regions and internationally and between regions and counties within the North? • Support the improvement in the reliability and resilience of the North's strategic road and rail networks? • Support the improvement of overall journey times (passengers and freight), travel convenience and reliability? • Promote local requirements to guide investments to connect to regional and national networks? • Encourage the optimisation of potential economic outcomes for the North from decarbonisation of transport? (e.g. alternative fuels or propulsion technologies) • Contribute to establishing an effective transport network that increases investment? • Support improved availability and accessibility to good quality employment and skills development opportunities? • Support economic activities in rural areas? • Help reduce the GVA per capita gap between the Northern economy and the rest of England?	Employment and Economics

No.	ISA2 Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic(s)
		• Help improve labour market participation, productivity and reduce inactivity across the region? • Promote a modal shift to active travel through high-quality green infrastructure to improve people's mental and physical health?	
13	Coordinate land use and strategic transport planning across the region	Will the STP2… • Support the development of compact, higher density mixed use development coordinated with transport infrastructure? • Support the development of connected communities? • Support housing and employment development in areas that are or will be served by public and active rail transport?	Land Use, Soils and Agriculture
14	Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens and reduce Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE), particularly for the North's most vulnerable groups. *EqIA Macro-Objective*	See the EqIA Sub-Objectives	Population (inc. equality, accessibility and community safety)
15	Improve the health and wellbeing for all citizens and reduce inequalities in health	See the HIA Sub-Objectives	Human Health and Healthcare Population

No.	ISA2 Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic(s)
	HIA Macro-Objective		
16	Promote community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime for all citizens *HIA Macro-Objective*	See the HIA Sub-Objectives	Population

Table 5: EqIA Sub-Objectives

No.	ISA2 Objective	EqIA Sub-Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic
14a	Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, and reduce Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE), particularly for the North's most vulnerable groups	Improve extent and quality of public travel and active travel connections to services, facilities and amenities	Will the STP2… • Support improved access to essential facilities, including employment, healthcare and education, particularly for those on low-incomes, people with disabilities and long term health conditions, carers, and those in areas with a high risk of transport-related social exclusion? • Support improved walking, cycling and public transport services and facilities in areas with a high risk of TRSE? • Support improved high-quality green infrastructure?	Population

No.	ISA2 Objective	EqIA Sub-Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic
			• Promote a transport system that meets the needs of everyone, including those with a physical or learning disability and those with limited mobility? • Encourage the provision of transport services that are welcoming for all groups of society to increase availability of travel options? • Support the improved access to information for all users for the purpose of promoting travel options?	
14b	Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, and reduce Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE), particularly for the North's most vulnerable groups.	Improve affordability of transport	Will the STP2… • Support the provision of transport services that are financially accessible for all? • Facilitate the provision of transport services that provide appropriate and/or statutory fare structures for vulnerable users (i.e. concessionary fares on public transport services)? • Promote the use of technology to reduce transport costs for users, e.g. integrated ticketing and smart cards?	Population

No.	ISA2 Objective	EqIA Sub-Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic
14c	Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, and reduce Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE), particularly for the North's most vulnerable groups	Reduce severance	Will the STP2… • Support the enhancement of better access to essential facilities and community assets to reduce any existing severance issues? • Consider the physical and perceived impact of the transport system on the local environment and local communities? • Support the reduction in the dominance of traffic on residential roads and in proximity to key services? • Support the improvement of public realm and overall environment and reduce road vehicle behaviours that affect accessibility for active and public transport users in areas with a high risk of TRSE (e.g. pavement parking)?	Population

Table 6: HIA Sub-Objectives

No.	ISA2 Objective	HIA Sub-Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic Matters
15a	Improve the health and wellbeing for all citizens and	Improve accessibility to services and facilities that	Will the STP2… • Support residential, commercial, community facilities and recreational	Human Health and Healthcare Population

No.	ISA2 Objective	HIA Sub-Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic Matters
	reduce inequalities in health	improve health outcomes	developments that are accessible by active travel and public transport, including for vulnerable groups? • Prevent disproportionate health benefits/harms for some groups more than others? • Promote accessibility (particularly on foot, cycling or public transport) to open space, nature and recreational activities (e.g. playing fields, sports facilities, footpaths or National Trails), particularly for vulnerable groups? • Encourage more people to integrate physical activity into their everyday journeys (either as complete active travel journeys or as part of a multi-modal journey)? • Prevent impacts on the quality and extent of existing recreational assets, such as formal or informal footpaths including National Trails?	
15b	Improve the health and wellbeing for all citizens and	Reduce transport related vibration,	Will the STP2… • Support the reduction of the transport impact on	Human Health and Healthcare

No.	ISA2 Objective	HIA Sub-Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic Matters
	reduce inequalities in health	air and noise pollution.	vibration, air quality and noise, particularly around vulnerable users such as children, older people and deprived areas?	Population
16a	Promote community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime for all citizens *Community Safety Micro-Objective*	Improve road safety and reduce the number of accidents and other incidents	Will the STP2... • Promote the enhancement of road safety and reduce the number of road traffic incidents for everyone but particularly for vulnerable users • Support the reduction of levels of private car use, reduce levels of car dominance (e.g. pavement parking) and providing safer environments for everyone those walking, cycling, and wheeling? • Reduce the potential for collisions and accidents involving wildlife, particularly protected species, which could affect the safety of people using the transport network, the efficiency of that network and the future of individuals and populations of protected species?	Human Health and Healthcare Population

No.	ISA2 Objective	HIA Sub-Objective	Assessment Criteria	ISA Topic Matters
16b	Promote community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime for all citizens *Community Safety Micro-Objective*	Improve actual and perceived safety and security issues	Will the STP2…. • Promote improvements of public realm and levels of natural surveillance to create a more welcoming environment for travel, physical activity, and accessing key facilities? • Promote increased provision of safe facilities for those utilising public transport, walking and cycling? • Create a more welcoming environment for travel and accessing key facilities for all, but particularly women, those with disabilities, LGBT people, low-income groups and ethnic minorities?	Human Health and Healthcare Population

4. Assessment Overview

4.1 Compatibility Assessment

Three assessments on the STP2's strategic ambitions, called objectives within this assessment, have been undertaken in November 2022, January 2023 and March 2023 as the plan developed. The STP2 Plan had 3 objectives considered throughout all stages:

- Transforming Economic Performance.

- Rapid Decarbonisation of Surface Transport.

- Reducing Transport Related Social Exclusion which changed to Enhancing Social Inclusion and Health in March 2023

Each of the STP2 objectives provided by TfN also had a number of sub-objectives which were also considered as part of this assessment.

4.1.1 November 2022

The assessment found that there were no STP2 plan objectives scored with a 'Potential conflict' against the ISA2 objectives. Three ISA2 objectives found to be scored as 'Dependent upon nature of implementation measures' or 'Not relevant' across the three STP2 plan objectives.

4.1.2 January 2023

The assessment found that there were no STP2 plan objectives scored with a 'Potential conflict' against the ISA2 Objectives. It was found that all ISA2 Objectives found to be scored at least once as 'Broadly compatible' across the STP2 plan objectives following action taken by TfN to update the STP2, following our first assessment in December 2022. Therefore, no areas of specific focus and consideration were given due to the strengthened text within the STP2's objectives. The revised STP2 Objectives were found to provide a firm underpinning to help ensure that the sustainability performance of the plan can be maximised.

4.1.3 March 2023

This iteration of the assessed the STP2 objectives contained within the consultation version of the STP2. The assessment found that there were no STP2 Plan objectives scored with a 'Potential conflict' against the ISA2 objectives. However, the assessment found that Objective 1 scored lower with three objectives changing from 'broadly compatible' to 'dependent upon the nature of implementation measures' compared with the January 2023 assessment scores due to the change in wording included within the objective.

From this assessment, it is considered that objective 1 provides a weaker basis to ensure the sustainability of the plan can be maximised, compared to that assessed in January 2023. To strengthen the STP2 objectives, the TfN plan writers were encouraged to make clearer and stronger economic ambitions for the North to improve the ISA2 assessment outcomes.

4.2 Assessment of Alternatives

TfN identified three reasonable alternative scenarios. The alternative scenarios were developed through the development and implementation of STP1 and informed by the ongoing evidence base work TfN are undertaking. The ISA2 provides an assessment of each alternative against the ISA2 objectives and helps to enhance the transparency of the decision-making process, as part of the development of the STP2.

In order to assess the three alternative scenarios against the ISA2 Objectives, a series of assumptions were developed for each. These assumptions, developed by TfN, were based on what are considered likely outcomes from each of the scenarios. The three alternative scenarios and ISA2 assumptions are defined in **Error! Reference source not found.** below.

Table 7: Alternative Scenarios and Assumptions

Scenario Description	Assumptions
Scenario 1 – Continuation of STP1	
Assumes the provisions and ambitions of STP1 are still in place.	• Implementation of a vision of a thriving North of England, where world class transport supports sustainable economic growth, excellent quality of life and improved opportunities for all. • The objectives of the STP1 are: Transforming economic performance; increasing efficiency, reliability, integration and resilience in the transport system; improving inclusivity, health, and access to opportunities for all; and promoting and enhancing the built, historic and natural environment. • This scenario focuses investment on seven identified strategic development corridors that reflect economic links across the North. Each of the Strategic Development Corridors will have a different scale of contribution towards achieving the outcomes of transformational economic growth and therefore different transport

needs. However, investment in all the corridors is critical to the collective ambitions of Transport for the North and Partners.

- Travel, economic and population growth assumption in line with the Core Scenario within NTEM 2022[1] and that National Road Traffic Projections 2022[2]. The Core Scenario is based on 'firm and funded' government policy and published plans.

Scenario 2 - Balanced	
Assumes the provisions and ambitions within STP2 are introduced.	• The STP2 builds on the original vision in the 2015 Northern Transport Strategy and the first Strategic Transport Plan with a renewed focus on decarbonisation and social opportunity. • By 2050 the North of England will have become a thriving, socially inclusive region. This will be achieved through a transformed zero emission, integrated, safe and sustainable transport system, that will enhance connectivity, resilience, and journey times for all users. • The STP2 vision is supported by three clear strategic ambitions: enhancing social inclusion and health; transforming economic performance; and rapid decarbonisation of surface transport. • The STP2 sets out policy priorities for 9 distinct place types across the North. • The STP2 retains the seven Strategic Development Corridors identified within the STP1. • The STP2 proposes, as a minimum, a position of no 'net' road traffic growth in the North from a 2018 baseline to 2045. This recognises the significant social, economic and environmental benefits that may be derived from reducing car dependency and that greater priority should be given to sustainable modes when considering highway investment.

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[1] National Trip End Model (NTEM) - data.gov.uk

[2] National Road Traffic Projections 2022 - Core Scenario - National road traffic projections 2022 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

	• Road capacity works would be supported, where primarily driven by safety improvement needs or where there is compelling evidence it is required to deliver significant economic and social benefits.
Scenario 3 - Local Modal Shift Max	
Assumes a shift of focus (relative to the Balanced Scenario) towards prioritised investment in local public and active transport infrastructure and services.	• Shares the strategic ambitions of STP2 but aims to achieve them through a stronger focus on reducing road vehicle mileage, relative to technological change. • Prioritised investment at local level. • Objective to achieve 20% absolute reduction in vehicle mileage within the North as a whole (against 2018 levels). • Fare subsidies for local public transport. • Local road user charging schemes would be encouraged where both feasible and appropriate with 'revenue recycling' back into the provision of enhanced public and active travel offers for those local areas. • Prioritised investment into active travel and micro-mobility facilities to achieve usage rates on a par with the Netherlands. • Modal shift for longer distance trips and measures to increase rail freight will be a lesser priority. • Investment in EV transition and alternative fuels would be left to private investment to enable the transition. • A pause to all road building schemes, unless for safety reasons, would be recommended.

4.2.1   Summary

The assessment of the three alternative scenarios found that the 'Balanced Scenario' performed the best overall across the ISA2 Objectives. The 'Continuation of STP1 Scenario' performed well against the ISA2 Objectives, with a slight, moderate or largely beneficial impact against eight objectives. The Local Modal Shift Max Scenario scored similarly to the Continuation of STP1 Scenario, albeit with strengths in different areas. Across all three scenarios, it will be key to ensure any adverse effects are reduced and beneficial effects are enhanced as appropriate through the carefully considered and identified mitigation measures. It is not the purpose of the ISA2 to decide which alternative scenario should be pursued. This is the responsibility of TfN who have considered the preferred, most appropriate strategy to be taken forward.

4.3   Assessment of the STP2's Policies

Three assessments on the STP2's plan policies have been undertaken in November 2022, January 2023 and March 2023 as the plan developed.

4.3.1   November 2022

The first assessment assessed the Policies and Place Framework, which comprised nine place-based policies, against the ISA2 framework objectives.

- Commuter Towns
- Large Conurbations
- Rural Villages and Dispersed
- Rural Town and Fringe
- Transformation Places
- Other Urban
- Visitor Destinations
- Former Metropolitan Counties
- Industrial Places

The assessment identified a number of strengths within the policies, specifically in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, minimising embedded emissions, protecting local air quality, increasing resilience of the transport network, enhancing long term economic prosperity, supporting the coordination of strategic transport and land use planning and promoting inclusive environments. The assessments findings also identified areas of uncertainty in terms of conserving and enhancing historic assets, landscapes and townscapes and promoting the prudent use of natural resources.

The assessment recommended mitigation and enhancements against each of the ISA2 framework objectives, where it was considered necessary, to help improve the STP2. However, it was acknowledged that the mitigation given to enhance these policies may be included within the remaining policies in the draft STP2 which we had not yet received, or therefore assessed.

In the second assessment, both thematic policies and the amended Policies and Place Framework were assessed. This assessment assessed the 13 thematic policies included in the draft STP2, which at this stage comprised:

- Rail

- Road

- Freight and Logistics

- International Connectivity

- Local Connectivity

- Rural Mobility

- Achieving more Sustainable Travel

- Active Travel

- Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

- Multi-modal Hubs

- Connected Mobility

- Decarbonisation

- Transport Relation Social Exclusion

The assessment findings identified a number of strengths within the thematic policies, specifically in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, minimising embedded emissions, protecting local air quality, increasing resilience of the transport network, enhancing long term economic prosperity, supporting the coordination of strategic transport and land use planning and promoting inclusive and safe environments. The assessment also identified areas of uncertainty in terms of avoiding land contamination and conserving soil, conserving and enhancing historic assets, landscapes and townscapes and enhancing blue infrastructure networks. The assessment recommended mitigation and enhancements against each of the ISA2 objectives, where it was considered necessary, to help strengthen the STP2.

The draft STP2 plan included an amended Policy and Places Framework. This comprised of the same 9 place-based policies, against the ISA2 framework objectives. The assessment findings continued to identify a number of strengths within the policies, specifically in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, minimising embedded emissions, protecting local air quality, increasing resilience of the transport network, enhancing long term economic prosperity, supporting the coordination of strategic transport and land use planning and promoting inclusive and safe environments. However, areas of uncertainty found from the assessment included those related to conserving and enhancing historic assets, landscapes and townscapes and conserving soil and land remediation. The assessment again recommended mitigation and enhancements against each of the ISA2 framework objectives, where it was considered necessary, to help strengthen the STP2.

4.3.3   March 2023

This assessment assessed the four thematic policies included in the draft STP2, which comprised:

- Rail

- Road

- Freight and Logistics

- Local Connectivity

The other plan policies from January 2023 had been removed as separate policy sections, with some incorporated into the four remaining themes.

The assessment findings identify a number of strengths in the thematic policies when assessed against the ISA2 objectives. The policies scored well in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting local air quality; enhancing long term economic prosperity; and promoting inclusive and safe environments for all, which support the three overarching ambitions of STP2. However, the assessment findings also identify areas of uncertainty across the thematic policies, specifically surrounding protecting and enhancing the blue infrastructure network, avoiding land contamination conserving and enhancing historic assets, landscapes and townscapes. Table 8 summarises the findings of the March thematic policies against each ISA2 Framework objective.

In addition, the amended nine policy sections within the Policies and Place Framework, which was now located in Annex 1 of the plan, were also assessed. In previous assessment rounds, appendices were excluded from the ISA2 assessments however, in this final assessment, the Policy and Place Framework within Annex 2 were assessed. This was undertaken due to the significant contribution the Policy and Places Framework is considered to have on the implementation of STP2 and the Framework being considered as 'policy' which would be used specifically to guide development of the North's transport network.

The assessment findings continued to identify a number of strengths in the Policy and Places Framework when assessed against the ISA2 objectives. The policies scored well in terms of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting local air quality; enhancing long term economic prosperity; and promoting inclusive and safe environments for all which support the three overarching ambitions of STP2. Following changes made based on our recommendations from the initial assessment of the STP2, the Policy and Places Framework also scores strongly against protecting and enhancing blue and green infrastructure, conserving and enhancing historic assets, landscapes and townscapes.

The assessment findings also identify areas of uncertainty or only slightly beneficial impacts across the Policy and Places Framework. Mitigation and enhancement have therefore been recommended to help strengthen the policies against certain ISA2 Framework Objectives. The Policy and Places Framework relates to distinct place types, therefore whilst certain policies were not scored strongly

it was not considered proportionate to amend the policy wording where it had instead been addressed elsewhere within the STP2. Therefore, mitigation was not identified where it was considered to be addressed when the STP2 was read as a whole. Table 9 summarises the findings of the assessment of the Policy and Places Framework policies against each ISA2 Framework.

It should also be noted that a number of the recommended enhancement measures across both the thematic policies and the Policy and Places Framework to address these identified uncertainties would need to be considered at the design stage or project level and therefore led by delivery authorities. For this reason, it was not considered appropriate or proportionate to be included within the STP2. Therefore, whilst TfN would not have direct responsibility over these measures, TfN would work with and influence the delivery authorities to minimise the adverse environmental and social impacts, as outlined within the Action and Impact Framework.

Therefore, when the plan is read as a whole, the STP2 provides a firm basis for future transport planning for the North.

Table 8: Summary of assessment scores for the STP2 Thematic Policies (March 2023)

Thematic Policies	ISA2 Framework Objectives																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14a	14b	14c	15a	15b	16a	16b
Rail	+++	+/?	+/?	+/?	+++	+	0/?	0/?	0/?	+	++	++	++	+++	+++	+++	++	+++	++	+++
Roads	+++	++	++	0	++	+++	+	0/?	0/?	+	+	++	++	++	+	++	++	++	++	+
Freight and International Connectivity	++	++	+/?	+/?	+++	++	0/?	0/?	0/?	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Local Connectivity	++	++	+	?	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+

Table 9: Summary of assessment scores for the STP2 Policy and Place Framework (March 2023)

Policy and Place Framework	ISA2 Framework Objectives																			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14a	14b	14c	15a	15b	16a	16b
Commuter Towns	+++	++	++	+	++	++	++	0/?	+/?	+	+	++	++	++	+++	++	++	+	+	+
Large Conurbations	+++	++	++	++	+++	+++	++	0/?	+++	+++	+	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	+++	++	++
Rural Villages & Dispersed	+++	++	+/?	+	++	+	0	0/?	+	+	+	++	++	++	+++	++	++	++	++	++
Rural Town and Fringe	+++	++	++	+	+++	++	++	0/?	++	++	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Transformational Places	+++	++	+	+	+++	++	0/?	+/?	0/?	+	+	+++	++	++	++	++	+	+++	++	0/?
Other Urban	++	++	++	++	+++	++	++	+	+++	+++	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Visitor Destinations	+++	+	++	++	+++	++	+	0/?	++	++	+/?	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	++
Former Metropolitan Counties	+++	+	+	+	+++	+	0/?	0/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+++	++	++	+	++	++	+	++	++
Industrial Places	+++	++	++	+	++	++	++	0/?	+++	+	+	+++	+++	++	+	++	++	+	++	+

5.   Cumulative, Synergistic and Indirect Effects

The ISA2 has considered cumulative, synergistic and indirect effects. These are defined as:

- Indirect effects are not a direct result of the plan but occur as a result of actions. An example of this would be development that changes a water table, therefore affecting the ecology of a nearby wetland.

- Cumulative effects are where several insignificant individual effects have a combined significant effect. An example of this would be noise or dust pollution from multiple new developments.

- Synergistic effects are where a total effect is greater than the sum of the individual effects. An example of this would be a wildlife habitat becoming progressively fragmented with limited effects on a particular species until the last fragmentation makes the areas too small to support the species.

The identification of these effects already takes into account the fact that TfN have taken on board earlier recommendations to improve the sustainability performance of the STP2. Table 10 outlines the results of this analysis.

Table 10: Anticipated cumulative, synergistic and indirect effects

Effects	Causes	Affected Receptor	Significance
Greenhouse gas emissions	It is considered that the STP2 will help to result in a fall in GHG emissions due to the decarbonisation of the transport network and delivery of better integrated public and active travel modes, as well as the development and increased use of sustainable modes of transport. Uptake of electric and zero-emission vehicles is also anticipated to bring major benefits.	Population Wildlife habitats Transport Infrastructure	Climate change is a global phenomenon meaning that greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere are likely to increase during the STP2 period as a result of human activities on a global scale. Anticipated medium to long term benefits as interventions are

Effects	Causes	Affected Receptor	Significance
			developed and uptake of low and zero emission vehicles develops.
Biodiversity	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it will result in a mix of cumulative positive and negative effects on biodiversity.	Wildlife habitats Flora and Fauna Landscapes and Townscapes	The use of land for new infrastructure, including for example transport infrastructure, commercial uses and housing could result in habitat degradation, loss or fragmentation. However, positive effects are anticipated following the introduction of the Environment Act (2021) with the 10% BNG requirement and Local Nature Recovery Strategies.
Sites designated for nature conservation	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it could result in a mix of cumulative positive and negative effects on sites designated for nature conservation. It is not possible to quantify these at this stage of plan development.	Wildlife habitats Flora and Fauna Landscapes and Townscapes	Potential for effects on sites designated for nature conservation – requirement for Habitats Regulation Assessment to be undertaken at the appropriate stage.
Air quality	It is considered that the STP2 will have a cumulative	Population	Whilst the STP2 is considered to have a

Effects	Causes	Affected Receptor	Significance
	beneficial effect on air quality. This beneficial effect will be derived from the decarbonisation of the transport network and delivery of better integrated public and active travel modes, as well as the development and increased use of sustainable modes of transport. Uptake of electric and zero-emission vehicles is also anticipated to bring major benefits.	Wildlife habitats Flora and Fauna	cumulative beneficial effect on air quality, air emissions from the major road network and particularly congested areas remain a concern. Designation of AQMAs indicates that national air quality standards are unlikely to be met in the areas concerned. This affects the health of humans and other species. Anticipated medium to long term benefits as interventions are developed and uptake of low and zero emission vehicles develops.
Blue infrastructure network	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it could result in a mix of cumulative positive and negative effects on the blue infrastructure network, including inland and coastal water environments. For example, an increase in shipping infrastructure could have a greater impact on	Population Wildlife Habitats Flora and Fauna	There are anticipated positive and negative effects over the medium to long term as measures are implemented.

Effects	Causes	Affected Receptor	Significance
	coastal surface water and the disturbance of aquatic habitats. On the other hand, a reduction in emissions from road vehicles and public realm improvements could result in reduced pollution benefiting the surrounding blue infrastructure network.		
Soil, agricultural resources and contaminated land	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it could result in a mix of cumulative positive and negative effects on soil, agricultural resources and contaminated land. For example, the development of the highway network provides an opportunity for positive effects relating to contaminated land, but it may also provide an opportunity for further land to become contaminated and could potentially lead to the loss of soil / agricultural resources. Effects will be experienced across the north of England.	Population Wildlife Habitats Flora and Fauna Landscapes and Townscapes Rivers Groundwater	There are anticipated positive and negative effects over the medium to long term as measures are implemented.
Historic Assets	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it will result in a mix of negative and positive effects on historic assets, industrial	Landscapes and Townscapes Heritage Assets	The use of land for new infrastructure, including transport infrastructure, commercial uses and

Effects	Causes	Affected Receptor	Significance
	and cultural heritage and their settings across the north of England. For example, better integrated and more accessible sustainable transport modes could improve access to heritage sites, however changes to transport infrastructure could have potential negative effect on the integrity and setting of heritage assets that form part of the transport network without appropriate mitigation measures.		housing could result in the disturbance of heritage assets and their settings. Negative effects could also be caused by human activities such as recreation, pollution and noise from transport. Anticipated positive and negative effects over the medium to long term as interventions are implemented.
Landscapes/ townscapes	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it will result in a mix of negative and positive effects on landscapes and townscapes across the north of England. For example, a reduction in car ownership could lead to a positive effect on townscapes due to reduced congestion, yet the siting and design of new sustainable transport infrastructure could impact on the setting of a landscape or townscape.	Landscapes and Townscapes Population Infrastructure Heritage assets Wildlife Habitats Flora and Fauna	The combination of multiple developments could result in the degradation of species and wildlife habitats, landscapes and townscapes, with the potential to cause irreversible harm. Anticipated positive and negative effects over the medium to long term as interventions are implemented.
Economic growth	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived	Population	Changes in access to employment

Effects	Causes	Affected Receptor	Significance
	from it will act as a key driver to long term economic prosperity and promote a clean and green economic transformation across the north of England.		opportunities or a change in shift patterns as a result of new or improved transport infrastructure. Anticipated positive effects over the medium to long term as measures are implemented.
Health and well-being	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it will act to promote health and well-being through providing greater access to services and employment opportunities, in particular for vulnerable groups and areas at high risk of TRSE.	Population	Changes in access to health and leisure facilities, and a change in local air quality as a result of new or improved transport infrastructure. Anticipated positive effects over the medium to long term as measures are implemented.
Increase in flood risk	It is considered that the STP2 and interventions derived from it could result in a mix of cumulative positive and negative effects on flood risk. For example, the development of the highway network provides an opportunity for positive	Population Infrastructure Heritage assets Wildlife habitats Flora and Fauna Rivers	The use of land for new infrastructure, including transport infrastructure, commercial uses and housing could result in an increase in impermeable surfaces which could increase

Effects	Causes	Affected Receptor	Significance
	effects relating to flooding, but it may also provide an opportunity for increases in flood risk. Effects will be experienced across the north of England.	Groundwater	the risk of flooding. The impact of climate change will also increase the risk of significant flood events. The combination of multiple developments could result in an increased risk of flooding, with the potential to cause irreversible harm. Anticipated positive and negative effects over the medium to long term as interventions are implemented.

6.   Mitigation

As part of the assessment, mitigation and enhancement has been suggested to strengthen the STP2 against the ISA2 objectives. Mitigation includes recommendations to reduce any significant negative effects. Enhancement includes recommendations to improve positive effects further. The proposed mitigation measures were largely addressed within the plan policies. Table 11 provides an overview of the recommended enhancement measures given for the STP2 against the ISA2 objectives to help further enhance the positive effects of the STP2.

Table 11: Overview of Proposed Enhancements

ISA2 Objective	Proposed Enhancements
1. **Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from surface transport in the North.**	Due to the potential threats posed by climate change and the Government's commitment to reduce carbon emissions, measures should be taken to reduce the amount of carbon from the North's transport system. Reductions would largely come from a reduction in private vehicle mileage and the increased availability, accessibility and affordability of sustainable transport modes which comes across strongly in the STP2. This could be enhanced by prioritising in policy, Climate Change mitigation and adaptation measures in the development of new, or improvements to existing transport infrastructure.
2. **Minimise embedded emissions from the development of new transport infrastructure and the maintenance of existing infrastructure.**	There should be a consideration of using innovative low carbon construction materials and techniques for the development of new, or improvement of existing, transport infrastructure as well as for maintenance activities. For instance, the road and rail thematic policies could place more emphasis on making better use of existing infrastructure. Carbon footprint can be readily measured at construction and operation by use of an appropriate carbon calculator. The implementation of mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities.
3. **Protect and enhance the biodiversity, geodiversity**	The STP2 promotes good design of transport infrastructure to maximise ecological connectivity and to secure Biodiversity

ISA2 Objective	Proposed Enhancements
and the green infrastructure network.	Net Gain. This is particularly important given the Environment Act 2021 which will set in to law a 10% BNG requirement on all new development. More complex measures could be considered such as animal over or under passes on the road network, the development of wildflower meadows along linear features such as roads and railway lines or the active control of invasive species. Particular consideration needs to be made to protection measures in relation to any scheme which may impact directly, or indirectly, on any site designated for nature conservation purposes. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.
4. **Conserve and enhance internationally designated environment sites.**	There could be particular consideration within projects to the conservation and enhancement measures of internationally designated environment sites, particularly those designated as SSSI or Natura 2000. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.
5. **Protect and enhance local air quality.**	None identified.
6. **Increase resilience of the transport network to extreme weather events and a changing climate.**	It is important to increase our understanding of the transport systems vulnerability to the effects of a changing climate. Particularly as extreme weather events become more regular, there should be consideration in policy to increase the understanding of the transport systems vulnerability to climate change effects, as well as to encourage adaptive management and design to respond to uncertain climatic effects.
7. **Protect and enhance the blue infrastructure network including inland**	Impact on local water resources can be addressed through planning and design for the efficient use of water, including water recycling. Consideration should be given to the use of

ISA2 Objective	Proposed Enhancements
and coastal water environments.	nature-based solutions to protect the blue infrastructure network, including aquatic habitats. It is particularly important to protect aquatic habitats and coastal surface water as a result of growth in the freight shipments sector. Mitigation and enhancement measures should be considered to protect the natural environment. Protection and good pollution control measures are to be utilised during both construction and operation of transport schemes. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.
8. **Protect and conserve soil and remediate and avoid land contamination.**	The protection of soil resources, particularly those of higher quality / areas of better agricultural lands should always be considered – this could be done during scheme planning by careful route selection. If areas of good quality soil cannot be avoided, care should be taken during construction to store topsoil for later reuse – either on site as landscaping or further afield. Opportunities should also be taken to utilise areas of previously developed land and to remediate contaminated land when possible. This could include the removal / appropriate treatment of any invasive species such as Japanese Knotweed. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.
9. **Support the conservation and enhancement of the quality and distinctiveness of historic assets, industrial and cultural heritage and their settings.**	Heritage assets may be buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes. Consideration should be made of the character and setting of the heritage asset, its significance (and level of protection afforded to it), the potential for loss or harm and need for conservation. Opportunities to support supporting improved access to historic or culturally important

ISA2 Objective	Proposed Enhancements
	sites by sustainable transport modes should be taken when possible.

It should also be noted that due to its nature, not all heritage features may be apparent at the planning / design stage and precautions for unexpected discovery should be taken – perhaps through an archaeological watching brief. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes. |
| 10. **Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes and townscapes.** | The design, construction, repair and maintenance of transport infrastructure should be encouraged to respect and enhance where possible the landscape character and townscapes of the north of England. Reducing the scale of a project or making changes to its operation can help to avoid or mitigate the visual and landscape effects of a proposed project. Consideration during planning should also be given to appropriate siting, design of the scheme (including choice of materials) and landscaping schemes. Policy should therefore consider the design of transport infrastructure that protects and enhances the character of landscapes and townscapes. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes. |
| 11. **Promote the prudent use of natural resources, minimise the production of waste and support the re-use and recycling of materials.** | Consideration during design and construction of transport schemes should be given to the waste hierarchy of prevention, reuse, recycling and disposal. All waste should be handled in accordance with applicable waste management legislation and the emphasis should be to minimise the volume of waste produced and the volume sent for disposal, unless it can be demonstrated that this is the best environmental outcome. Consideration should be given to ensuring that new or upgraded infrastructure is resource efficient and encouraging |

ISA2 Objective	Proposed Enhancements
	the use of recycled materials, local suppliers and locally produced materials in construction. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.
12. **Enhance long term economic prosperity and promote a clean and green economic transformation.**	None identified.
13. **Coordinate land use and strategic transport planning across the region.**	Consideration should be given to supporting the development of connected communities and coordinating public transport infrastructure with the future development of employment and housing within 15/20-minute neighbourhoods to enable coordinated strategic planning across the plan area. However, all proposed development will require adherence to the relevant planning requirements. As such consideration of these requirements will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.
14. **Promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, and reduce Transport Related Social Exclusion (TRSE), particularly for the North's most vulnerable groups.**	None identified.
15. **Improve the health and wellbeing for all citizens and reduce inequalities in health.**	Consideration during scheme planning and design could be given to reducing emissions and other aspects such as noise pollution and vibration dust which potentially effect health and well-being. The implementation of such mitigation measures will be led by delivery authorities and will be made at the design stage of all relevant schemes.

ISA2 Objective	Proposed Enhancements
16. **Promote community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime for all citizens.**	Consideration is given in the STP2 to safety improvements in relation to multi-modal hubs, but specific reference to natural surveillance and to reducing the potential for accidents and collisions involving wildlife could be included.

7. Monitoring

Monitoring of the STP2 will be completed once the plan is adopted. This is currently planned for December 2023 and is stage E of the IA process. This in accordance with the SEA Directive and Regulation 17 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. It requires the organisation who created and adopted the plan to monitor how it is implemented to identify any unforeseen effects and to take appropriate action to resolve these effects.

Monitoring for the plan will cover social, environmental and economic effects and it will include indicators that will enable the link between the implementation of the STP2 and the likely significant effects (both positive and negative) to be monitored. A bespoke monitoring framework has also been developed to specifically monitor those effects relevant to the ISA2 objectives. The monitoring framework is outlined in Section 12 of the Main ISA2 report. The monitoring arrangements will also be set out in a Post-Adoption Statement after the plan is adopted.

8.   Conclusion

This report describes the process and the findings of the ISA2. The preparation of the ISA2 has strengthened the sustainability of STP2.

To ensure transparency throughout the ISA2 process, it was agreed that there would be two conclusions; the first summarising the assessment findings when considering only the policies within the consultation STP2 plan (main plan document), and the second summarising the assessment findings when considering the STP2 Vision, Ambitions and Objectives in Annex 1 and the STP2 Policy and Places Framework in Annex 2, in addition to policies included within the consultation STP2 plan (main plan document).

When considering the STP2 plan (main plan document) without the Annexes, the policies provide a strong strategic direction for transportation infrastructure across the plan area. These policies perform well against the ISA2 objectives, specifically in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and protecting local air quality; enhancing long term economic prosperity; and promoting inclusive and safe environments for all which support the three overarching ambitions of STP2. However, the assessment findings also identify areas of uncertainty, specifically surrounding protecting and enhancing the blue infrastructure network, avoiding land contamination, conserving and enhancing historic assets, landscapes and townscapes.

When examining the consultation plan (main plan document) with the Annexes 1 and 2, this complete plan provides a more robust policy foundation for future growth within the plan area. The complete plan performs well against the ISA2 objectives, specifically in protecting and enhancing blue and green infrastructure, and conserving and enhancing historic assets, landscapes, and townscapes. It is important to note however, that there are areas of uncertainty or only slightly beneficial impacts remain relating to avoiding land contamination and promoting the prudent use of natural resources. However, the level of detail that could be addressed by the STP2 was limited and it was not considered proportionate to include this level of detail within the STP2 policies. The identified uncertainties should be addressed at a project level by delivery authorities. Despite this, it is considered that this complete plan would have a strong, positive influence on the North's transport network across environmental, economic, societal and health indicators and a firm basis for future transport planning for the North.

TfN are now seeking comments from consultees on STP2's policies, evidence and supporting annexes, including the ISA2 and HRA. Following the STP2 plan consultation, responses will be considered and appropriately actioned. Any changes will be documented as part of stage D of the

IA process. Following this, a post-adoption statement will be written as part of stage E of the IA process once the plan is adopted by TfN.